

December 2024

CWU London & South East News



As you may be aware, we were recently asked to vote on whether we would pay the political levy, an opt-in, opt-out element of union subscriptions for most unions. We want to highlight how important this funding is for the work we do. The CWU uses this money to apply pressure on the government, advocating for improved workers' rights and fairer working conditions.

In October 2024, the Employment Rights Bill was launched, marking a significant step forward in the union's ongoing efforts to strengthen protections for working people. The bill proposes major reforms, including banning exploitative zero-hour contracts, guaranteeing rights to secure hours, and ensuring protection from unfair dismissal from day one of employment. These changes, along with strengthened collective redundancy rights, improved parental and bereavement leave, and measures to close the gender pay gap, will directly benefit workers and provide stronger legal safeguards.

The impact of the CWU's advocacy through the political levy cannot be overstated. Our commitment to advancing workers' rights ensures that over time, we will continue to see improvements in job security, fair pay, and a stronger voice for workers across all sectors. This is just the beginning, and with your continued support, we can keep pushing for even more positive change.



What's been happening! BT and Openreach have already initiated preparations to brief a revised policy on sexual harassment in the workplace, with anticipated forthcoming changes to the relevant legislation as mentioned in the new Employment Rights Bill. Additionally, this year has seen a reduction in the number of Saturday rosters for Openreach SD and FTTP, a change the CWU has actively pursued for some time. We believe that there may be further opportunities for reductions in the future.

Unfortunately, there has been an increase in cases where team members are not using the TETRA system correctly. We urge all team members to prioritise safety and ensure they are using the correct equipment. "DO NOT BE PUSHED BY MANAGEMENT INTO CUTTING CORNERS ON SAFETY." Some managers may focus on targets or statistics rather than your well-being, but your safety must always come first. If you are asked to do more than you can reasonably handle in a day, contact the CWU for support. Stay safe and follow the correct procedures.

Your collective voices make a difference, so why not ask why BT or Openreach are refusing to engage with the CWU on unagreed pay points, as promised? Why target grades, downgrade pay points, and alter skill sets? Why are career pathways being changed to unagreed alternatives? And why are there so many contractors and VPL schemes? At the CWU, we aim to secure a better working environment for 2025, and with your continued support, we believe we can make significant progress. Thank you for your support in 2024, and let's see what we can achieve together next year.

