

## **TUC launches report on AI**



The **TUC** launched its new report “worker first” AI strategy on 27 August which called on the UK government to make a step change in its approach to AI to deliver for workers and protect jobs

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/2025-08/buildingaproworkerAIinnovationstrategy.pdf>

The **TUC** says AI technologies can be harnessed to the benefit of all workers and help improve public services – and is calling for an urgent and active policy response, with workers front and centre.

It warns that without a “worker-first plan”, AI could lead to “rampant inequality”, degraded working lives and the discontent that the far right thrives on.

**TUC** Assistant General Secretary Kate Bell said: “AI could have transformative potential – and if developed properly, workers can benefit from the productivity gains this technology may bring. But for this to happen workers must be placed at the heart of AI innovation.

“That means ensuring public money comes with strings attached, and isn’t siphoned away into the pockets of billionaire tech bosses. It means ensuring workers get a share in any productivity gains from new technologies. And it means dedicated training and skills programmes to protect workers in industries that may be disrupted by AI.

“The alternative is bleak. Left unmanaged and in the wrong hands, the AI revolution could entrench rampant inequality as jobs are degraded or displaced, and shareholders get richer.

“We cannot let that happen. Unmanaged disruption is not inevitable or acceptable. It’s time for an urgent and active policy response that makes sure workers are not left behind. AI technologies can help build a better future – we’re setting out a plan that shows how it can be done.”

## **Health workers to strike against ‘second class’ status**

Airedale hospital workers have voted to strike in anger at two-tier workforce structure the **GMB** has announced.

Porters, domestics, catering and security staff will walk out over the fact they get worse terms and conditions than colleagues working at the same hospital. More

than 90 per cent of those who voted said they were ready to take industrial action. They want parity for everyone working across the trust.

The workers have been outsourced to AGH Solutions (AGHS), a wholly owned subsidiary of Airedale NHS Foundation Trust. AGHS uses its subsidiary status to not honour the NHS Agenda for Change terms and conditions, including NHS pensions, sick pay rates, annual leave and Sunday working enhancements.

Strikes are scheduled for 12, 15 and 16 September

Joe Wheatley, **GMB** Organiser, said: "These workers are absolutely vital for Airedale Hospital to operate safely. It's outrageous that they are treated like second class citizens. These workers will walk out with heavy hearts - Airedale and AGHS must now recognise how important they are and give them the same pay, terms and conditions as the rest of the workforce."

Source: <https://www.gmb.org.uk/news/airedale-hospital-workers-vote-to-strike>

### **Strike action at Mining Museum**

The Guardian reports

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2025/aug/23/miners-from-1980s-strikes-return-to-picket-line-at-mining-museum> that staff at the Wakefield museum, many of them former coalminers, have walked out in a dispute over pay, and were joined on Thursday 21 August by former **NUM** leader Arthur Scargill.

Alongside him was Russ Kear, who has worked as a guide at the museum since the UK's last coalmine, Kellingley colliery, in North Yorkshire, closed in 2015. He began working as a miner at the age of 16, at Sharlston colliery, near Wakefield, before moving to Selby coalfield, and later, Kellingley.

He said many of the museum's staff, particularly those who have gone on strike, are former miners.

More than 40 members of the **UNISON** are in dispute with the museum's management over pay. They say the existing offer – of a rise of 5% or 80p an hour, whichever is greater, for all workers – is less than the previous deal proposed by the union and which they believed would be accepted by management. But the museum said it was an “increased offer” on previous pay proposals and “equates to a 6% pay rise for many”.

The strike is due to last until Sunday 14 September, unless an improved offer is put forward by museum managers. The action means underground tours are suspended, but the rest of the museum remains open.

More at: <https://yorks.unison.org.uk/2025/08/19/national-coal-mining-museum-strike-information/>

## **The UK's third-largest steelworks placed under government control**

Nearly 1,500 workers in Rotherham and Sheffield face an uncertain future as Insolvency courts granted a compulsory winding up order sought by creditors owed hundreds of millions of pounds by Speciality Steels UK (SSUK) – part of the Liberty Steel metals empire of controversial tycoon Sanjeev Gupta.

The company will now be placed in the hands of the Official Receiver and special managers from consultancy firm Teneo, which has been appointed to run it on behalf of the liquidator. The government has agreed to cover the ongoing wages and costs of the plant while a buyer is sought.

Liberty Steel said the decision to put the firm into compulsory liquidation was "irrational".

The judge found the company was "hopelessly insolvent" with £600,000 in the bank, a monthly wage bill of £3.7m, supported by a parent group that has 15 entities in insolvency proceedings across nine jurisdictions.

Commenting on the action of the insolvency court the **GMB, Unite and Community** said: "This action by HMRC threatens thousands of jobs and is a devastating blow to our members and their families. Liberty Steel is a strategically important business, crucial to delivering net zero, and under no circumstances can our plants be allowed to close. The trade unions call on GFG and HMRC to get back round the table and hammer out a deal that provides space for the company to refinance. The best route to protect jobs and repay HMRC and other creditors would be to enable the business to continue to trade...."

## **Action continues at Bradford University**

Staff at the University of Bradford struck for three more days in mid-August over budget cuts that will see hundreds of jobs go and multiple courses close, UCU reports.

As part of the planned cuts the university aims to reduce staffing to the level it was in 2019. This which equates to the loss of around 300 full-time equivalent jobs, but well over this figure once part-time roles are included.

Staff struck on 14, 15 and 16 August, following five days of action in July, with pickets at the university's main campus on Great Horton Road on each day.

The action coincided with the release of A-Level results, as well as an Open Day on Saturday 16 August, highlighting the commitment of members to defend both staff working conditions and student learning conditions at the university.

On 25 July, Paul Nowak, general secretary of the TUC made a surprise visit during the earlier week long strike. He pledged support for Bradford and all the other university workers taking action to defend jobs and higher education. Dave Pike the regional TUC and Julie Kelley, UCU regional official, joined him.

### **Bus workers across the country could bring services to a halt**

Around 7,500 bus workers are either striking or balloting to strike across the country, **Unite** has announced. Bus drivers and workers in Birkenhead, Brighton, Bristol, Chorley, London, Greater Manchester, Newcastle, Preston, Rochdale, Stoke and Swindon are currently involved in disputes, primarily involving pay.

Strikes involving 2,000 London United workers in West London, 1,000 First West of England drivers in Bristol and 70 Go South West workers in Swindon have already been announced. Strikes by 450 Cardiff Bus workers and 600 Stagecoach Newcastle workers will also go ahead if offers currently being balloted on are rejected.

Further strikes involving thousands more bus workers are planned at other towns and cities in the coming weeks.

**Unite** general secretary Sharon Graham said: "Bus employers everywhere need to get the message loud and clear: Driver pay simply does not reflect the stresses and strains of the job. Fatigue, a lack of toilets, abuse and even assaults are a daily occurrence. **Unite** will fight tooth and nail for bus workers until wages and conditions improve across the sector."

**Unite** has previously reported that bus drivers face a tsunami of abuse at work, with workers reporting that the number of incidents is increasing year on year.

The union is also campaigning for improvements to rest breaks, toilet facilities and exhausting shift patterns to reduce dangerous and endemic fatigue. Bus drivers are more likely to suffer mental and physical ill health than other professions due to the stressful nature of the job.

**Unite** has had 167 bus disputes since 2023 involving 42,626 workers.

### **Sellafield workers consider new offer**

**Unite** members supplying power to the Sellafield nuclear site have suspended their strike action following a new pay offer.

Almost 40 workers at Fellside Combined Heat and Power facility, the plant supplying steam and power to the Cumbria site, were set to walk out for 24 hours on Tuesday after previously turning down two offers.

**Unite** said the strike had been suspended while members were balloted on the new deal.

Source: <https://www.unitetheunion.org/news-events/news/2025/august/px-limited-strike-suspended-as-workers-are-balloted-on-new-pay-offer>

### **Airbus workers vote for strike action**

More than 3,000 aircraft fitters and engineers at Airbus and members of **Unite**, will take 10 days of strikes after members voted overwhelmingly in favour of industrial action over pay.

Members have delivered a striking 90 per cent vote in favour of taking industrial action.

Strikes will take place for 10 days over a three week period beginning 2 September. The action will disrupt production of wings for Airbus's core commercial and military aircraft programmes, delay deliveries and put pressure on the global supply chain.

### **North East Stagecoach strike called off**

A further strike by Stagecoach North East workers was suspended following an improved pay offer. **Unite**, is currently balloting the workers on the new offer, so strike action scheduled for Thursday 21 August did not take place. If the offer is rejected, indefinite strike action will go ahead from 31 August.

### **Action in support of recognition enters its second year**

**Unite** reports that their members remain strong in face of union-busting activities by employer who refuses to recognise their union for collective bargaining. Striking workers in Sheffield are staying united on the picket line as the one-year anniversary of their strike action approaches.

The workers at refuse company Veolia have been on strike since 19 August 2024 in a fight for recognition. Despite having been the majority of workers at the Lumley Street site, Veolia refused to recognise **Unite** for collective bargaining - dealing with issues like pay, conditions, disciplinary matters and work policies.

An agreement was even reached at Christmas, only for Veolia to go back on the deal at the last minute.

**Unite** general secretary Sharon Graham said: "**Unite** will continue to back our members at Veolia one hundred per cent. The company's approach to workplace relations remains in the gutter. All our members want is for their union to be recognised. That Veolia continues to refuse such a reasonable request speaks

volumes about its approach to its employees. But if Veolia thinks Unite will go quietly, it needs to think again."

### **Security staff at Houses of Parliament to strike**

**PCS** union has announced that security staff at the Houses of Parliament will strike for two 24 hour periods and also implement an overtime ban and work to rule.

Over 300 **PCS** members working in the Parliamentary Security Department of the Palace of Westminster (Houses of Parliament) have announced strike dates after giving the Clerk of the House of Commons two weeks to resolve their dispute.

The key issue is the reduction of annual leave entitlements, but pay has also stagnated since 2019 and the ethnicity pay gap is widening yearly. Management has consistently failed to address members' grievances in a timely and satisfactory manner, and has also been heavy-handed in the use of disciplinary sanctions, including dismissals.

The security officers will walk out from 7am on Wednesday 3 September until 7am Thursday 4 September and from 7am on Wednesday 10 September until 7am Thursday 11 September.

The members will also take action short of a strike, consisting of an overtime ban and a work-to-rule from 1 September until 12 September. More at:

<https://www.pcs.org.uk/news-events/news/security-staff-houses-parliament-strike>

### **Super picket marks mid-way point of MyCSP strike**

The members have taken six weeks of strike action and start the next six weeks today, in their fight for union recognition.

**PCS** members working for MyCSP (the current administrator of the Civil Service Pension Scheme) in Liverpool and Cheadle have been on strike since the beginning of July, in an effort to secure union recognition and to ensure that **PCS** is fully involved in the talks to protect their terms and conditions ahead of the transfer of the Civil Service Pension Scheme (CSPS) contract from MyCSP Ltd to Capita on 1 December.

The initial six weeks' strike was due to end on Friday 15 August but another six weeks have been added as the employer has failed to address the union's requests for recognition and negotiation. Since the dispute began, new members have been joining **PCS** and taking part in strike action and picket-line duty.

### **GMB condemns closures**

The BBC reported that the UK's largest bioethanol plant began closing down operations on Monday 18 August, after the government decided not to offer the

sector a rescue package. Hull-based Vivergo Fuels, owned by Associated British Foods, told the BBC the first redundancies would take effect on the following day.

AB Foods and Ensus, which owns the UK's second large bioethanol plant in Redcar on Teesside, had both previously warned that without government support they would be forced to close, after a deal to allow US ethanol to be imported tariff-free.

The government said it had worked closely with the companies since June, but had decided it was not "in the national interest" to provide them with taxpayer funds.

**GMB** says the closure of Hull and Redcar bioethanol plants shows the impact tariffs are having on UK industry.

Charlotte Brumpton-Childs, **GMB** National Officer, said: "This is the impact of tariffs and trade deals, with working people losing their livelihoods. They're not numbers in a spreadsheet. These are lives put on hold and communities potentially devastated," she said.

"The government was also falling short on building a green energy strategy. A clean energy industrial strategy means nothing if we cannot protect plants long enough to deliver clean energy jobs here in the UK."

Sources: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c24zle12y5yo> and <https://www.gmb.org.uk/news/vivergo-closure-shows-impact-of-tariffs>

### **London Underground workers to take strike action**

**RMT** members on London Underground are to stage a series of strikes in September in an intensifying dispute over pay and conditions.

They will be taking industrial action for seven days from 5 September in a dispute over pay, extreme shift patterns and a reduction in the working week, as well as failing to honour previous agreements made with staff.

In a separate dispute, **RMT** members on London's Docklands Light Railway will also be striking in the week beginning 7 September. London Underground (LU) workers and management have been discussing workers' claims on pay, fatigue management, shift patterns and a reduced working week. But union leaders have claimed management have refused to engage seriously.

**RMT** General Secretary Eddie Dempsey said: "Our members are doing a fantastic job to keep our capital moving and work strenuous shift patterns to make sure Londoners get to their destinations around the clock....**RMT** will continue to engage LU management with a view to seeking a revised offer in order to reach a negotiated settlement."

More at: <https://www.rmt.org.uk/news/rmt-will-launch-rolling-strike-action-over-pay-conditions-and/>