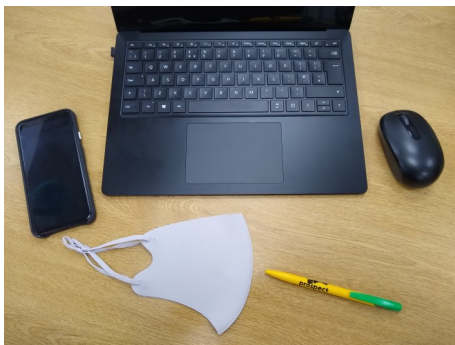


BT/EE London Circular

Return to the Offices, but take care and keep safe

BT is planning a further return to some office locations from the beginning of October. Prospect continues to review and discuss the process with BT.

While some, for operational reasons, have been working from offices safely throughout the pandemic, many have worked effectively from home, often in difficult circumstances.



There is no question that being in an office has benefits when it is appropriate and necessary to do so. Just occupying a desk space for tasks that could be done from anywhere is much less satisfactory.

Despite the positive impact of vaccines, COVID is still circulating, and infection rates are comparatively high.

If you are returning to an office, please satisfy yourself that you feel safe to do so and not pressured to work in unsatisfactory conditions. Flag concerns to the Prospect Helpdesk on 0300 600 1878 and the Union will make sure these are raised with BT.

Opening of One Braham

The new Aldgate East HQ of BT One Braham is due to open in the coming weeks. The accommodation will be a considerable improvement on BT Centre, although inevitably there will be issues of detail to work through on occupation.

Prospect is working with BT to keep an eye on matters in the early period of the building opening. If you are going in to One Braham and have a concern flag it to the local property people on site and if need be to Prospect on 0300 600 1878.

Prospect Survey

You should have been e-mailed a member's survey from Prospect. This is the first one the Union has run for two years due to the pandemic. It is however part of a long running series of surveys that allows the union to understand general membership feeling on a range of issues from pay and bonus to Better Workplace. The general detail (not individual responses) is discussed and reviewed with BT.

Please take time to fill the survey in. It is recognised as an important benchmark of managerial and professional views by both Prospect and BT.

Please [click here](#) to access the survey which will close on Monday 11 October at 5pm.

Prospect London Secretary

Keith Flett
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PROSPECT MEMBER CONTACT CENTRE

Call 0300 600 1878, Mon-Fri 08:30-19:00

Black History Month

Black history month is a time to remember contributions of Black people. We acknowledge the work of Black women in Information Technology, such as of Marian Croak the inventor of Voice over Internet Protocol, Gladys West whose work contributed to the development of Global positioning system and Dr Shirley Ann Jackson a theoretical physicist whose work contributed to the development of fibre optical cables.

Sadly, it is also a time to reflect on recent history which saw the modern-day lynching of George Floyd and the worldwide protests that followed. This culminated in a renewed call to end police brutality and racial inequality. Additionally, we have all had to deal with the impact of Covid-19 and the lockdowns that followed. Most of us know at least one person who has died because of the virus and some are grieving for the loss of family members and friends. We take time to honour their lives and contributions as well.

The government launched an inquiry into the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 and an investigation on institutional racism in the UK. The report acknowledged labour market differences but aimed at explaining these away. This report only served to polarise opinion whilst ignoring reports such as The McGregor Smith Review and research by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on Ethnic minority disadvantage in the labour market. Both reports point to the prevalence of poor pay, and promotional outcomes for Black and Minority Ethnic Workers.

During this period many organisations acknowledged the existence of inequities, but few were prepared to acknowledge or address the equity problems that exist in their own organisations.

Prospect and BT have engaged with members and staff, via webinars and surveys with the aim of trying to tackle the issue of race and how it manifests in the workplace. Gauging from some online comments, some would rather overstep the issue, the vast majority however engaged and sought to educate themselves on the systemic issues and microaggressions black people face in the workplace and genuinely sought to become allies.

BT launched its Ethnicity Rapid Action Plan (ERAP) to accelerate the pace of change focusing on accelerating diversity within the organisation and leading by example. The company has since carried out a meaningful people data campaign which saw ethnicity declaration rates rise to 76.6%. This is something Prospect has been calling for.

BT also published its [Diversity & Inclusion Report](#), which included the Ethnicity Pay Gap Report, this report acknowledges that there are less black colleagues in senior leadership and management roles. BT also published Black inclusion and diversity targets to support its 2030 targets and has programmes in place to address these issues.

Prospect our Union has been busy supporting colleagues through this period, holding webinars and developing a wide-ranging Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy with a focus on race and racism, which has resulted in the development of a Race Action plan. Prospect has worked closely with members of our community and members of the NEC to develop the plan which will be launched shortly. Ensuring we have diverse voices represented at all levels of the organisation this will help in creating an inclusive workplace.

I am cautiously hopeful and keen to see what these programs and activities deliver. Activists know that despite existing legislation designed to protect people, racism and discrimination exists in attitudes, messages and stereotypes and beliefs due to implicit and unconscious bias. For some racism is a matter of life and death. As Union members we should never shy away from fighting the good fight against injustice and improving work life experiences and outcomes for all members.

Recent lockdowns have sharply focused our minds on what really matters, it has also shown the resilience of organisations and individuals, and our ability to change and adapt let us apply the same focus to issues of equality and racism.

Thank you

Christine Danniell
Deputy Vice Prospect and BT London branch