WHEELS

Together we Stand



Section 88 factsheet

Life on the Road

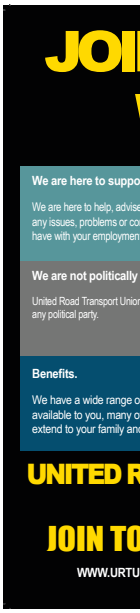
Best & Worst Truckstops

2027 Contribution Rates

UNITED ROAD TRANSPORT UNION • NOVEMBER 2026 EDITION

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Injured abroad? How Thompsons can help



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Worst & Best Truckstops UK

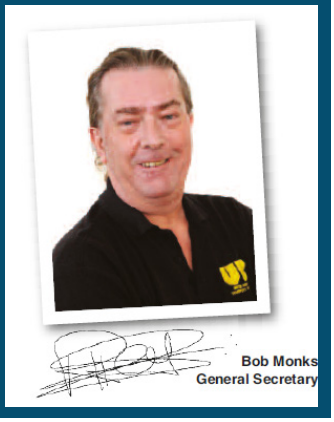


I was heartened to recently read that the Senior Transport Commissioner ('STC'), Kevin Rooney, has indicated that Traffic Commissioner's ('TC's) objective for the coming year is to focus on drivers. Speaking at a Transport Managers conference, contributors highlighted the importance of a company culture that allows employees to feel free to say when they feel fatigued. While driver's hours regulations allow for fifteen hour shifts in a day, providing it was followed by nine hours rest, no one has indicated that this was actually a safe practice. It is an absolute limit that was imposed to prevent unfair competition. The 'STC' added that no one says you have to do it and it should really only be done after undertaking a proper risk assessment. With the challenges to recruitment and retention in recent years, taking steps to safeguard drivers physical and mental wellbeing is not only an essential duty of care concern for its own sake, but could also be a significant factor in driver retention. Signing drivers up for Driver CPC Wellbeing courses may not seem such a bad idea after all.

It will not have escaped the notice, of you or your employer, that the cost of diesel has spiralled out of control over the past weeks. It would seem almost inevitable, when you look at a world that appears 'hell bent' on continuing with conflicts. Whether it is, Iran or the major powers, Russia or the United States, they are increasingly asserting themselves through geopolitical force. This situation disrupts global supply chains, deliveries are delayed and pressure on the entire system increases. When fuel prices rise, costs increase, when supply chains are disrupted, pressure mounts on wages and working conditions. Social dumping risks intensify and insecurity becomes part of the job. Workers feel the consequence every day, whether at the fuel pump, in energy bills or in the rising costs for food. Protecting purchasing power is therefore essential . Wage protection mechanisms are not a luxury, they are a necessity and must be protected. For trade unions the priority is clear, workers must not be forced to pay for rises they did not create. Democracy is under pressure all over the world. Authoritarian regimes, autocrats, dictators and the like are in power in more and more countries. Whilst this carries on unabated, the right to take industrial action , the right to campaign and demonstrate are all at risk.

Finally, I noted that some six months ago over one hundred members of parliament and peers joined the call for improvements in roadside facilities for HGV drivers, in a bid to tackle freight crime. A letter to the then Prime Minister urged support that would ensure HGV drivers have access to safer, more secure roadside facility parking places. The key here is "… six months ago…". It would appear, the last time I looked, nothing has been done. Why am I not surprised. Whilst we would support fellow trade unionists whom drive trains, campaigning over the lack of breaks and facilitates which force drivers to risk health and endure degrading conditions, professional HGV drivers have experienced identical issues for many years now. It is high time this problem was addressed.

Until next time….drive safe.



Bob Monks
General Secretary

Section 88 Entitlement

This note is intended to provide guidance on when an HGV/LGV driver may legally continue driving while their driving licence is being renewed under Section 88 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. The note applies to drivers of Category C, C1, CE and other Group 2 vehicles.

What is Section 88?

Section 88 allows a driver to continue driving while the DVLA processes a licence application, provided certain legal conditions are met.

For HGV drivers, this typically applies when:

- A licence has expired and a renewal application has been submitted.
- A licence has been revoked on medical grounds, and the driver has reapplied.
- A licence has been lost or damaged, and a replacement has been requested.

Section 88 does not give new driving entitlements, it only preserves the categories the driver already holds.

Conditions You Must Meet

A driver may rely on Section 88 only if all the following apply:

- A valid application has been submitted to DVLA (e.g. D2/D4 forms for Group 2 licences).
- The previous licence was valid for the HGV category being driven.
- The driver meets Group 2 (see below) medical standards and has no condition that makes them unfit to drive.
- The DVLA has not issued a letter advising the driver not to drive.
- The driver is not disqualified by a court.
- The application is still pending, entitlement ends immediately if the DVLA refuses it.

If any of the above conditions are not met, the driver must not drive.

Medical Requirements

Group 2 medical standards are stricter than those for car drivers. Drivers must ensure:

- Their D4 medical report is complete and accurate.
- They have no new medical conditions that would affect fitness to drive.
- They have not been told by a doctor or the DVLA that they must stop driving.

If the DVLA requests further medical evidence, Section 88 may continue only if DVLA has not instructed the driver to stop.

Evidence Drivers Should Carry

To avoid delays at the roadside or issues with employers, it is recommended that drivers carry:

- DVLA confirmation of the renewal application (email or letter).
- A copy of the expired licence (if available).
- A copy of the completed D2/D4 form (if available).
- Any correspondence from DVLA confirming they may continue driving.

This is not a legal requirement, but is strongly recommended.

When Section 88 Cannot Be Used

Drivers cannot rely on Section 88 if:

- DVLA has refused the application.
- DVLA has issued a ‘do not drive’ letter.
- The driver has been disqualified.
- The driver has not actually submitted a valid renewal application.
- The driver only held a provisional HGV entitlement.

Driving in these circumstances is an offence.

Employer Expectations

Employers may ask drivers to provide:

- Proof of the DVLA application.
- A declaration that they meet Group 2 medical standards.
- Confirmation that DVLA has not advised them to stop driving.

These are commercial requirements, not legal, but they help ensure compliance and protect the employer’s operator’s licence.

What to do if your employer refuses to allow you to drive

If you believe Section 88 can be relied on to allow you to drive and your employer has refused to allow you to drive in the course of your employment:

- Firstly, refer them to Section 88 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.
- Provide them with a copy of this document.
- Provide them with the documents referred to in the ‘Evidence Drivers Should Carry’ section of this document.
- If that is not sufficient and your employer does not agree to you driving, contact your regional union representative for further guidance.

Summary

If you have applied to renew your HGV licence, you’re medically fit, and DVLA hasn’t told you to stop driving, Section 88 normally allows you to keep driving your lorry until DVLA makes a decision.

Disclaimer

The content of this fact sheet is provided for general information purposes only. It is not intended to constituent legal advice and should not be relied upon as such.

Employees seeking guidance on their specific circumstances should contact their Regional Officer for advice and support

Injured abroad? How Thompsons can help



It is in the nature of the road haulage, distribution and logistics industry that many URTU members work overseas. When something goes wrong abroad, the consequences can be overwhelming. Different legal systems, language barriers, foreign defendants and unfamiliar surroundings can make pursuing compensation seem an impossible challenge.

Thompsons Solicitors has a long and established record of supporting trade union members who have suffered serious injury or illness outside the UK, ensuring they still have access to justice, expert legal advice and union backed representation.

Accidents at Work Overseas

URTU members may be required to work abroad as part of their role. Injuries can arise in the same way that they do at home: unsafe equipment, inadequate training, excessive working hours, or failures in health and safety systems.

In many cases, it may still be possible to bring a claim in England and Wales, particularly where:

- The employer is based here
- The contract of employment is governed by the laws of England and Wales
- The employer's negligence occurred in England and Wales

Thompsons' specialist team assesses whether the English and Welsh courts have jurisdiction and, if so, can pursue claims even where the injury occurred overseas.

Road Traffic Accidents Abroad

Road traffic collisions are one of the most common causes of serious injury outside the UK. URTU members may be injured:

- While working abroad
- While travelling between workplaces

Claims may involve non-UK drivers, insurance companies or hire vehicle providers. Thompsons has extensive experience navigating these claims to ensure injured members are not left to deal with the consequences alone.

It is increasingly possible, despite the accident happening abroad, for these types of cases to be pursued here, but there is no longer an automatic right post-Brexit, and so it is vital that each case is assessed on its own merits by an experienced lawyer.

Holiday Accidents
Many injuries abroad occur during holidays, including:

- Slips and trips in hotels or resorts
- Accidents during organised excursions
- Injuries in swimming pools or water parks

Where travel was booked as a package holiday, UK tour operators may be legally responsible for failures in safety abroad. Thompsons regularly bring claims in England and Wales against tour operators, protecting members from the risks of having to pursue appropriate compensation in unfamiliar foreign legal systems.

Where travel was not booked as part of a package, it may still be possible to pursue the claim in England and Wales, although this must be assessed on an individual basis.

Serious Illness and Exposure Abroad
Members may also suffer serious illness overseas due to poor hygiene standards, contaminated food or water, or exposure to harmful substances. Thompsons has acted for clients who contracted serious gastrointestinal illness, infections and long term conditions linked to negligence overseas.

These cases often require expert medical evidence and detailed investigation, particularly where symptoms develop after returning home.

Aviation and Maritime Claims
URTU members may be injured while:

- On aircraft or airport premises
- On ships, ferries or offshore installations

Such cases can involve complex international conventions, multiple legal systems and jurisdictional challenges. The team at Thompsons is experienced in handling high value, complex claims involving injuries suffered in the air or at sea.

Fatal Accidents Abroad
In the most tragic cases, families are left grieving after a loved one dies following an accident overseas. Thompsons can advise bereaved families on:

- Inquests and investigations
- Bringing dependency claims
- Recovering compensation for financial and emotional loss

The firm works closely with families, ensuring they are treated with dignity and supported through every step.

Union Backed Expertise You Can Trust
International injury claims are legally complex and time sensitive. Strict and varied limitation periods apply, and evidence can be lost quickly. That is why early legal advice is crucial.
As the UK's leading trade union law firm, Thompsons offers:

- Union backed representation
- Specialist cross-border personal injury lawyers
- Access to trusted overseas lawyers where needed
- A clear focus on protecting workers' rights, wherever the injury occurs

For URTU members injured abroad, help is available — and you do not have to face it alone.



James Riley - Personal Injury Expert

Union Benefit Guidelines

Here is a guide to two Benefits our Union offers its members. Full details and links can be found within the Members area of our Union's website.

Personal Injury

The Union may provide Personal Injury Legal Assistance to Members and their Families. To take advantage of this benefit you will need:

- A valid fully paid up to date membership
- Be paying either the Driver or non-Driver full time contribution rates

To use this service members need to visit the Members Area of the website and choose the 'Personal Injury' page. On this page they will find the telephone number for our dedicated Personal Injury Solicitors.

To make a claim the member or family member:

- Must be a member of the Union at the time of the Accident and remain a member of the Union throughout the case.
- Whilst claims can only be made within 3 years of an accident, in order to ensure that a case can be supported, a claim through our Union should be made within 2 years of the accident where possible.

You will receive 100% of your compensation. There will be no deductions for legal fees. Please note that the Solicitor’s conclusion in all cases is final.

Personal Injury claims can be made if you have an accident at or away from work, or on holiday. It should be noted that our Union's Personal Injury Solicitors are unable to assist Family members with work related injuries.

Employment Law Cases

The Union may provide an Employment Law Solicitor to Members whom have paid 'up to date' membership and by quoting their membership number.

You will need to speak in the first instance to your Regional Officer. They are likely to request paperwork. Therefore, please remember to keep copies of all paperwork associated with your complaint.

Your Regional Officer will assess your case. If it merits a referral to the Union's Solicitors, your case will likely be passed to a solicitor whom will determine whether your case will be supported. If appropriate the solicitor will be instructed to provide Legal support.

Union contribution rates 2027

For members paying their contributions through their Bank or Building Society, this increase will take effect for all payments due after 01 January 2027.

Where contributions are deducted from payroll your employer should have received notification, but would you please ensure that they are aware of the new rates.

This decision to increase membership contribution rates was sanctioned by URTU's National Executive Committee. The Union continually monitors its cost base to ensure that any increase is kept to an absolute minimum.

	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	1/2 Yearly	Yearly
Driver	£5.25	£22.75	£68.25	£136.50	£273.00
Non-Driver	£4.37	£18.93	£56.79	£113.58	£227.16
Part Time	£2.55	£11.05	£33.15	£66.30	£132.60

About URTU

The United Road Transport Union (URTU) has been in existence since 1890. We are a non-political organisation, dedicated to advancing the interests fo those workers connected with the road transport, distribution and logistics industry

Why Join URTU.

- We want recognition of the vital contribution that the road transport industry and professional drivers in particular, make tot he nation's economy.
- We want to ensure all those who employ road haulage workers understand their responsibilty to provide a safe and healthy work environment.
- We want equality of opportunity for bot existing workers and those seeking to join the road transport and distribution industry regardless of age, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion or creed.
- We want to ensure, as far as is practicable, that appropriate opportunities exist in the road transport and distribution industry for those who experience any form of disability.
- URTU is the oldest transport and distribution Union in the UK and is a member of the STUC, WTUC and TUC.

What URTU can do for you.

- Legal representation should you be injured at work.
- Representation in grievance and disciplinary matters.
- Free representation at Employment Tribunals, Medical Appeal Tribunals, Licensing Authority and other regulatory hearings.
- Access to a free legal helpline.
- Sickness beneit (after qualifying period).
- Death benefit.
- Hearing and DWP appeals.
- A Benevolent Fund, which provides free legal represntation in Court should you be in a position where you licence is at risk and financial assistance to alleviate the hardship that might result from the imposition of fines for certain road traffic offences.

PARTNERS
CREDIT UNION
Save, Borrow, Plan for Tomorrow

UNITED ROAD TRANSPORT UNION
URTU

INTRODUCTORY OFFER FOR NEW URTU MEMBERS



Your membership of URTU could unlock more than you think.

As a member of the union, you can access our exclusive Trade Union Fast Track Loan when you join Partners – giving you access to **higher** levels of borrowing and lower rates from the outset, without first having to take a Starter Loan.

It's our way of recognising your commitment while helping you build a stronger financial future.

TRADE UNION FAST TRACK LOAN

BORROW UP TO	JUST	REPAY OVER UP TO	SKIP THE STARTER LOAN
£7,500	19.6% APR (Representative)	60 MONTHS	HIGHER BORROWING FROM THE START

WHY CHOOSE THE TRADE UNION FAST TRACK LOAN?

PREFERENTIAL RATE
Lower rate of 19.6% APR for trade union members.

RECOGNISING YOUR MEMBERSHIP
We value your commitment to your trade union.

PARTNERSHIP FOCUSED
We can work with your employer to explore partnership opportunities for payroll deduction.

BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE
Helping you and your family achieve financial wellbeing.

STRONGER TOGETHER
Supporting our trade union community every step of the way.

YOUR LOAN JOURNEY

1. YOU JOIN
Become a member of Partners Credit Union and enjoy the benefits of membership.

2. FAST TRACK ACCESS
Access the Trade Union Fast Track Loan – borrow up to £7,500 at 19.6% APR without a Starter Loan.

3. WE WORK TOGETHER
We can work with your employer to explore partnership opportunities for payroll deduction.

4. PAYROLL PARTNERSHIP
Payroll deduction arrangement established with your employer.

5. FUTURE BENEFITS
Enjoy a preferential rate and higher borrowing while building a stronger financial future.

WE PROVIDE LOAN PROTECTION INSURANCE
AT NO COST TO YOU*
on all eligible loans. Terms and Conditions apply.

- Financial support when you need it most
- Peace of mind for you and your loved ones
- Included automatically on eligible loans

CONTACT US TODAY

0151 258 1014 | enquiries@partnerscreditunion.co.uk | www.partnerscreditunion.co.uk | Apply online or through our mobile app

Save with Confidence | Borrow Responsibly | Manage your account online & via our mobile app

THE PARTNERS PROMISE
Our promise. Your peace of mind.

- We put members first, always.
- We treat you fairly and with respect.
- We keep things simple, clear and honest.
- We protect your money and your future.
- We support our communities and strengthen lives.
- We're here today, here tomorrow, here for you.

Partners Credit Union Limited is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority

*Terms and Conditions apply

PARTNERS
CREDIT UNION
Save, Borrow, Plan for Tomorrow

What is a Credit Union?

Credit unions are not-for-profit savings and loans co-operatives owned and run by their members for their members. They offer savings, great value loans and insurance products, plus they are local and ethical and exist solely to benefit their members.

Is the Credit Union Safe?

Short answer is yes! Apart from being strictly regulated by the Financial Conduct and Prudential Regulation Authorities, credit unions are covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) who will make sure you get your money back, automatically compensating you up to £85,000 per eligible person, in the unlikely event that the credit union fails.

Who can join Partners?

We have a unique agreement with URTU, offering membership of Partners to their members and their husbands, wives or partners living in the same household. We also have childrens accounts which you can open for your kids, grandkids, nephews and nieces.

Saving with Partners

By saving up a nest egg you'll feel confident that you can handle what life throws at you. Save as much or as little as you want in our regular savings accounts or specific Christmas Club accounts. We even do accounts for children!

Loans from Partners

Whether it's time to sort out your finances, buy a new cooker, replace the family car, finally do those home renovations, or make a start on re-building your credit, a personal loan from Partners could be the answer. We have a range of different loan amounts and terms available - up to £15,000. Use our loan calculator on the home page of our website to work out your repayments and what is best for you.

How do I make payments?

You can pay into your PCU account regularly by Standing Order, straight from your wages if your employer is one of our Payroll Partners (*'What you don't get you don't miss'* and it soon mounts up – it's so easy), or by having your benefits paid direct into your account with us. You can also make debit card payments online via our website and you can also opt to purchase a Paypoint card, so you can pay additional funds in cash via local shops, post offices etc. Please note we DO NOT accept cash payments at the office or pay funds out in cash. *If you'd like us to approach your employer re Payroll Deduction, let us know!*

Dividends/Interest on Savings

As a credit union, we don't have a single owner or shareholders. Instead, we are owned by our members. This means if and when the credit union makes a profit/surplus, it may collectively, via an Annual General Meeting, and based on a proposal by the Board of Directors, decide to pay all or some of that profit back to members as a 'thank you' for saving with the credit union. This is called a dividend. We may also offer interest bearing Cash ISAs from time to time.

Free Insurance

Our members' savings (excluding ISA's) and loans are insured at no cost to them, so in the event of your death, your loan is repaid and an extra 50% on top of your savings balance is paid out. *Terms & Conditions do apply so please check.*

Other

- Mobile App – balances, instant withdrawals, loan applications
- Debit Card & Paypoint Card upon request (charges apply)
- Members' Only Monthly Lottery

Don't Delay – Join Today! Scan the QR Code ➔

JOIN PARTNERS

☎ or call our friendly team on 0151 258 1014

✉ or email us: enquiries@partnerscreditunion.co.uk

💻 Or visit our website: www.partnerscreditunion.co.uk

We are open Mon-Fri from 9.15 am – 4.15 pm (calls & emails)
Office is open Mondays and Fridays only for face to face visits, by appointment only

Partners Credit Union is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. Firm reference number: 213715

ife on the road with a Co-Pilot: Oxford study looks at drivers and their dogs

Ever spotted a dog peering out of a lorry cab window on the motorway?

Researchers at the University of Oxford have, and they've been digging into a part of this industry that hardly ever gets talked about: drivers who take their companion animals to work.

The research began with a survey of 101 UK lorry drivers. Of those, 58 said have taken a pet along with them on the road – almost always a dog – while a further 42 said they'd like to but currently can't.

Why do drivers do it?

For a lot of them, it comes down to practicality – proper pet care while you're away can be hard to arrange, or simply too expensive.

One driver explained how the care for his companion shapes his whole working pattern: **"***If pets were allowed to come with us, I would change from day driver to tramper. I'm only a day driver because of my dog.***"**

Another wrote about what having a dog on board means for coping with the loneliness of the job: **"***I suffer with anxiety and find myself very lonely at times in this job, having my dog with me is the best company I could imagine. I wish I'd done it sooner.***"**

Another driver, speaking about his elderly Yorkshire Terrier who now comes to work with him every day, put it plainly: *"I'd be lost without him. I wouldn't be here without him***."**

And it's not just companionship. Drivers said their dogs get them out of the cab for proper breaks and walks and more than a few said their dog's presence is enough to see off anyone loitering too close to the truck. But taking a dog along isn't straightforward. It depends on the type of work, the vehicle, the route, and whether an employer is willing to agree to it – and that agreement can be fragile, subject to change at a manager's discretion.

The research is now a PhD project, and it needs your help.

The next stage is in-depth interviews. The researchers want to hear from drivers who take pets along, but also those who have a pet but can't or don't take them on the road, whatever the reason: the job, the vehicle, employer policy, anything at all.

Your experience is very valuable to this research. The aim isn't just to understand how drivers live and work alongside companion animals – it's to help build a better case for the systems and support that could make this demanding job more liveable.

Got a pet, or know a fellow driver who does? Get in touch with Neha Arora at neha.arora@conted.ox.ac or WhatsApp on 07459 533917.

All conversations are confidential, and names are changed in any published work. It's a chance to have your say on an issue that rarely gets discussed but affects a fair number of people in this industry.

This research is based at the University of Oxford's Department for Continuing Education and is supervised by Dr Debbie Hopkins.

It builds on the paper "*Truck Dogs: Advancing a Mobile Geography of Multispecies Relations of Care*," published in Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers.



Eight simple measures the Government could introduce in advance of the full implementation of New Deal for Working People

The IER and the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom propose eight measures that Burnham's Government could introduce

Author: Tony Burke - IER
Published: 18 August 2026
https://www.ier.org.uk/news/eight-simple-measures-the-govt-could-introduce-in-advance-of-the-full-implementation-of-new-deal-for-working-people/

The Campaign for Trade Union Freedom (CTUF) and the Institute of Employment Rights, along with many of our affiliated unions, are supporting the call for a Second Bill on employment rights to ensure that all the original Labour Party proposals in A New Deal for Working People are brought into effect.

As Labour Unions (TULO) said in May 2026, the government must “deliver the rebalancing of power in the workplace promised in A New Deal for Working People, in full, without any carve outs or loopholes”.

CTUF/IER proposes eight simple measures which Burnham’s Government could introduce in advance of full implementation of the New Deal. With one exception (tribunal reform), they would cost nothing while demonstrating to workers and trade unions that the Government is on their side.

Quite apart from a Second Bill for full implementation of the New Deal, the government needs urgently to establish a Ministry of Labour so that workers can be heard directly at the heart of government.

There was of course previously a Ministry of Labour in this country, which was renamed the Department of Employment, headed by a Cabinet minister. But it was abolished by the Tories in the 1990s, never to be restored by Labour governments since.

The lack of political representation at the highest level is a good indication of the low priority now attached to workers and their trade unions. It is not acceptable that workers' rights should be the responsibility of a junior minister in the Department for Business and Trade.

If employers merit their own department and political representation at the highest level, so too do Britain's 34 million workers.

This could be done now: it does not need primary legislation.

You can read the eight measures on the folowing pages.

Andy Burnham and the Employment Rights #2 Bill



01 Sectoral Collective Bargaining

The first priorities of a Labour Government must be to attack the cost of living crisis by increasing wages. This has many benefits: promoting growth by increasing demand in the economy, reducing government expenditure on subsidising low wages, increasing tax-take, reducing inequality and so on. This can only be done by reintroducing extensive collective bargaining.

The widespread restoration of collective bargaining is advocated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other global institutions. The EU requires all Member States to have an action plan to achieve at least an 80% collective bargaining coverage rate to set minimum pay, terms and conditions.

In contrast, before the 1980s over 80% of the UK workforce was covered by a collective agreement but this has been slashed to around 25% today. The Government should support restoration of at least 80% coverage to prevent UK workers falling even further behind Europe.

As the New Deal promised, legislation should give the Secretary of State the task of identifying (in consultation with unions and employers) sectors of the economy that would immediately benefit from a sectoral collective agreement.

Once the sectors are identified, a Joint Industrial Council should be established in the sector in question under statutory powers to set minimum pay, terms and conditions across the sector.

Agriculture, hospitality, and fast-food and parcel delivery are obvious candidates for Joint Industrial Councils.

02 Status of Workers

Different categories of worker in the UK workforce have different employment rights.

So, for example, only ‘employees’ in the legal sense are entitled to claim unfair dismissal and only ‘employees’ and ‘limb (b) workers’ can claim the National Minimum Wage and paid holidays. This incentivises employers to re-categorise their workforce to cut down the number of rights they can claim.

The New Deal promised to abolish these different categories in favour of a single status to include protection for all workers (except only the genuinely self-employed in business on their own account with their own clients and customers).

Although this change is widely accepted, the Government has put out for consultation on the form of the necessary legislation. The Secretary of State should begin that consultation immediately and the legislation should form the backbone of a second Employment Rights Bill.

The consultation process must make clear in advance that the purpose is to ensure the maximum coverage of labour legislation: labour law protection should be universal and comprehensive. Apart from the genuine self-employed, (working on their own account), anyone who works for another should be protected.

There should be no exclusion from protection for the vulnerable and the exploited.

03 Zero Hour Contracts

In the light of the New Deal commitment, workers and unions are expecting an end to exploitative zero hours contracts (ZHC).

It is time for the new Government to revisit the 2025 Act on ZHC - which is so complex that it occupies 34 pages of the legislation, leading many to fear that the most exploited zero hours workers may not benefit from it.

To do otherwise will leave 1.2 million workers in the UK on ZHCs (and their families) bitterly disappointed that a Labour Government has failed on a clear commitment.

04 Trade Union Right of Access

The New Deal promised a trade union right of access to workers on employer premises or electronically.

The 2025 Act only gives unions the right to seek the agreement of the employer to such access.

Thereafter the union can apply to the Central Arbitration Committee (CAC) for an Access Order and if the employer refuses to comply, the union can apply again to the CAC.

Ultimately the union can ask the CAC to impose a fine on the employer which is paid to the CAC - not the union.

The process is cumbersome, legalistic, and invites delaying litigation by un-cooperative employers.

The Act must be amended to give unions a right of access without the need for an access agreement.

And unions should have the right to apply to the High Court for an injunction to prevent an employer interfering with its right of access.

05 Trade Union Recognition Procedure

The current statutory recognition procedure introduced by the Blair government has become

virtually unusable. The small number of applications to the CAC is extraordinary given the declining levels of collective bargaining coverage. The ineffectiveness of the legislation presumably explains why it was retained by the Tory administrations.

The procedure needs to be radically reformed. Although changes have been made by the 2025 Act, these are not enough to deal with the constipated, complex and drawn-out procedure - or the problem of employer hostility present, for instance, at Amazon in Coventry in 2024 where a recognition application by the GMB was defeated.

To begin with, all state agencies, including ACAS and the CAC should have an overriding duty to promote collective bargaining. Thereafter, a union should be able to secure recognition by showing evidence of majority support (as in Australia). There is no need for a ballot in these cases.

In addition, it should be unlawful for an employer to take steps to encourage workers to resign from their union; to foster a hostile anti-union environment (including by using 'labour consultants'), particularly when a union is promoting an organising campaign.

Where an employer violates these and related prohibitions currently in the legislation, the employer should be liable to injunctions and financial penalties. These penalties for the protection of workers should be commensurate with the penalties imposed by bodies like Ofgem for the violation of legislation designed to protect consumers.

06 The Right to Strike

The International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled in May 2026 that the right to strike is protected by the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) Convention No 87. As the New Deal set out, the UK's laws on industrial action should comply with the Treaties that the UK has voluntarily ratified.

These obligations include the right of prison officers in England and Wales to take industrial action. The UK Government should immediately lift the ban on prison officers in England and Wales being allowed to take industrial action (as their colleagues in Scotland have long been permitted to do).

They also include the right to take solidarity action in support of other workers in dispute. The right to take solidarity action was removed by the Thatcher Government in 1990, a step that has been criticised by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on a regular basis ever since. Legislation is needed to repeal these restraints and to restore trade union freedom.

07 Fire and Rehire

Workers and Unions also expected that there would be an end to fire and rehire, as promised in the New Deal.

But the 2025 Act does not prevent it - and the P&O Ferries situation, where 800 seafarers were sacked to enable contract labour to replace them at less than half the pay rate and on far worse conditions, will still be possible, though it will cost the employer a bit more.

Where fire and rehire is used by employers without going through the necessary consultation the law ought to allow a trade union to seek an immediate injunction to halt the process until the legal requirements have been met or an agreement is reached.

08 Tribunal Reform

Finally, attention needs to be devoted to the creaking employment tribunal system. There is no point introducing new rights if the enforcement system is unable to cope with what will inevitably be an increase in the number of complaints.

Serious failings in the enforcement of workers' rights have been identified by several organisations, including the BBC, the Bureau of Investigative Journalism and the Work Rights Centre.

Research by these bodies paints a bleak picture of justice delayed by virtue of long waits (often five years) before cases are heard, and justice denied when, in many cases, compensation awards are never paid.

As a result, employers are laughing at the 'justice' system, which many appear to ignore with impunity.

Tribunals need greater investment especially in terms of judges and admin staff, the power to impose more effective remedies, and the jurisdiction to enforce their own Orders. Directors, owners and managers should become personally liable in the event of corporate default.

Workers need legal aid if they are to be able to navigate a very complex area of law against employers armed with HR managers and lawyers.

At the same time, a proactive justice system demands a comprehensive labour inspectorate with powers to prevent employers from breaking the law and to require them to take steps to redress any breaches. That will require a properly resourced ACAS and a revamped Fair Work Agency but also a very different mindset.

The best and worst Truckstops

Here are some of the best and worst-ranked Truckstops in the UK. These are rated for their access, facilities, security, and services.

Best Truckstops

1. **AWJ Penrith Truckstop**
   Located just off Junction 40 of the A66. AWJ Penrith Truckstop offers an extensive array of facilities for use by all guests, offering everything you need all in one place. These include:•Restaurant serving excellent food•Bar•Free to use Internet Enabled PCs•Comprehensively stocked shop•Cash machine•Clean & spacious showers•Fully automated refueling forecourt•Secure Parking with 24hr patrols.

2. **Onroute Truckstops - Avon Lodge**
   People say this truck stop offers good food, including hearty breakfasts and homemade meals, along with clean and well-maintained shower and toilet facilities. They also highlight the friendly and helpful staff, secure parking, and excellent value for money.

3. **Tebay Services**

   Located in Perinth, off Junction 38, on the M6. It's a family-owned truck stop with amazing facilities for truck drivers and the general public. With 24-hour CCTV and a patrolling warden, you can safely park heavy goods vehicles in this compound. Truck drivers also enjoy waste disposal and electric charging services at the truck stop. The kitchen here serves fresh, homemade food; other facilities include fuelling stations and showers.

4. **Ashford Truck Stop**
   Off Junction 10 on the M20, Ashford Truck Stop has impressive security, including motion sensors, CCTV cameras, barbed wire fences, and security patrolling the area. Drivers can access over 389 parking spaces, but they need to book online. On-site accommodation can be included in the parking fee, and drivers also have access to a laundrette and shower facilities. The restaurants serve various delicacies, and the convenience shop is available for 24-hour shopping.

5. **Formula Services**
   In Ellesmere Port, off the M53 is the best example of a modern truck stop with the best facilities. The parking facility provides parking spaces for 110 vehicles. The 24-hour manned patrol and camera make the place secure. Getting an overnight parking ticket gives drivers full access to the site's facilities. Drivers can find all the necessities, from showers and toilets to truck wash and fuel stations. They can also find leisure facilities, like game rooms, free massage chairs, and a fitness suite. Trucks with mechanical problems can be serviced at the facility before drivers leave.





Worst Truckstops

1. Leeming Bar Services
   (A1-M, Nottinghamshire): Ranked the worst in a 2025 survey by Breakwells Transport due to poor HGV parking and high prices.

2. Bridgewater Motor Services
   (M5, Somerset): Frequently criticised for being cramped and dirty, with poor, low-quality toilet facilities.

3. Hartshead Moor East (M62):
   Previously identified as one of the lowest-ranked stations for overall satisfaction by Transport Focus.

4. Barton Park & Markham Vale:
   Named among the bottom three in recent HGV industry rankings.

5. Hilton Park (M6):
   Often cited for poor, outdated amenities and poor shower conditions.

Taken from google search.

Have your say:

Send in your reviews to:

info@urtu.com

Titled with the name and location of the Truckstop.

Review the rest stop against the following categories, giving a score out of 10 for each category.

- Location
- Accessibility
- Size (number of spaces)
- Wash and toilet facilitates
- Types of food and drinks available (fresh or fast food)
- Safety & Security
- Friendliness
- Costs for parking and what is included

URTU Secures £43,886 Tribunal Award

URTU member Paul Hildreth has been awarded £43,886 in compensation following a successful Employment Tribunal claim against his former employer, highlighting the importance of seeking union advice when problems arise at work.

Paul initially contacted his URTU representative, Peter McKevitt, after receiving a formal written warning from his employer. The warning had been issued without the company following a disciplinary process and, importantly, without giving Paul the opportunity to appeal the decision.

After reviewing the circumstances, Peter advised Paul that his employer should have followed a fair disciplinary procedure in accordance with the ACAS Code of Practice.

Although Paul was considering leaving his employment, Peter advised him not to simply walk away. Instead, with the Union's support, Paul submitted a formal grievance challenging the written warning and requesting that it be withdrawn. His employer was also informed that Peter would represent Paul throughout the grievance process.

Employer Rejects Grievance

Rather than addressing Paul's concerns, the company rejected his grievance, claiming that it was not valid. It also incorrectly stated that, because the company did not recognise a trade union, Paul was not entitled to union representation.

As the relationship between Paul and his employer continued to deteriorate, Peter supported him in preparing a carefully worded resignation letter.

The letter made clear that Paul considered his employer's actions to have fundamentally breached the relationship of trust and confidence between employer and employee, leaving him with no reasonable option other than to resign and pursue a claim for constructive unfair dismissal.

Despite being given an opportunity to address Paul's concerns and resolve the situation, the employer failed to do so.

Peter subsequently referred Paul to the Union's solicitors, who pursued the matter through the Employment Tribunal on his behalf.

Tribunal Finds in Paul's Favour

Following a full hearing, the Employment Tribunal found in Paul's favour on multiple claims.

The Tribunal ruled that his former employer had committed a number of unlawful acts, including:

- Constructive unfair dismissal
- Breach of contract
- Discrimination because of Paul's trade union membership
- Disability discrimination through a failure to make reasonable adjustments

As a result, Paul was awarded a total of £43,886.91 in compensation.

"They Were Finally Held to Account"

Reflecting on the outcome of the case and the support he received from URTU, Paul said:

"Without the backing of the Union and the real-time advice from my full-time representative, Peter McKevitt, I would've fallen foul of what turned out to be a very unscrupulous employer.

Although the case took two years to reach an Employment Tribunal, it was extremely satisfying to sit in a hearing with the very people who had effectively tried to bully me out of my job and see them finally being held to account for their actions."

The Importance of Seeking Advice Early

Paul's case demonstrates the value of contacting your Union before taking action when difficulties arise at work.

What began with an improperly issued written warning ultimately resulted in a successful Employment Tribunal claim. By seeking advice at an early stage, Paul was able to challenge his employer's actions through the appropriate procedures, protect his position and ensure that the circumstances surrounding his resignation were properly documented.

The case also provides an important reminder that an employer does not necessarily have to formally recognise a trade union for a worker to benefit from the advice, support and representation of their union.

If you are experiencing disciplinary action, a grievance, discrimination or another workplace problem, contact URTU for advice as early as possible. Getting the right advice before responding or making a decision could make a significant difference.



Get the degree without the debt

Author: Jonathan Routledge
Date: August 2026
Jonathan@ilkagency.com

GXO Degree Apprentice explains how he's got the best of both worlds

With the current GCSE results, many school leavers and college students across the country will be faced with the often daunting decision of what to do next.

Data shows that a big portion of 18-year-olds (36%)[1] choose to go to university after college. An overwhelming majority of students enjoy this experience, with 87% reporting to be happy with their degree[2]. However, due to inflated tuition fees and rising cost of living, most are leaving further education with debts of £50,000 or higher.

Matthew Francis chose a slightly different route, taking on a Degree Apprenticeship with GXO, a sponsor of the awareness campaign, Generation Logistics.

"*The main reason I chose this degree apprenticeship rather than going to university is that you gain hands-on experience in a real job alongside studying. This means by the time you have finished, you have years of experience and a qualification, and are ahead on the career ladder," Matthew explains. "Furthermore, you are also getting a good salary with the degree apprenticeship, as well as a better understanding of how fast-paced and dynamic the industry is.*"

"For the last three and a half years, I have been studying a supply chain management degree apprenticeship. For the past few months, I have been undertaking a new role which is becoming a bonded administrator on a premium cyclewear contract, Rapha."

In terms of how he's developed over that time, Matthew said the degree has helped him become more confident: "The main skill that I have developed has been my confidence. This is because with a degree apprenticeship, you are required to do presentations, which has allowed me to improve my public speaking skills."

For people considering a career in logistics, Matthew advises, "Be prepared for a fast-paced and constantly changing environment, where no two days are the same. It's important to develop strong communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills, as these are essential to keep operations running smoothly. I would also recommend being open to learning and taking every opportunity to gain experience, as logistics offers strong and rapid career progression and a variety of pathways depending on your interests if you are willing to learn." Bethany Windsor, Programme Director at Generation Logistics, comments: "Matthew's story is a reminder to all young people that traditional university degrees are not the only route to success.

“A degree apprenticeship means you’ll graduate with no debt, experience both working and student lifestyles simultaneously, and have a full-time job once you are qualified. It can provide the perfect balance for those not quite ready for full-time employment, but don’t want to do a traditional university degree.

“The logistics sector is packed with these types of opportunities, with many of the major players offering degree apprenticeships across a wide range of roles. For any young people still deciding what to do after school or college, the logistics sector could offer them a long-term, progressive career path via a degree apprenticeship.”

For those wanting to find out about the
opportunities in logistics, take this quiz to see which role could fit with your future:
www.generationlogistics.org/find-your-future/

For more information, please contact Jonathan on Jonathan@ilkagency.com or visit www.generationlogistics.org

Sources

1. https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-7857/
2. https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/latest/insights-and-analysis/higher-education-numbers



Union Sickness Benefit

The Union offers a Sickness Benefit to members who are on the 'A+BF' and 'A' scales. Below is a brief overview of the benefit and how to claim.

- A member has to be fully paid up for a minimum of 26 weeks to be able to claim the benefit.
- The Union requires copies of sick notes for the entirety of the sickness period.
- A member can only make and receive sickness benefit once within a 12 month period. Once a sickness period has ended, the member has to pay Union contributions for 49 weeks before a new sickness claim can be submitted.
- There is an initial three week 'waiting period' at the start of a sick claim. Your Union does require sick notes to cover this period.
- The Sickness Benefit entitles the claimant to £15 per week, for a maximum of 12 weeks.
- Sick notes also cover a member's contributions. After the full £180 Sickness Benefit has been paid out, if a member is still off sick they need to continue to send in copies of their sick notes. This is to ensure that they do not pay contributions whilst absent from work through sickness.
- A refund of contributions cannot be backdated. Refunds of contributions start from when the first sick note is received into the Union's Head Office, but will be reimbursed from receipt of the second sick note.
- To receive a refund of contributions a member has to have paid contributions 'up to' date.
- Sick notes can be sent through the membership area of the Union's Website or by e-mailing the Union's Head Office.
- Members are responsible for sending or ensuring that their own sick notes are forwarded to our Union's Head Office.



IF YOUR BRANCH REQUIRES, WE CAN ALSO CREATE BESPOKE POSTERS

Contact the Union Head Office on:

admin@urtu.com

OR FREEPHONE

0800 526 639



ORDER YOUR FREE POSTERS FOR YOUR WORKPLACE



Sleep Awareness at Biffa Cardiff

As part of their annual Health & Safety Week, Biffa Waste in Cardiff hosted a series of events, including a Sleep Awareness session delivered by URTU Learning to help employees understand the vital role of quality sleep for wellbeing, safety, and workplace performance. The session combined a Sleep Awareness Quiz with practical guidance from Liggy Webb's Sleep Well booklets.

Liggy Webb is a wellbeing and personal development expert, known for her work in emotional resilience, stress management, and life skills training. She has written multiple practical guides and booklets aimed at helping people improve their mental health, relationships, and overall wellbeing, often in a workplace context.

In waste management, employees face demanding shifts, early starts, and long hours, making consistent sleep difficult. Drivers and collection crews are particularly at risk of fatigue, which can impact both personal safety and workplace performance.

As part of the Health and Safety week, URTU Learning facilitated a quiz session, prompting employees to reflect on sleep habits and common misconceptions. The quiz acted as a fun icebreaker and highlighted how sleep directly affects alertness and safety.

Staff were given copies of Liggy Webb's Sleep Well booklets, offering practical advice on:

- Understanding sleep cycles
- Establishing healthy sleep routines
- Managing stress and relaxing before bed
- Reducing screen time and distractions

Sleep is essential for both personal health and workplace safety. The session by URTU Learning reminded staff that even small steps — like maintaining a regular sleep schedule, creating a calm sleep environment, and managing stress — can have a big impact on alertness, wellbeing, and safety.

To find out more about ways to improve your sleep, please click HERE.



Wales Union Learning Fund

IOSH Health and Safety Training



Get Certified in Health & Safety with an IOSH-Approved Training Course

distance learning

What you will learn:

- 🦺 Your responsibilities for workplace health and safety
- ⚠️ Risk assessment — identifying hazards and deciding how to control them
- 🔍 Risk control and preventing accidents
- 📊 Measuring safety performance
- 📝 Investigating incidents and accidents
- 👥 Understanding the role of managers in creating a safer workplace

Get In Touch

0790 331 9995

www.urtuulr.com

Basic Shop Steward

The course has been designed to enable our Shop Stewards to develop and improve their skills and knowledge. The course identifies ways in which improvements can be implemented to make the Union more effective at a local level.

Course aims:

- Ensure you understand your role within the Union and your responsibilities toward the members.
- Learn essential skills to assist you in representation at disciplinary and grievance meetings.
- Develop your communication skills.
- Give you a clearer understanding of relevant legislation.
- Consolidate your negotiating skills.
- Give you an understanding of the importance of recruitment and retention.
- Develop your recruitment skills.
- Increase your confidence as a Shop Steward.

Advanced Shop Steward

The course has been designed for our Shop Stewards who have previously attended the Basic Shop Steward course.

Course aims:

- Develop your knowledge of Disciplinary and Grievance procedures.
- Develop your knowledge of Collective Consultation and TUPE.
- Improve your negotiating skills.
- Develop your understanding of the UK legal system.
- Gain an understanding of current Employment Law.
- Develop your understanding of the Working Time Regulations.

To find out the latest course dates and to book your place, visit www.urtu.com login and visit the union courses page.

Training

Basic Health & Safety

The course has been designed to equip our Health & Safety Representatives with the knowledge of the role and the trade union approach to Health and Safety.

Course aims:

- Ensure you can handle Health & Safety issues and develop an appropriate response to both members and management.
- Demonstrate your understanding of the updated SRSc Regulations.
- Ensure you know how to conduct effective workplace inspections, including all accidents and near misses.
- Develop your skills to identify, obtain, order, and summarise relevant Health & Safety information.

Advanced Health & Safety

The course has been designed for our Health & Safety Representatives who have previously attended the Basic Health & Safety course.

Course aims:

- Ensure you enhance your Health & Safety skills.
- Demonstrate your knowledge to enable you to function in a professional and confident manner within the confines of Health & Safety legislation.
- Develop your understanding of current European Health & Safety legislation.
- Develop your understanding of the constituent parts of the major pieces of this legislation.
- Develop your understanding of the Union's approach to Health & Safety legislation.

courses

Course Dates

Union Representatives play a vital role within the Union, helping members within their branches, and recruiting. To support them your Union hosts a number of courses throughout the year. These courses are designed to give the Representative the skills they need to undertake their role and are specifically tailored to the Logistics sector.

Below is a list of upcoming course dates. These are held at the Quorn Grange Hotel and are a Monday to Thursday residential course.

To book your place on one of these courses, please contact your Union's Head Office on 0161 486 2100 or freephone 0800 526 639. You can also e-mail them at admin@urtu.com

18 - 21 January 2027 - Advanced Health & Safety

1 - 4 February 2027 - Basic Shop Steward

22 - 25 February 2027 - Advanced Shop Steward

20 - 23 September 2027 - Basic Shop Steward

18 - 21 October 2027 - Advanced Shop Steward

22 - 25 November 2027 - Basic Health & Safety

31 Janaury - 3 February 2028 - Advanced Shop Steward

21 - 24 February 2028 - Advanced Health & Safety

We are here to support you.

We are here to help, advise and support with any issues, problems or concerns you may have with your employment.

Your membership.

Your employer does not need to know if you are in a union.

If you move jobs you can take your membership with you.

We are not politically affiliated.

United Road Transport Union is not affiliated to any political party.

Pay Terms and Conditions.

If we don't negotiate on your behalf for better working conditions, who will?

Value for Money.

- Legal Support
- Hardship grants
- Personal Injury
- Peace of Mind & More

All for the price of a cup of coffee!

Benefits.

We have a wide range of benefits available to you, many of which can extend to your family and friends.

UR

UNITED ROAD TRANSPORT UNION TU

STRONGER TOGETHER

UNITED ROAD TRANSPORT UNION

THE ONLY SPECIALIST LOGISTICS UNION IN THE UK

PROTECT YOUR RIGHTS | FAIR PAY FAIR TREATMENT | STRONGER TOGETHER | SUPPORT WHEN YOU NEED IT | REPRESENTATION THAT COUNTS



Join Today

Be part of something bigger

SCAN ME

ONE UNION, ONE VOICE, STANDING TOGETHER SINCE 1890, WWW.URTU.COM