
BFAWU Branch Secretary Network June 2025

Around the branches

The lack of volume was raised as a concern by a number of branches, this continued drop across different parts of the sector has had different impacts on members, from reducing the working week down to 4 days for drivers despite it being traditionally peak season, and experiencing cost increases in the local area, through to increased cost saving initiatives and redundancy consultations starting. There were branches that reported Christmas lines would soon be starting and as such seasonal temps are being set on.

A discussion was held around the purpose of pre-conference meetings and whether delegates attending the conference were there to represent their branch, who nominates them as delegates or the region their branch sits in.

Ideas to support branch secretaries

There has been talk at the GFTU around running a branch officials' course, which was welcomed by the newer branch secretaries on the call.

Ideas were welcomed from the group around what could be offered to support them in their roles going forwards.

It was suggested that a regional WhatsApp group for branch secretaries would be a good idea so that they could keep in contact with each other between regional council meetings and conference etc., a 'communities' group could be set up so that announcements can be made to all in a consistent manner, but the regions could communicate with each other and build networks.

An induction book like the reps one was also deemed a good idea too as well as tips on how to succession plan to ensure that branches don't collapse when a long-standing branch secretary retires. Discussions were had around the role and function of regional councils, could they be utilized better and whether there was any way of developing packs for branch secretaries to support the reps' development.

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The importance of supporting members and the huge impact it can have not only on members but their families too can not be underestimated, sometimes it can feel as branch secretaries that the role becomes much wider than just workplace issues and can become overwhelming, but supporting members in their time of need and seeing their lives improved as a result is like nothing else.