



2008 will see the launch of Community's unique Member Service Centre, a one-stop shop for members seeking advice and support that will pioneer new ways of keeping you informed, as its director Lesley-Anne Ure explains.

A brilliant new service for Community members will be launched in 2008. The Member Service Centre will become the interactive communications hub for the union. Members in any part of the country can phone in for advice or help on any issue, ranging from their treatment by their boss to a health and safety worry, from a legal or financial problem to a request for training or careers information. But as the communications hub, the Member Service Centre is about a lot more than just answering members' calls.

census on this with this issue of the magazine. It's important that you return these to the Member Service Centre so that it can design its services around your needs.'

Lesley-Anne came to Community as a member of the TUC's Organising Academy. She became a union organiser in the Midlands where she has been working until her appointment as Director of the Members' Service Centre. 'I am happy to have the opportunity to develop the centre, which will take

New centre at your service

The new centre will revolutionise communications within the union, pioneering new technologies to keep members in touch with developments. Whenever an urgent issue arises, the union will be able to send advice by email, text or voicemail to each member affected. If negotiations are concluded, the result can be transmitted immediately to people in the relevant company. If extra training is available, details can be sent within minutes to those who have expressed an interest.

'It won't be just another call centre with endless recorded messages and options,' says Lesley-Anne Ure who will be the service centre's director. 'It will be a very personal service, and the phones will be answered by a team of friendly, committed specialist advisers.'

The centre's specialist staff will have experience of employment law, and health and safety regulations, and a library of employment contracts and law books will be built up at the centre so staff can research definitive answers to your questions. Recognising your time is precious, they'll call you back rather than keeping you on hold if they need to research an answer.

The Member Service Centre will use new technology to contact the union's membership. But Lesley-Anne is aware that some members prefer traditional methods. 'Email is a useful tool but a lot of our members don't use it. So we are asking members what's the best way of contacting them when we have something important to say. Members will receive a short

our union forward in a most exciting way. We will have a personalised service that is streets ahead of anything else in the union movement. But the centre won't undermine traditional relationships between branch officials and organisers; in fact, it will help branch secretaries to do their work in a number of ways.

The Members' Service Centre will initially be open from 9am to 5pm and later from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday. If the union needs immediate contact with its membership, then the centre can operate flexible hours to respond to those needs.

'Launching the centre is a huge challenge,' says Lesley-Anne, 'but when we succeed the payback for the union and its members will be enormous. We want to get off to a good start so I would urge every member to complete their census form and send it back as soon as possible.'