

Heartunions 2020

A TUC toolkit for trade union activists

10-16 February 2020

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What is heartunions week?

Heartunions week will be taking place from 10 to 16 February 2020. It's a week of activity throughout England and Wales that highlights the good work that unions do every day to offer everyone a voice at work.

Why are we doing heartunions week?

Heartunions week is all about recruiting people. In 2020 we'll roll out new training on how to have organising conversations, as well as materials and advice to support you in getting new members into your union.

It's a chance to tell the story about why unions are vital for everyone at work, and encourage people who aren't yet in a union to join.

Our themes this year

In 2020, the campaigning theme for heartunions is standing against sexual harassment at work. Look out for more details about how you and your workmates can take action on sexual harassment, and use the campaign to encourage non-members to get involved.

#ThisIsNotWorking

The TUC-led alliance against sexual harassment is campaigning for a new law

SEXUAL HARASSMENT HAS NO PLACE IN THE WORKPLACE **#THISISNOTWORKING**

Every day, people across the UK are sexually harassed at work. Our current laws put the onus on individuals to report such incidents but 4 out of 5 don't feel able to tell their employer. #ThisIsNotWorking

The #ThisIsNotWorking alliance, led by the TUC, is calling on employers to take preventative measures against sexual harassment, including adoption of a model workplace policy, staff surveys, and a safe reporting process.

We call on the government to take immediate action. We demand a new, easily enforceable legal duty requiring employers to take all reasonable steps to protect workers from sexual harassment and victimisation.

that means employers need to take steps to prevent sexual harassment at work. **We will email out more details on how you can support this campaign on Wed 29 January.**

Organising & recruiting: our bread and butter

Unions' effectiveness is based on one core truth: that when a group of workers act and speak together, their employer has to listen.

We win when we have strong, organised workplaces. Building those workplaces takes time, training, and more than one pair of hands!

So we've designed new online material, activists guides, and a webinar to help you brush up your skills.

Whether you're a new or experienced organiser, our materials are designed to **help you make the most of #heartunions week as an organising opportunity** with your members and in your workplace!

Showcasing the great work unions do in all workplaces

Heartunions week is a great time to celebrate the work that unions do in different workplaces. Throughout the week, we'll be highlighting your activities, as well as the specific campaign on sexual harassment in the workplace.

Heartunions is also a great opportunity to talk about the Great Jobs Agenda which sets out why everyone at work should:

- get paid fairly
- work in a safe and healthy environment
- get treated decently
- have guaranteed hours
- be represented by unions and have a strong independent voice on what matters at work
- get the chance to progress at work and get on in life.

▣ HOW TO ORGANISE: GET A TRAINING REFRESHER!

Get ready to organise for heartunions week, with our suite of tools and trainings designed for reps and activists.

*On Tuesday 4 February, we're offering a **TU Education webinar on 'how to have an organising conversation'**. It's aimed at experienced reps and people wanting to learn for the first time. You can register for it here:*

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/events/webinar-how-have-organising-conversation-heartunions-2020>

*TUC regions will also be offering **face-to-face organising training workshops**. Contact your regional office to find out if there's one in your area.*

Our Talking Union guide and eNote is a great resource for planning how you talk to colleagues. *It has been updated and is available via the heartunions webpage.*

The pocket guide to organising and campaigning can be a really handy tool to give out to local reps and activists as a reference tool in their campaigning work.

Don't forget you can download all of these and more heartunions resources via our website.

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What you can do to support heartunions week in your area

Take action in your local area

Trades councils are organising stalls and leaflet drops in town centres across England and Wales to support #heartunions, tell people about the sexual harassment campaign, and gain signatures for the petition.

On Monday 10 February, the TUC is hosting a big campaign organising call about the sexual harassment campaign, which will equip activists to bargain with their employers for a new policy on sexual harassment.

All of our resources are downloadable via our heartunions page:
<https://www.tuc.org.uk/heartunions>

Get in touch with your regional TUC office to request resources, to find out more and ask how you can get involved.

Northern cdawson@tuc.org.uk

North West JMckenna@tuc.org.uk

Yorkshire & Humber GLewis@tuc.org.uk

Midlands RJohnston@tuc.org.uk

London, South East & East
LHeselden@tuc.org.uk

South West ILage@tuc.org.uk

Wales JRees@tuc.org.uk

▣ TIPS FOR RUNNING HEARTUNIONS STREET STALLS

We're keen for heartunions to be as visible to the public as possible. To grow the movement, we've got to speak to people who aren't union members.

We'll be asking trades councils and activists to raise awareness of our campaign against sexual harassment, talk to people about the benefits of unions, and encourage people to sign the petition: <https://bit.ly/36p1Twu>

Top tips

- Don't obstruct shops, take up the width of the pavement, or obstruct the walkway.
- Pick a spot with plenty of foot traffic, that allows people to pass by easily.
- Be positive and friendly with the public. Don't argue with people who disagree with you, just thank them for their time and move on.

We strongly urge activists not to protest in stores or to put local store managers, workers or customers under any direct pressure. We want employers to change their policies, not alienate them.

Heartunions - running a brilliant stall

To have the biggest impact with your stall, there are some simple steps to follow.

The goal of our heartunions stalls is to raise awareness of the good work trade unions do, and reach out to people who are not trade union members.

This year, we are promoting our campaign against sexual harassment in the workplace via our petition.

We want to use the petition to build support for a change in the law, to make employers protect their employees better. To do this, we want to have as many conversations as possible.

While handing out flyers helps, the real goal is to engage people on the issue and ask them to add their names to the petition.

You can access the petition here:

<https://bit.ly/36p1Twu>

And you can use your phone/tablet to collect signatures, or use the paper petition template that you can download from the heartunions webpage.

AND remember to check out our guide to taking great photos at your event and post them on social media with the #HeartUnions, or send to cdawson@tuc.org.uk

Heartunions – having conversations on your stall

Our focus is on getting members of the public to sign the petition. Remember to be

▣ SOME TIPS FROM EXPERIENCED CAMPAIGNERS

- Don't obstruct the entrance to the shop, take up the width of the pavement, or obstruct the walkway.
- Pick a spot with plenty of foot traffic, that allows people to pass by easily.
- Once you've greeted and briefed all your attendees, start them off in pairs collecting signatures. Once they're comfortable, they can decide if they'd like to work on their own or continue working together.
- Be positive and friendly with the public. Don't argue with people who disagree with you, just thank them for their time and move on. Your time is valuable and there are lots of people to talk to.
- If approached by security, move on.
- Remember that while major political events are ongoing, the focus of this activity being the positive face of trade unions and building support for our sexual harassment campaign, not to support any party or candidate.

friendly and upbeat. It's our job to get people interested in trade unions, build support for our sexual harassment campaign and give other volunteers a fun experience of campaigning.

Introduce yourself by name and introduce the issue. Start with an open question - let them tell you what they think. This may be the first time they have thought about this issue so give them some time to work it

through for themselves before getting deeper into the discussion.

"Hi, I'm talking to people today about sexual harassment in the workplace. As trade unions we're campaigning for a change in the law to protect workers. Have you heard about it?"

If they support the campaign, **ask them to share why.**

And share a bit about why the campaign is important to you too. Maybe you or someone you know has had a positive experience of trade union representation? It's important to share your experiences – people will hear your passion and will want to support the campaign too.

"Me too! Why do you support it? I personally feel strongly about it because..."

If they don't know/seem unsure, explain [some of our recent statistics].

"Did you know 1 in 2 women are sexually harassed at work but 4 out of 5 don't feel able to tell their employer. We think the focus needs to shift to preventing sexual harassment in the first place. We believe that when workers get together, we have the power to win what we deserve. Would you add your name to support them?"

If they seem to be strongly against unions or the campaign, then they have probably made up their minds. Don't take this personally. Thank them for their time and move on to the next person. It's better to focus your energy on finding people who are likely to support.

□ FAQs

- **Why do workers need to take strike action? [general]**

Strike action is often a last resort. Workers always try to negotiate with their employer. You may have heard of the McStrike at McDonalds? Last year, strike action led to a 10-year record pay rise for workers and more guaranteed hours – it is proven to work. McDonald's workers in America have won billions of dollars of pay rises through strike action – they made \$15 an hour, the standard we all deserve.

- **Why do we care about sexual harassment**

We believe that workers deserve dignity and safety at work.

It should not be down to the individual to prevent and manage their harassment alone.

We believe, just like health and safety measures protect us from risks to our wellbeing, employers need to protect us from harassment, whether it comes from a colleague or from a third party such as a client, customer, or patient.

- **How do I join a union?**

Anybody can join a trade union. You can use this online tool to find a union <https://www.tuc.org.uk/join-union>

Taking great photos at your stall

Why photos are important

Pictures can have a massive impact on how people see a campaign. They are a great way to communicate and get the message out. That is why the best campaigns are backed by the best possible pictures.

If you are running a stall, it's good to think about what photo you can take of the stall, and the people on it. You don't need to have lots of people.

Before the event:

Make sure someone has a camera or smart phone to take photos with [and its charged]

Set the camera to the highest resolution you can.

What to take a photo of:

Good photos help show the strength of our campaign. It's important to think about what is in the image and what "story" it is telling.

You can see examples of photos taken at a previous day of action for workers rights here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/waronwant/albums/72157672250559002>

They can provide you with inspiration. Sometimes one person holding a placard, with a logo in the background is enough to provide a great visually striking image.

Don't be afraid as the photographer, to ask people to move position, or pose how you want them. Its best for the photographer to take control as they can see the image they are taking.

■ HERE ARE SOME TIPS FOR TAKING GREAT PHOTOS:

- Think about what is in the photo - actively look at the image you are taking.
- Take lots of photos and pick the best one.
- Take the picture close up with participants crowding in the picture [One person can be enough for this]
- Include posters, stickers as they can convey the message of the campaign.
- Photos in landscape usually work better on social media - so take mostly landscape photos.
- Try taking it from lots of different angles [from low to high, high to low, from the side etc]
- Try to make sure all subjects are evenly lit - take the photo with the sunlight behind the person taking the photo if possible.

Edit the photo

Lots of smart phones have the ability to edit / adjust the photo after you've taken it. Think about cropping an image so there's no wasted space [or strange person in the background!], and changing the light and colour can help bring out the best of an image.

How to share (WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

Once you've taken a photo. Think about what you want to say when you post it on social media. Its often best to describe what

is happening in the image, and also let us know where it is happening.

E.g. "I joined my union because I believe we all deserve fair pay, safety and dignity at work #heartunions @The_TUC"

Keep your message positive. For example: "Trade unions are taking a stand against sexual harassment, join us #heartunions"

Use the hashtag #heartunions

Include @The_TUC, your local union, your regional TUC twitter account, and/or @MegaphoneUK

Making the most of our organising resources

We've published a range of resources to brush up on your organizing skills for heartunions week.

But trade unionism is all about doing things together! So don't just sit on your own and learn. Why not get some colleagues together and make an event out of it?

Think about who to reach out to: your local union branch? The Trades Council? Maybe there are other activists or campaigners in your area?

Have a chat with them about what kind of event you could run to promote trade unionism in your community.

Here's some sample text for your event invite:

"Do you think everyone deserves fairer wages, the choice of guaranteed hours and union rights at work?"

"Want to learn how to organise winning campaigns in your workplace?"

▣ WHY NOT HOST A WATCH PARTY?

Hosting a watch party is a great way to find friends and colleagues who want to 'talk union' and lead campaigns.

Get some friends or colleagues together to watch back TUC Education's Webinar on 'How to have a good organising conversation.'

Or use our #ThisIsNotWorking sexual harassment resources to run an event at your local university or college, or in your workplace!

Here are some top tips to organising a good watch party

- **Reach out to a local student group.** They'll generally be motivated, and will be able to book free rooms with good tech at the student's union
- **Advertise your event on facebook,** as well as through your local Trades Council, and community organisations.
- **Be clear on the invite** or promo about start and end times, date, and location
- **Make sure to check guests building access** and dietary needs (if you're having food). The best way to do this is to set up an Eventbrite form.

"The place to start is by learning how to have kickass persuasive conversations with your friends and colleagues."

"Join us for this event xxx."

Take action online

You can sign the petition calling for a new law to prevent sexual harassment in the workplace and putting pressure on the government and employers to negotiate with trade unions on this issue: <https://www.megaphone.org.uk/petitions/uk-gov-act-to-prevent-sexual-harassment-at-work>

Once you've signed, make sure you share the petitions on social media with the hashtag #heartunions #ThisIsNotWorking so we can show as much support as possible for these campaigns.

We'll be featuring your activities all week. So if you've got a great photo of an action you've taken part in, a story to tell about how your union helped you, or just want to tell us why everyone should heartunions, make sure you tweet us @The_TUC with the hashtag #heartunions

Take action in your workplace

Heartunions week is a great time to ramp up action in your workplace or branch. Talk to friends and colleagues in your branch, workplace or trades council about what you want to do for #heartunions week – 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. Or you could run a rally or lunchtime talk – you'll know best what works in your local area or workplace. Maybe your members would like to tell their stories on social media? Use our 'pocket guide' to organising and campaigning to help you run your event: <https://bit.ly/2vkZoOX>

▣ 'TALKING UNION' – A BRIEF GUIDE

We talk to colleagues about a range of issues at work. Joining a union can naturally form part of that conversation. Avoid a sales or a pushy approach; it is usually best to speak to colleagues more generally. Some conversation starters could include:

- *How are you finding your role?*
- *What are you enjoying about work?*
- *Are there any concerns that you might have at work?*

Establishing a rapport with colleagues avoids coming across as 'prying' into their work. It could be that your colleague has never heard of a union. You might want to introduce what unions do, the benefits of joining a union, and why you personally joined.

If your colleague does not know much about unions, they may have some concerns. If they respond with any objections, avoid getting into an argument. Respond constructively and stay positive.

The most important skill is to listen so that you can understand their view. In the end, your colleague might decide not to join a union right away, but you have started a conversation with them and you can always follow up with them later.

Find out more

For more information about the campaign, go to:

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/heartunions>

Follow the campaign on:

Twitter @The_TUC and use the hashtag #HeartUnions

For more information about the campaign get in touch with:

Gareth Forrest on glewis@tuc.org.uk