

## Pay

BT/ Openreach's achievements don't happen by magic. They happen because you show up every day and deliver through rain and snow (oh so much rain!). And as pay negotiations open, this is exactly the right time to make sure BT hears how important fair pay is to you.



Think about what you've pulled off recently. You generated £6.2 billion in earnings in just nine months. You've built the network out to 21 million premises, with over a million added in quarter three alone. You smashed records with 571,000 full-fibre connections in a single quarter. You've kept customer satisfaction climbing. You've adapted to new AI systems that were meant to simplify work, but often made it more intense. You've picked up when the contractors couldn't. And on top of that, you've driven sales, boosted bundles, and helped EE stay the UK's best mobile network for the 11th year running.

All this while BT pushed cost-cutting and "efficiencies" at every turn.

BT talks about being a "winning team." Well, a winning team deserves fair pay, especially when the cost of living is biting harder every month. If BT wants growth, it needs to invest in the people who actually create it.



Your CWU negotiators have just started talks with management. So now's the time to speak up:

Tell your CWU Branch what you expect from this pay review.

Tell your line manager what fair pay means to you.

If BT/Openreach wants wins, it needs to back the people delivering them.

## Union Representation

Being called into a disciplinary hearing is never pleasant. Even if you've done nothing wrong, it can feel tense, formal, and a bit overwhelming. That's exactly why taking a CWU rep with you isn't just a good idea, it's one of the strongest protections you have.

A CWU rep brings experience, calm, and clarity into a situation that can easily feel stacked against you. They know the procedures inside out, so they can spot instantly if something isn't being handled properly. They'll make sure the BT/Openreach sticks to its policies, that you're treated fairly, and that nothing gets twisted or taken out of context.



We can ask questions you might not think of, challenge assumptions, and help you explain your side clearly and confidently. They're also there to slow things down when the pressure ramps up, giving you space to think rather than react.

Most importantly, you're not facing it alone. Having someone in the room who is firmly on your side changes the whole dynamic, it levels the playing field.

So if you're ever invited to a disciplinary meeting, don't walk in by yourself. Take your CWU rep. It's your right, and it genuinely makes a difference. Let us help you. Call your rep or email [office@cwuset.uk](mailto:office@cwuset.uk)

## Shorter Working Week

The CWU's Shorter Working Week campaign is all about winning a meaningful reduction in weekly working hours with no loss of pay for Telecoms & Financial Services members. We argue that work has changed dramatically, technology has accelerated, workloads have grown, and stress levels have risen, yet working patterns haven't kept pace. A shorter week presents a practical, modern solution that benefits both workers and employers.



Across the UK and internationally, hundreds of employers have already trialled reduced-hours models with overwhelmingly positive results: better work-life balance, lower stress, improved retention, and higher productivity. CWU members feel the same. In our 2025 survey, members showed strong support for shorter hours, saying they'd use the extra time for family, caring responsibilities, rest, and simply getting some breathing space.

Our campaign brings together research, case studies, and the collective strength of union members to push for trials in recognised workplaces. It's not something that will be won overnight, it relies on members spreading the word, building support, and showing employers that the appetite for change is real.

At its heart, the campaign is about fairness, wellbeing, and shaping a future of work that actually works for people. Find out more on our website at [cwuset.uk/shorter-working-week/](http://cwuset.uk/shorter-working-week/)

## Branch BGM

All members are formally invited to attend the Biennial General Meeting of the South East Telecom Branch of the CWU.

Due to the large geographical area covered by our branch, this meeting will be held online to ensure as many members as possible can take part. The meeting will take place on Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> March 2026, and joining details will be sent to members via email nearer the date.

At this meeting, all branch positions will be elected for a two-year term. Vacant positions can be filled on the night and we are always looking for new committee members.

If you require any assistance or information, please contact a branch officer. Their details are available on this website.

This is your opportunity to shape how your branch is run. Your participation matters.

## Political Corner

It's been one of those months where the news has reminded us exactly why union values still matter. The renewed focus on the Epstein files, and the wider conversations about misogyny, exploitation and the abuse of power, have sparked anger for good reason. When powerful people behave as if rules don't apply to them, it highlights the importance of collective voices that stand up for dignity, equality and basic decency. These aren't abstract principles, they're the foundations of every safe, respectful workplace.

We've also seen politics wrestling with issues that land squarely in the union world: debates about workers' rights, the future of AI regulation, and the need for stronger protections against harassment and bullying. Across Parliament, there's been renewed scrutiny of behaviour in public life, a reminder that everyone deserves a workplace free from intimidation, whether they're on a shop floor, in an office or in the corridors of power.

And with cost-of-living pressures still biting, discussions about fair pay, secure work and public investment have been front and centre.

Conflicts still continue in Ukraine, Gaza/Israel, Sudan, Myanmar, Somalia, DR Congo, Syria, Yemen, Haiti, Ethiopia. On watch list Iran?

Trade unions have always stood for peace, democracy, human rights and solidarity. Conflict anywhere affects working people most, through displacement, poverty, exploitation, and the erosion of rights.



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