

Trades councils at national level

There are about 150 trades councils in England and Wales, and about 25 county associations. These are represented nationally by the TUC Joint Consultative Committee (TUCJCC), which has nine elected trades council delegates and meets with members of the TUC General Council six times a year. There are also trades councils in Scotland and Ireland that have links with the TUC and their own national TUCs.

Trades councils conference

This is held annually and consists of delegates from local TCs and CAs. Conference discusses a report from the TUCJCC, motions relevant to the movement, current campaigns and new programme of work ideas via conference workshops. Conference selects a single motion for the TUC annual Congress, and elects a delegate to move that motion.

Is your trade union branch affiliated?

Just as all unions are affiliated to the TUC at regional or national level, all trade union branches should affiliate to, send delegates to and play their full part in their local trades council. For details of local meetings, current campaigns and affiliation fees please contact your local council.

Details below:



Trades Union Councils

Who we are and what we do

Trades union councils promote working-class solidarity in local communities. This leaflet explains how we do this and encourages YOUR union branch to take part.





What is a trades union council?

Trades union councils are local groups of trade unionists. They are elected from trade union branches whose members live and/or work in the area. Trades union councils are often referred to simply as trades councils (TCs). TCs promote effective solidarity in disputes, joint campaigns on issues such as health, education, welfare and transport, and, in general, provide the vital link between the workplace and the wider working-class community. Trade union branches affiliate to their local TC on the basis of a small annual fee per member, which is usually between 10p and 25p. In turn, TCs support, and can themselves affiliate to, local and national union campaigns for social justice.

What do trades councils do?

TCs' activities are guided by an annual programme of work, determined by their annual conference. This can include campaigns to defend the NHS, to promote public education, transport, the welfare state, and to support benefit claimants, women, black, ethnic minority, gay and transgender people, young people and people with disabilities.

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Trades councils and the trade union movement

Trades councils are the local trade union movement! They can be called upon by any trade union branch to show strike or other dispute solidarity, which could be via a picket line, media publicity or a financial appeal. National trade unions can promote their priority issues more effectively when local trades councils assist with publicity, leaflet distribution, recruitment, and speakers at meetings. When trades councils respond to strong feeling in working-class communities, they can report this to the Trades Union Congress (TUC) at regional and national levels.

Trades councils at county and regional levels

Trades councils can combine within one or more local government areas to form a delegate-based county association (CA), which meets to co-ordinate campaign and solidarity work across that wider area. Trades councils can also send delegates to regional TUC meetings and conferences, either

directly or via their CA, and may have seats on the Executive Committee of regional TUCs.

