



Amicus women aim to top Euro lists

We meet Amicus-MSF MEP hopefuls Anita Pollack and Theresa Griffin

The next European Parliament elections take place in 2004, but the race to get candidates selected on to regional lists has already begun.

European elections matter to trade unionists. Over the past two decades, some of the most important employment legislation has come from Europe.

That's why it is important Amicus members get involved and support Labour Party candidates in the elections – and why Amicus is pleased to support its members seeking selection as candidates to be Labour MEPs.

Recoup the ground!

Amicus-MSF member Theresa Griffin has worked across Europe, advising councils and leading local bodies on creative industry and cultural strategies.

Theresa's latest assignment is for Belfast City Council. Her work has taken to Greece, the Netherlands, Italy and also to the 'new' European states hoping to join the EU like the Czech Republic and Hungary.

Culture vulture Theresa (pictured on right) is a fully qualified arts expert, having trained in theatre and TV. But she has always been a keen union member and is a long serving member of our Merseyside Community Branch.

"This is why I'm so interested in employment issues," she says, "and with my background of

working in Europe I can see the importance of economic development in a Europe-wide context."

A former Liverpool Councillor, Theresa unsuccessfully stood on the Labour Party's North West European Parliament candidate list in the last Euro elections in 1999.

Four out of the 10 MEPs elected were Labour and now Theresa wants to help increase that total to at least six. "With a population of 6.9 million people in both urban and rural areas, Labour needs to recoup the ground here in the North West and local people need Labour to represent them."

If selected and then elected as an MEP Theresa said she would campaign on equalities issues and the speedier implementation of the information and consultation directive.

Call of the wild

Former MEP Anita Pollack is currently Head of European Liaison for English Heritage. But something is calling her back...

Australian-born Anita (pictured left), union member for 30 years, was the MEP for South West London for 10 years – 1989 to 1999.

But in 1999 a totally new list system was brought in, doing away with traditional constituencies and introducing 10 seats for an entire region. Sadly Anita wasn't amongst the winners.

But she's fighting back and is hoping to be selected for the Labour Party's London region list.

Her passion is the environment, and she hasn't finished the work she started. "Everything you can achieve for the environment is a global bonus. I really do care about what happens."

Her last project as an MEP was to help push through important legislation on air pollution. "But there's a whole lot more that needs to be done. And you really need to be on the ball to ensure that these improvements are followed through."

Anita has worked in her new role at English Heritage for the past two years. If anything it has reinforced her view that departments in Brussels need to talk to each other

"Did you know the European Commission's State Aid rules actually work against regeneration – and even against its own policies on regional development funding?" she asks.

It's clear why Anita wants to return to Brussels. But what's even more important she believes is the need for everyone to vote in the next Euro elections.

"The far right are rampaging across Europe. We really need a strong turnout to redress the balance in Europe."