
BFAWU Young Members Network September 2025

Network Meetings

There was a discussion about whether the Network meetings are the best way to bring young members together as attendance at them is generally low, the space for young members to come together and have discussions is broadly welcomed as many are not able to engage with other areas of the union structures as not elected to regional council or conference, but attendance is certainly not reflecting that feeling.

It was agreed that we should email out to young members and ask them what would be the most useful and engaging for them and seek ideas from the group about moving forwards, suggestions in the meeting included having specific topics for the meetings such as housing, rent, the far right, climate and once that topic had been covered and discussed to then have the general meeting included so that space is not lost.

The WhatsApp group that has been in place for a while should also be circulated in the email to encourage young members to join that too, in the hopes that as we move towards conference motion season, young members could support each other developing motions to put to their branches and regions to be discussed and voted for at conference that are relevant to young members.

Reform and the Far Right

Young members are attending Anti-Fascist demo's and getting involved in the Palestine movement as well as the Climate and pro Trans movements and often need support responding to some of the far right rhetoric that is being repeated in workplaces, communities and branches as people can become quite aggressive towards them when young members don't agree with the rhetoric, or challenge some of the myths that are being stated as fact.

Ensuring there are resources available for young members to be able to access so that they can confidently respond to myths and untruths is vital, as it is building a block of attendance at these sorts of demos and having measures in place to ensure safety whilst there too. At the recent 'Unite the Kingdom demo' on the 13th of September it was aggressive and hostile towards the Antifascist demonstration leading many in attendance fearful that they were going to be physically attacked, reports from those in attendance included that some were attacked on the fringes, that there were Unite the Kingdom attendees surrounding the Antifascists and attacking the Police who stood between the two groups, that they were kettled for over 3 hours and finally were escorted to a tube station so that they could leave. It has been described as being the most aggressive responses that has been seen in decades and whilst violence and threats from the Far Right is often the case at these types of events, it stops people, particularly those from the BAME community from wanting to attend them which then makes it look as though the majority agree with the far right, when we know that is not the case, we just are not playing on the same field as each other.

Structures

National branches were discussed for groups of workers, taking inspiration from the SWU and SALT branches, it was suggested that it might be worth investigating whether a national McDonalds or Wetherspoons branch or Worker Cooperative branch could be set up so that workers in those specific workplaces that have common issues and experiences could communicate with each other, meet as a group and build support and experience. This would take some time to properly look into and would definitely need rule changes at conference, but it may support young members who are currently in district branches with no obvious way of engaging with the union an avenue to be more active.