

# **Briefing: Trade Union Bill week of action**

*8-14 February 2016 – heartunions*

From 8–14 February, the TUC will run a special week of action against the Trade Union Bill throughout England and Wales. It will showcase the amazing work unions do and tell the stories of ordinary members and reps. We want to get members involved in the campaign against the Trade Union Bill, tell positive union stories to the wider public and recruit new members to the union movement.

### **Why is a February week of action important?**

This government is determined to shift the balance of power in the workplace in favour of employers and get the Trade Union Bill through Parliament with as little scrutiny as possible. We must not let them get away with it.

It is essential that we keep up the pressure as the Bill enters its critical House of Lords stage. The House of Lords committee and report stages (likely to occur early in 2016) are the best chance to secure changes to the Trade Union Bill. So we need to keep the bill in the public eye and to remind people why unions are so important.

### **What is the theme of the week of action?**

The week will showcase the vital work unions do in the workplace and society, raise the issues in the Trade Union Bill and give us all the opportunity to ask friends and family to join us by joining a union. The week will be branded heartunions – a surprising and modern sentiment for trade unions and an appropriate one in the run-up to Valentine’s Day.

### **What are we going to do?**

It’s up to you how you, your branch or workplace and your union engage with the week of action. It’s your campaign – and

you know best how to run something that will engage your members and get local people in your area involved in and enthused.

There will be two big days during the week of action:

- On Tuesday 9 February at lunchtime, we’ll be running ‘The Big Workplace Meeting’. The TUC general secretary Frances O’Grady and some very special guests will be broadcasting a short Q&A live into workplace meetings around the country. It’s your chance to join thousands of other trade union members in hearing more about the Trade Union Bill and our plans to campaign against it together.
- On Thursday 11 February, we’ll be asking every trade union member to do something to make trade unions visible and proud in your community. Maybe your branch will run a street stall or leaflet a train station before work? Maybe you’ll share the reasons you joined a trade union on social media? Maybe your workplace will do a rally or lunchtime walkout? Whatever you do, make sure you ask at least one other person to join a union – because together, we are stronger.

And don’t forget, you’ve got all week – so if you’d like to do more to raise the profile of unions, fight against the Trade Union Bill or ask people to join a union, it’s up to you. All week, we want you to tell stories of the great work done by unions and reps where

you live and work. We want to know why you heartunions.

## Resources

We have created a logo for you to use however you see fit – feel free to put it on your material and modify the colours so they work for you. The branding guidelines and online resources will be available at [www.heartunions.org](http://www.heartunions.org)

TUC regional offices will have campaign materials for local and regional events including branded enamel badges and pens, heart-shaped, red postboxes and accompanying postcards, pull-up stands and tablecloths and campaign props for photographs.

We're also planning to produce additional materials promoting the union advantage, asking people to join a union and highlighting the events we have planned.

## How can I get involved?

It's critical that we get planning and organising now. Here are five ideas for how you can get involved in heartunions week

### 1. Tell your story and be a heartunions star

We are looking for case studies that can tell the story of the role grassroots lay reps play in private and public sector workplaces across the country. If you want to highlight the great work done by unions and reps where you work and live, please get in touch with Kathleen Christie at [kchristie@tuc.org.uk](mailto:kchristie@tuc.org.uk).

### 2. Get ready for The Big Workplace Meeting

We'd love you to join Frances O'Grady and her very special guests for 'The Big Workplace Meeting' – coming to a computer, tablet or smartphone near you!

This event will take place at 12.45pm on Tuesday 9 February – so it's time to make sure your branch or workplace meeting is in the diary. You probably want to start the meeting at 12.30pm (to allow for any unforeseen circumstances) to give members a chance to get ready to tune into Frances' presentation, which can be found by going to [www.heartunions.org](http://www.heartunions.org). The event will last for 15 minutes, during which Frances will give an update about the Trade Union Bill and take questions from union members. If you can, think about whether you have or can borrow a laptop and projector to show the 15-minute live broadcast, otherwise if members have tablets or large smartphones they can bring these in. And don't worry: if your branch isn't meeting you can join us solo from your smartphone, tablet or PC, or catch up on the broadcast on YouTube later. To register your participation please email Michelle Gregory at [mgregory@tuc.org.uk](mailto:mgregory@tuc.org.uk) or complete the form online.

All the information you'll need – including downloadable posters and recruitment flyers will be available at [www.heartunions.org](http://www.heartunions.org) in early January 2016.

### 3. Make your plans for Thursday 11 February – heartunions high visibility day of action

Talk to friends and colleagues in your branch, workplace or trades council about what you want to do for the heartunionscommunity day of action – and start making your plans!

If you want to make sure that local people or other workers in your workplace know about the great work done by unions and reps where you work and live, why not put up some posters or organise an event, leafleting session or street stall in your branch or local area?

There will be a poster to download with space for your local details. Or you could run a rally or lunchtime walkout – you'll know best what works in your local area or workplace. Maybe your members would like to tell their stories on social media? Look out for lots of ways to be involved in heartunions.

#### **4. Spread the word online**

Many people don't know about the great work done by union reps in workplaces and the community, so it's important to tell them your stories – and remind people why unions are so important, as the Trade Union Bill enters its critical House of Lords stage.

So think about what you can tell the world on social media about why you are

a union member and what your union reps have done for you. It's also worth talking to friends and colleagues online about why you are concerned about the Trade Union Bill. Use the hashtag #heartunions so you can connect with everyone else talking about the campaign. Now's the time to start planning what you'll put on social media well in advance and get ready to post them throughout the week of action.

#### **5. Stay in touch**

Our latest online actions will always be up on [www.heartunions.org](http://www.heartunions.org) and you can read the latest from the campaign here too. We're looking forward to hearing about your plans.

## Dates for your diary

Date	What's planned	Resources
Monday 8 February	Start of the <i>heartunions</i> week of action  Get sharing on social media, get posters up in your community and workplace, tell your local media, share the petition against the Trade Union Bill	Downloadable local media release, posters
Tuesday 9 February	'The Big Workplace Meeting'  Make sure you've moved your union branch meeting to this day and borrowed a laptop and projector, ready to tune in at 12.45pm. Or catch-up on YouTube later	Downloadable posters and flyers
Wednesday 10 February	Keep sharing your stories on social media – and watch out for grassroots workers and union members taking a petition to 10 Downing Street	Pictures and video to share on social media
Thursday 11 February	<i>heartunions</i> high visibility day of community action  Run a street stall, go leafleting at a train station, do a lunchtime walkout or a rally in your town centre. Whatever you do, be proud of our unions – and make sure you ask a non-member to join a union	Downloadable flyers with information about how to join a union – and why everyone should
Friday 12 February	Keep sharing your stories on social media – and make sure that everyone you know knows that you are a union member – and why they should be too	More pictures and video to share on social media
Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 February	Time for a rest – or maybe a chance to schedule regional or local events to tell more people why you <i>heartunions</i>	

## Find out more

For more information about the campaign, go to:

**[heartunions.org](http://heartunions.org)**

Follow the campaign on:

**Twitter [#heartunions](https://twitter.com/heartunions)**

Follow the campaign on Facebook at:

**[facebook.com/heartunions](https://facebook.com/heartunions)**