



“Our responsibility is to fight for the next generation,” our deputy general secretary Terry Pullinger told delegates at a key gathering of trade union activists in London conference earlier this month.

One of several senior national union officers to address the National Shop Stewards Network conference, Terry made the link between the fight for today’s and tomorrow’s workers the key theme of his enthusiastically received address.

“They try and buy you off by saying your terms and conditions can stay, but the new people who come in will be on worse terms and conditions,” he said, explaining how employers use the “divide and conquer” tactic by creating a two-tier workforce.

But the CWU had staunchly resisted Royal Mail’s attempts to do this during our Four Pillars campaign, Terry continued, pointing out that members had their decent terms and conditions because “earlier trade unionists fought for that long ago.

“We don’t get what we deserve – we get what we fight for and we got the message across that our responsibility now is to fight for the next generation – we must not pull up the ladder,” he concluded, to rousing applause.

Also speaking from the CWU was long-standing activist Judy Griffiths, who talked about the need for activists across the movement to find practical ways to assist and solidarise with each other, citing the CWU’s Four Pillars campaign and also some of the operational difficulties being faced by our Openreach members.

Britain’s largest union, Unite, is the most recent affiliate to NSSN and its assistant general secretary Howard

Beckett talked about the need for the movement to “build for strategic conflict.

“The answer to organised greed is and always will be organised labour and it’s time to unite our efforts,” he said.

Ian Hodson and Amy Murphy, from food and retail unions BFAWU and Usdaw, gave rousing speeches on their unions’ respective campaigns for a £10 per hour minimum wage and against insecure employment.

BFAWU is the union that organises fast-food workers and their members in several McDonald’s restaurants took strike action recently over pay, the first walkouts at that company in the UK.



## SUCCESSES HAVE TO BE ORGANISED FOR AND FOUGHT FOR”

“When our members walked out, they had a message for the establishment: ‘We ain’t gonna lie down and we ain’t gonna take it,’” BFAWU president Ian told the audience.

“They said it’s unacceptable to pay less than £10 per hour and it’s unacceptable that people get bullied at work,” he added, to enthusiastic applause.

One of the McDonald’s strikers, Richard Shattock, received an ovation from the hall when he said: “We’ve had our first taste of fighting back and we want some more.”

Richard, who has worked for the company in Watford for two years, explained how he and his fellow workers had been joined by staff from Manchester, Cambridge and Crayford in the action, and about the inflation-busting 5.3 per cent pay rise the company’s workers had won.

Striking had been “the proudest day of my life and when we strike, we win,” he continued.

“Our union, the BFAWU, might be small, but we represent fast-food workers and we’re growing.

“So, if you work in fast food, come and talk to us.”

Udaw president, Amy Murphy told the conference of how her union is also prioritising the fight for decent standards of pay and security of

employment, in a sector which has traditionally had a poor record in these aspects.

An estimated 60 per cent of its 435,000-strong membership are on either short-term or zero-hour contracts, she said, adding that TUC research indicates that insecure employment affects around one-tenth of the total UK workforce.

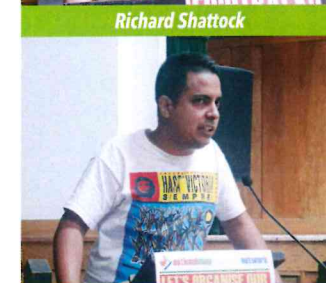
“We need to end bogus self-employment, an end to zero-hour contracts. We need a statutory right to a proper contract and a minimum £10 per hour for all workers,” she insisted.

Unite London bus driver and shop steward Mo Manir spoke of the struggles that his members are undergoing during the current period and put a strong emphasis on the need for strong rank and file organisation.

“Successes don’t come by accident, they have to be organised and fought for,” stressed Mo, who added that he had been at this event the previous year and had been “inspired to hear about all the battles.”

Speaking to Frontline after the conference, our general secretary Dave Ward said: “It’s really positive that our union’s activists and senior officers are at conferences like these, talking about our own successes and challenges, while hearing first-hand about the struggles of workers in different sectors from fast-food and leisure to public transport and retail.”

Most if not all of the key themes, aims and aspirations of the CWU’s *New Deal for Workers* initiative were addressed by the various speakers, including insecure employment, organising and recruiting in the private sector, and winning strategic victories



that help the movement as a whole to advance.

“That’s why this union is affiliated to this network at national level – and I’d strongly encourage our branches to affiliate in their localities and to help build these networks of activists.

“Let’s build the fight for a New Deal for Workers on every shopfloor in the land,” he urged.

■ To affiliate your branch, visit <http://shopstewards.net/join-affiliate>