

**BAKERS
FOOD
AND ALLIED
WORKERS
UNION**



FOODWORKER

SUMMER 2026



TOGETHER

**STANDING TOGETHER
AGAINST THE FAR RIGHT!**



STANDING TOGETHER AGAINST THE FAR RIGHT!

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EDITOR'S NOTES

"The pressure people are under is enormous, and unions like ours must continue to adapt, modernise and use our resources carefully and effectively."

sarah.woolley@bfawu.org

OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS, we have begun to see some encouraging signs across our union. Membership has seen modest but important growth, our financial position has improved, and the overall deficit has reduced. These are not things that happen by accident. They happen because members, reps, branch officers and activists continue to put in the hard work day in and day out organising workplaces, supporting colleagues, standing up for one another and keeping this union moving forward during some incredibly difficult times.

We should recognise those achievements and take confidence from them. At a time when many organisations across society are struggling, when working-class communities continue to face pressure from every direction, and when trade unions are constantly having to fight for space and influence, any growth matters. Every new member matters. Every rep trained matters. Every workplace organised matters.

But we also have to be honest with ourselves: *we are not out of the woods yet.*

Modernising does not mean losing who we are. Quite the opposite. It means ensuring that the values of collectivism, solidarity and working-class organisation remain strong and effective in a changing world.

The financial challenges facing trade unions remain real, and the wider economic picture facing our members remains bleak.

Years of austerity, rising living costs, insecure work and attacks on public services have left deep scars in communities across the country. The pressure people are under is enormous, and unions like ours must continue to adapt, modernise and use our resources carefully and effectively.

That is why we are currently looking at moving more of our email correspondence and campaigning work over to **Action Network**.

Not only is it significantly cheaper for the union to use, but it also offers more functionality and flexibility in how we communicate with members, organise campaigns and support branches.

In a period where every penny matters, we have a responsibility to make sure we are using the best and most cost-effective tools available to strengthen our organising work and improve communication across the union.

Modernising does not mean losing who we are. Quite the opposite. It means ensuring that the values of collectivism, solidarity and working-class organisation remain strong and effective in a changing world.

Annual Conference

We are also now preparing for our Annual Conference – one of the most important weeks in the union calendar. Conference is where members shape the direction of our union, debate policy, share experiences and learn from one another.

Alongside the formal business, there will once again be a range of fringe meetings, workshops and sessions for delegates covering important issues facing our movement and our industries.

We would encourage branches and delegates to make the most of these opportunities and, importantly, to bring the learning and resources back into workplaces and branches afterwards.

Education and political understanding are essential parts of building a stronger union. The more confident and informed our reps and activists are, the stronger we become collectively.

We would also encourage members to engage with the ongoing **GFTU Review** of the BFAWU and to take the time to complete the **Right to Food Commission** survey. Both are important opportunities for members to have their voices heard and to help shape not only the future direction of our union, but the wider conversations around food insecurity, poverty and the experiences of working-class communities across the UK.



GFTU Review **Right to Food Commission**
(BFAWU Member Consultation) (Survey form)

As many of you will already know from working in bakeries, factories, warehouses, shops and food production sites across the country, we are also entering another period of extremely hot weather. Despite the fact that the UK still has no legal maximum workplace temperature, employers still have a duty to protect workers' health, safety and welfare.

BFAWU reps should be ensuring that practical measures are being put in place during periods of high heat. Members should have access to cold drinking water, additional breaks where necessary, suitable ventilation wherever possible, and workloads should be managed sensibly. Reps and members should also be looking out for the signs of heat stress and heat exhaustion amongst colleagues. Nobody should be made ill simply because they are trying to earn a living.

Health and Safety is not an optional extra. It is a trade union issue – and so too is the growing threat posed by those who seek to divide working-class communities.

Division

Across the country we continue to see the far right attempting to exploit frustration, insecurity and anger. But instead of pointing the finger at the real causes of hardship — low pay, insecure work, austerity, corporate greed and decades of political choices that have prioritised profit over people there is a constant effort to blame the wrong people for the problems our communities face.

There is a huge amount of misdirection taking place.

The reality is that our members have far more in common with a food worker in Palestine, Sudan, Iran or the Congo than they do with millionaires and corporate elites who have grown richer while working people struggle to heat their homes, feed their families and pay the rent.

For over 15 years people have lived through austerity, cuts and declining living standards. Communities have been hollowed out. Public services have been stripped back. Wages have failed to keep pace with the cost of living. It is understandable that people are angry – *they have every right to be*.

People are, of course, entitled to vote however they choose. But we would encourage members to look carefully at the voting records and positions of those asking for their trust.

Those voting against Statutory Sick Pay from day one, against rent reform, against stronger workers' rights and against the abolition of exploitative zero-hours contracts are not acting in the interests of working-class people.

No politician is coming to save us unless working people are organised enough to force change.

That is why organising matters now more than ever. It is only through building collective strength in our workplaces that pay, terms and conditions improve. History has shown us time and again that rights are not simply handed down from above – they are won when ordinary people stand together.

Frank retires

Finally, this edition also marks the retirement of **Frank Loveday** as Regional Officer for Region 1. Frank has given many years of service and commitment to the union movement.



We would like to wish him all the very best for his retirement and the next chapter ahead.



And ending on a positive note, there also appears to be some encouraging news emerging regarding the proposed **Allied** and **Hovis** merger, with indications that Belfast may no longer need to be sold off in order for the merger to proceed.

We will continue to monitor developments closely and keep members updated as more information becomes available.

In Solidarity Always

Sarah



NATIONAL PRESIDENT IAN HODSON

“Everything we achieve as a union is built on the collective effort of people who organise, support one another and stand up for working-class people every single day”

The Politics of Inequality, Safety and Visibility

A CENTURY AFTER THE 1926 General Strike, working-class people in Britain are once again being told to lower their expectations while wealth flows upwards at a staggering rate.

For decades we have been promised that if we worked harder, accepted *'modernisation', privatisation, deregulation and restraint*, prosperity would eventually trickle down. Instead, what working people have experienced is falling living standards, insecure work, collapsing public services, rising food and energy costs and a widening gulf between the richest few and the rest of society.

Into that anger steps the politics of division.

The rise of Reform is not happening because working-class people are naturally right wing. It is happening because millions of people feel abandoned by a political system that no longer appears capable of improving their lives. When communities lose industries, wages stagnate, housing becomes unaffordable and public services disappear, people look for someone to blame.

The establishment response is always the same. Never blame the system. Never blame corporate greed. Never blame privatisation or wealth concentration. Instead blame migrants, refugees, environmental protections, equality policies or 'red tape'.

It is an old trick.

The powerful understand that a divided working class is easier to control than a united one.

That is why trade unions matter more now than they have in decades. Our movement exists to remind people where wealth really comes from. It is created by workers – every loaf made, every shelf stocked, every delivery completed, every service provided. Yet the people who create the wealth increasingly struggle to afford the basics while corporate profits and executive pay continue to soar.

Energy is one of the clearest examples of this failure.

We are constantly told that drilling for more oil and gas in the North Sea is about helping ordinary people with energy bills. But working people already know the truth. Oil companies do not extract resources for public good. They extract them for *profit*.

Even if more oil is drilled, ordinary people still pay global market prices because energy has been *privatised* and *commodified*.



The wealth leaves our communities while the public carries the burden through higher bills, environmental damage and insecure futures.

That is why **renationalisation** matters.

Energy should not exist primarily to create profits for shareholders while pensioners freeze and families choose between heating and eating. Public ownership is not *nostalgia*. It is about democratic control over the essentials of life. It is about recognising that some things are too important to leave to market speculation and corporate greed.

The same political choices affect safety at work.

Health and safety is not separate from politics. *It never has been.*

Every major workplace protection we have fought for by workers and trade unions against opposition from employers and politicians claiming protections were *too expensive, anti-business* or *bureaucratic*. The right to protective equipment, safer machinery, limits on exposure, proper reporting systems and legal accountability were not gifts handed down from above. They were won through struggle.

Today we are seeing attempts to attack those protections again under the language of cutting 'red tape'.

But there is nothing bureaucratic about a worker going home safely.

There is nothing excessive about preventing *amputations, occupational illness, stress, harassment* or *death*.

And there is nothing progressive about workplaces designed around only one type of worker while others are ignored.

That is why this year's Conference is making women visible in workplace health and safety.

For too long many workplace systems were built around male assumptions, male bodies and male experiences. Women workers have too often been treated as an afterthought.



BFAWU SUPPORTS THE TOGETHER ALLIANCE

DATELINE: 28.03.2026

Whether through PPE that does not fit properly, workplace temperatures, inadequate welfare facilities, the failure to recognise menopause impacts, or the refusal to treat sexual harassment as a workplace hazard.

Making women visible is not identity politics. It is trade unionism.

If a hazard harms workers, then it is our responsibility to confront it. If safety systems fail part of the workforce, then those systems must change.

Real workplace equality is not achieved through slogans from HR departments. It is achieved when unions organise collectively to force improvements that protect workers in practice.

That is the choice facing working people today.

We can allow anger to be redirected towards the vulnerable while wealth and power remain concentrated at the top. Or we can rebuild solidarity, challenge corporate power and fight for a society organised around human need instead of private profit.

The labour movement was built for moments like this.

And just as workers understood in 1926, change never comes from waiting politely for those in power to suddenly act in our interest – *it comes when ordinary people organise together and demand better.*

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of our staff, FTOs, activists and members for their hard work, commitment and solidarity.

Everything we achieve as a union is built on the collective effort of people who organise, support one another and stand up for working-class people every single day. Whether in workplaces, branches, campaigns, negotiations or on picket lines, your dedication continues to make a real difference.

In difficult times, solidarity matters more than ever, and it is the strength, determination and unity of our movement that gives us the ability to fight for better pay, safer workplaces, dignity and justice for all workers.

Thank you for everything you do for our union and for each other.

Ian





The TUC Disabled Workers' Conference took place at the Bournemouth International Centre, 19-20 May 2026

BFAWU was well represented, as you would expect



*Catherine Wright, Nick Mead and John Fitzpatrick with Sarah and, above, Nick seconding **Emergency Motion 1** on the situation in Iran on behalf of the BFAWU*



TUC BLACK WORKER'S CONFERENCE 2026

Bournemouth
24-26 April

Fredy Velez on behalf of BFAWU
Speaking in support of Motions
6, 7 & 8



CONFERENCE: It is real privilege to be here, to see the brothers and sisters who are leading the fight against racism, discrimination and injustice.

What is not to love about sharing this space with the freedom fighters? With the tireless and committed brothers and sisters that not only dream, but will do everything they can to build a more equal and inclusive society? The people that give a lot but very often get very little in return? The people who aim for a better future for all us regardless of our colour, our origin, our religion and our gender and sexual orientation, regardless of our identity and regardless of the positions we occupy in the unfair society we live in?

What is not to love about sharing this conference with the people who often face discrimination, abuse, aggression and unfairness but always will stand up, **HIGH AND PROUD** to reclaim the dignity that has been taken away from us?

Conference, This is the voice of a person once was an asylum seeker, a person who after long struggle became a refugee and a person who at some point recovered some part of dignity and the humanity that has been taken away whilst navigating the immigration and asylum system.

We the refugees, We the asylum seekers, We the immigrants – we did not come here to live in 5 star hotels, we did not come here to steal jobs and houses, we did not come here to commit crimes and did not come here to commit sexual abuse.

No, conference, we the refugees and we the asylum seekers, are the people who fled war, we are the people who escaped human rights abuses, the people who escaped oppression, the people who fled extreme poverty, the people who needed to escape the effects of climate change, we are the people who had nothing to else to lose.

We are the forcibly displaced, we are the people who witnessed extreme violence, we are the people who have been traumatised by torture and murder, we are the people who were forced to leave our families, our friends, our communities, our professions and the social environment we used to know. We are women and men who had to find safety in a word that is completely unfamiliar to us. We are the people who had to leave everything behind!!

This journey has been long, this journey has painful, this journey has been heart-breaking!!! This journey has been frustrating and this journey has been hopeless.

Experiencing the cruelty of the migration and asylum system has made me feel insignificant, emotionally broken and along the way has made feel to believe that I was illegal, that I was an alien citizen, that I was not a human and that I had not a right to live. The immigration system strips us of our dignity and it strips us of our humanity and often strips us of our will to live!

I am not sharing my experience for you to feel sorry for me or for the thousands of displaced people around the world. I want to show you that we the asylum seekers and the refugees are resilient, we are talented, we capable and we are productive, we have hopes, we have dreams, we have emotions and have love and solidarity as everybody else.

My experience also shows that we can survive, we fight and we can organise ourselves to challenge the narratives that promote division and hate. We are here to show that we have made this country our home, that our new neighbours and our new friend became our new families. That we overcame the trauma and the loss and that we turned them into strength and resilience....., that we here to fight the injustice of the asylum and migration system, that we are here to stay. We are here to challenge the toxic narratives of the far-right, we are here to gather solidarity and we are here to join forces in our struggle for racial justice and for social justice.

Growing up in extreme poverty, in a world hostile to the racial minorities, in a world where misogyny, homophobia and transphobia was part of our everyday day gave me the strength to seek education and to become a human rights activist and a trade unionist.

Standing here in front of you, addressing this conference as a proud member of the Baker's Union would be enough to attract death threats, enough for me to be imprisoned, to be tortured or to be forcibly disappeared. Colombia is the most dangerous country to be a trade unionist and a human rights activist and this is the reason why I had to flee to save my life.

Some of my colleagues in the Human Rights organisation where I used to work did not make it and they died in the struggle, some of them disappeared without trace, some were kidnapped or tortured, our offices were destroyed by a bomb and in the end, only a few us were lucky to escape and save our lives.

I am sure you are familiar with the tragedies and the experiences of the refugees so I don't need to tell you more. What brings us together to this conference is the common aim to challenge the hostile and hateful narratives of the far-right.

To plan actions to challenge the cruel and inhumane policies of the current Labour government, a government that is not on the side of the hard-working people, a government that works for interest of the elites and a government that is out-reforming Reform!!

We are here to join forces to challenge the Labour Party policies that will make it harder for asylum seekers to find safety, we are here to fight for the people that will need to wait more than ten years to get a settled status and to challenge the policies that will allow the deportation of children born in then UK. We are here to fight a government that is moving towards ICE style raids.

We are not alone in this struggle: we find solidarity in our communities, in our unions in the people who volunteer for the refugee organisations.

We have the power to educate the uneducated, we have the power to show tolerance to the intolerant. But we need to fight on every front: in the streets, in the schools, in the communities, in the workplace in our unions, by engaging the racist and the flag lovers, by showing them that they are in the wrong side of history and in the wrong side of humanity. We need to do more to show them the positive contributions we make to this society.

We need to show them that they are only instrumental to the economic Elites, the politicians, the despotic political leaders that promote military interventions for their own interest but then shut the doors to the victims of the wars they create.

Conference: We need to keep working together in our Unions, we need to keep organising in the work place, we need keep occupying the streets, we need to keep educating the new generations, we must keep working in an intersectional approach to fight the inhumane migration and asylum system.

We need to keep working together to challenge the politics and the rhetoric of division and hate represented by *Reform*, *Britain First* and their fascist sympathisers.

Finally we need to remind our government that the asylum seekers and refugees don't come here to beg for acceptance. Our rights are granted in the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** and the **Refugee Conventions**. This country has a moral and legal obligation as a signatory of these universal conventions and as such they we should held them account for not complying with their international responsibilities.

We must not remain passive, we fight to recover the dignity we deserve. We fight to challenge the negative stereotypes, we challenge the false narratives about us.



INVITING YOUNG MEMBERS TO THE TOLPUDDLE FESTIVAL



BFAWU IS INVITING Young Members to attend the Tolpuddle Festival this year – with subsidised travel expenses and complimentary tickets to events and exhibitions.

This festival is very informative about the roots of our movement as well as being a lot of fun!

Scan the QR code to register your interest.

THE HIDDEN RESPIRATORY RISK IN WORKPLACE CLEANING CHEMICALS

Why exposure controls matter in food production and industrial workplaces

FOR MANY WORKERS, the most dangerous substance they encounter at work is not always the obvious one. It is not necessarily heavy machinery, dangerous moving equipment, or visible hazards that damage health over time.

Increasingly, workers are raising concerns about repeated exposure to industrial cleaning chemicals and sanitisers used every single day in workplaces across food manufacturing, hospitality, logistics, retail, and industrial environments.

Products promoted as 'food safe', 'neutral', or 'high-performance sanitisers' can still present very real respiratory risks if exposure is not properly controlled.

One example is the widespread use of concentrated disinfectants and sanitisers such as *Tribac 100* and similar industrial cleaning products used throughout food production and manufacturing environments.

While these products play an important role in hygiene and contamination control, workers are increasingly reporting:

- breathing difficulties,
- coughing,
- chest tightness,
- wheezing,
- skin irritation,
- headaches, and
- symptoms consistent with occupational asthma.

In many workplaces these symptoms are dismissed as 'just irritation' rather than treated as serious warning signs of harmful exposure.

Occupational Asthma is a real workplace hazard

Occupational Asthma is one of the most common forms of work-related lung disease in the UK.

According to Health and Safety Executive guidance, repeated exposure to workplace chemicals, vapours, sprays, dusts, and cleaning agents can both trigger asthma attacks and cause long-term sensitisation leading to permanent respiratory illness.

The danger is often not a single exposure event.

It is the *repeated* daily exposure over months or years:

- spraying chemicals in enclosed spaces,
- foaming cleaning systems,
- poor ventilation,
- inadequate PPE,
- chemical mist inhalation, and
- pressure to clean quickly without proper controls.

Workers may not even realise the symptoms are work-related until they notice:

- symptoms worsening during shifts,
- improvement on days away from work,
- worsening breathing overnight after work, or
- increasing reliance on inhalers and medication.

Once Occupational Asthma develops, the effects can be life-changing and, in some cases, *permanent*.



'Food Safe' does not mean Safe to Breathe

One of the biggest misunderstandings in many workplaces is the belief that because a product is approved for use in food environments, it must therefore be harmless to workers.

That is not true.

Many industrial sanitisers contain active biocides, amines, disinfecting agents, solvents, or corrosive ingredients designed specifically to destroy bacteria and contaminants rapidly.

Those same properties can also irritate or damage the respiratory system if inhaled repeatedly.

The issue is not simply *what* chemical is used. It is:

- how it is applied,
- how often workers are exposed,
- whether it becomes airborne,
- whether adequate extraction exists, and
- whether proper health monitoring is in place.

What employers should be doing

Under UK Health and Safety law, employers have a duty to control exposure to hazardous substances under COSHH regulations.

That means *proper prevention and control measures* should already be in place before workers become ill.

Minimum protections should include:

Proper COSHH Assessments

Employers must carry out suitable and sufficient assessments of the risks posed by cleaning chemicals and disinfectants.

These assessments should not simply be copied generic paperwork. They must reflect:

- the actual task,
- frequency of exposure,
- spraying methods,
- ventilation conditions, and
- worker vulnerability.

Adequate ventilation

Poorly ventilated cleaning operations dramatically increase inhalation risks.

Workplaces using sprays, foams, or aerosolised chemicals should have:

- effective local extraction,
- airflow systems, and
- controls to prevent chemical mist build-up.

Safer application methods

Where possible:

- avoid aerosol spraying,
- reduce airborne mist,
- use controlled dosing systems, and
- minimise worker exposure time.

Appropriate PPE

PPE should be the *last* line of defence, not the first.

Where respiratory exposure exists, employers may need:

- properly fitted respiratory protective equipment,
- gloves,
- eye protection, and
- protective clothing.

Workers should also receive proper face-fit testing and training.

Health Surveillance

If workers are exposed to substances linked to asthma or respiratory disease, health surveillance may be required. That includes:

- monitoring symptoms,
- respiratory questionnaires,
- occupational health involvement, and
- early intervention before permanent damage occurs.

Worker involvement and Safety Reps

Workers and union safety representatives should be involved in:

- reviewing exposure risks,
- identifying unsafe practices,
- investigating symptoms, and
- challenging inadequate controls.

Too often workers raising concerns about breathing issues are ignored until conditions worsen significantly.

Prevention Must Come Before Profit

In many industries there is constant pressure to clean faster, produce more, and cut staffing levels. But safety cannot become secondary to production targets.

No worker should have to choose between earning a wage and protecting their lungs.

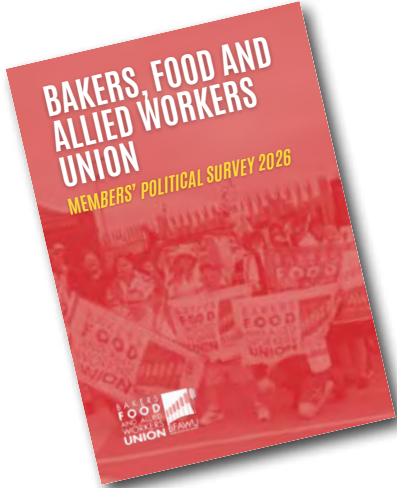
The reality is that workplace respiratory disease is often gradual, underreported, and invisible until serious damage has already occurred. That is why prevention matters.

Good hygiene standards and worker safety are not opposing goals. Properly controlled workplaces can and should deliver both.

The question is whether employers are willing to invest in the protections workers need before more people become permanently ill.



What Our Political Survey Tells Us About Our Movement



THE RESULTS OF THE BFAWU Members' Political Survey 2026 give us a great deal to think about as a union movement.

First and foremost, they show something positive: *our members are engaged*. The overwhelming majority of respondents are registered to vote, intend to vote, and care deeply about what happens in their workplaces, communities and across society. That matters. At a time when many people feel ignored or disconnected from politics, our members are still looking for change and still believe their voices matter.

The survey also paints a very clear picture of the issues that are shaping people's lives. Once again, members identified low pay, the cost-of-living crisis, insecure work, poor management practices, housing pressures and the future of the NHS as their biggest concerns. These are not abstract political talking points. They are lived realities for food workers and their families.

Many members also raised concerns about excessive workloads, understaffing, insecure hours and the pressure of being expected to do more with less. Others highlighted the importance of public ownership, support for a Right to Food, investment in industry, stronger employment protections and improved sick pay.

In short, our members want dignity, security and fairness at work and in society.

That is why one aspect of the survey results should concern all of us in the trade union movement: the growing number of respondents indicating support for **Reform UK**.

It is important to approach this discussion carefully and respectfully. People have every right to vote for whichever party they choose. Nobody should be dismissed, insulted or written off for how they vote. Many people are understandably frustrated and angry after years of economic insecurity, stagnant wages, cuts to public services and a political system that too often feels distant from working-class communities.

Trade unions cannot simply lecture people or pretend those frustrations are not real. If we want to rebuild trust and confidence, we have to start by listening.

But listening also means having honest conversations.

When we look at the issues BFAWU members themselves have identified as priorities – stronger workers' rights, better sick pay, action on low pay, investment in public services, tackling insecure work and protecting trade union rights there appears to be a significant gap between those priorities and the parliamentary record of Reform UK to date.

Reform MPs, for example, voted against the **Employment Rights Bill** during its passage through Parliament – legislation that included measures around strengthening worker protections, improving sick pay rights and tackling exploitative zero-hours practices.

That does not mean every individual Reform voter supports those positions, nor does it mean people's concerns should be ignored. In fact, many surveys show that even people considering voting Reform often strongly support measures such as banning exploitative zero-hours contracts and improving statutory sick pay.

This is where trade unions have a responsibility not to dictate how members should vote, but to encourage people to look closely at the record, the policies and whose interests are ultimately being served.

As trade unionists, we know from experience that better wages, safer workplaces and stronger rights are not handed down by politicians out of goodwill. They are won through collective organisation. Every improvement we enjoy today paid holidays, sick pay, health and safety protections, pensions, maternity rights, weekends, the minimum wage came because working people organised together and demanded change.

That remains true today.

If members are frustrated about low wages, insecure work or the state of their communities, the answer cannot simply be placing faith in personalities or slogans. Real change comes when working people build power collectively in workplaces and communities.

That means stronger unions, more workplace reps, more organised workplaces and it means more members standing together and demanding better.

One of the more hopeful findings of the survey was the increase in support for the Green Party amongst some respondents. Again, members will all make their own political choices, but it is clear that many workers particularly younger workers are increasingly linking issues such as climate, food security, public ownership and workers' rights together.

For food workers especially, climate change is not a distant issue. It affects food production, energy prices, supply chains, workplace temperatures and ultimately the cost of living itself. Many members clearly want to see a future where climate action and decent jobs go hand in hand rather than being falsely presented as opposites.

That is why BFAWU's *Year of Climate Action* and our push to increase the number of Green Reps across the union matters so much.

BACKGROUND

The Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU) conducted a survey of our members to try to understand the attitudes and concerns of professionals and support staff in the food and drink industry.

The survey gathered from the people who help form the backbone of the industry – the people who are the backbone of the industry – the people who are the backbone of the industry.

POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

BFAWU members are generally engaged in politics. The survey shows that over 80% of members are registered to vote, and over 70% intend to vote in the next general election.

Most BFAWU members intend to vote in the next general election. The survey shows that over 80% of members are registered to vote, and over 70% intend to vote in the next general election.

ISSUES IMPACTING BFAWU MEMBERS

Low pay is the biggest concern for BFAWU members. Other issues include the cost-of-living crisis, insecure work, and the future of the NHS.

POLICY PRIORITIES AND REFORM UK RESULTS

BFAWU members have identified several policy priorities, including stronger workers' rights, better sick pay, and investment in public services. The survey also shows that a growing number of respondents support Reform UK.

SURVEY RESULTS

The following graphs show the results of our survey on political engagement and issues impacting BFAWU members.

SURVEY RESULTS

The following graphs show the results of our survey on policy priorities and Reform UK support.

We believe workers must be at the centre of shaping the future of industry, not left behind by it.

The survey results also reaffirm the importance of the work the union is already undertaking.

Our campaigning around the **Right to Food Commission** is directly linked to the reality that too many food workers still struggle to afford the food they help produce, process, transport and serve.

Our bargaining agenda around pay, sick pay, guaranteed hours and safer workplaces reflects exactly what members have told us matters most to them.

Our campaigning against anti-union legislation and for stronger collective bargaining rights is about ensuring workers actually have the power to improve their lives.

And our work on climate, equality and international solidarity reflects the understanding that workplace issues do not exist in isolation from wider society.

Ultimately, this survey should be seen as both a warning and an opportunity.

The **warning** is that frustration, insecurity and political alienation are real and growing. If mainstream politics fails to deliver meaningful improvements in people's lives, many will continue searching elsewhere for answers

But the **opportunity** is equally clear.

Our members are not disengaged. They care deeply about fairness, security, decent public services, strong communities and dignity at work. Those values remain trade union values.

The challenge for all of us now is to turn that frustration into organisation, solidarity and collective action.

Because no political party whichever colour its rosette will improve our lives unless working people are organised strongly enough to demand it.

That has always been the role of trade unions.

And now, more than ever, it must continue to be.

LATEST ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATES FOR THE FOOD MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

Key Developments and Regulatory Changes

THE FOOD MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY is currently experiencing significant shifts in environmental regulations and sustainability practices. In the past year, there has been an increased emphasis on reducing single-use plastics and improving waste management, with many companies adopting recyclable packaging and compostable materials. Additionally, stricter emission standards are being introduced, prompting manufacturers to invest in energy-efficient technologies and renewable energy sources.

Water usage and conservation remain a focal point, with new guidelines encouraging the adoption of closed-loop water systems and improved monitoring of effluent discharge. The industry is also seeing a push towards carbon neutrality, with several major players setting ambitious targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and implementing carbon offset programmes.

On a broader scale, the European Union continues to roll out directives aimed at enhancing environmental performance, including updated requirements for reporting and transparency. These changes are expected to drive further innovation and collaboration across the sector, ensuring compliance and fostering sustainable growth.

As of early 2026, the food manufacturing industry is accelerating its shift towards net-zero goals, with a heavy focus on reducing Scope 3 emissions, implementing the circular economy, and enhancing supply chain transparency. Major focus areas involve strict waste management, plant-based innovation, and adopting AI for energy efficiency.

Regulatory and Policy Updates (2025–2026)

- **Waste Separation Regulations:** From 31st March 2025, businesses in the UK must implement separate food waste storage and collection processes.
- **Deposit Return Scheme (DRS):** Regulations are being implemented across the UK, with new guidance released in April 2026 for industry compliance regarding bottle and can recycling.
- **Packaging Restrictions:** UK MPs are calling for immediate restrictions on PFAS ("forever chemicals") in food packaging and cookware.
- **EU Green Deal:** New standards are targeting reduced air and water pollution, including mandatory limits on odour emissions for food processing plants.

Packaging and Material Sustainability

- **Recycled Packaging Focus:** Companies are shifting toward 100% recycled fibre-based food packaging to meet EU circularity regulations.
- **NoPalm Ingredients:** The winner of the 2026 Food Planet Prize uses microbial fermentation to create palm oil alternatives from food side streams.
- **Reducing Microplastics:** The industry is exploring alternatives to single-use plastic, including seaweed-based biodegradable films.

EC Environmental Report
Tony Mansell

COOL IT!

WORKPLACE TEMPERATURES ARE NOT 'just part of the job'. Employers have a legal duty to protect workers from unsafe heat and cold.

Under the **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974** and the **Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992**, employers must provide a working environment with a 'reasonable' temperature and carry out risk assessments where workers are exposed to heat, cold, humidity or poor ventilation.

There is currently no maximum legal working temperature in the UK – something unions like the BFAWU have long campaigned to change through the **Cool It!** campaign. But that does NOT mean employers can ignore dangerous heat.



If workers are suffering headaches, dizziness, dehydration, exhaustion, heat stress, fainting, rashes, breathing difficulties or worsening health conditions, employers must act.

Workplace Temperature Checklist

If you answer YES to two or more of these, your employer should be carrying out a proper risk assessment and putting controls in place:

- Workers are complaining about temperatures
- Air feels hot or stuffy
- Temperatures rise during the day
- Heat increases during hot weather
- Machinery, ovens or steam create heat
- Work is outdoors or in direct sun

- PPE traps heat or restricts airflow
- Air feels humid or very dry
- Fans or air systems blow directly onto workers
- Work is physically demanding in hot conditions
- Workers cannot adapt clothing
- Respiratory protection or heavy PPE is required

What workers can do:

- Raise concerns collectively with colleagues
- Report symptoms and unsafe conditions in writing
- Ask for a workplace temperature risk assessment
- Request extra breaks, water, ventilation, cooling measures or adjusted duties
- Speak to your union rep or health and safety rep
- Keep evidence — temperatures, photos, incidents and symptoms
- Use workplace safety procedures and near-miss reporting systems
- If there is serious and imminent danger, workers have legal protections under Section 44 of the **Employment Rights Act 1996**

Heat is not just uncomfortable. It increases accidents, injuries, stress, harassment, fatigue and mistakes. Workers should not be expected to risk their health just to keep production moving.

Safe workplaces are not a luxury. They are a right.



THE NEW RENTERS' RIGHTS ACT

Introduction of the new Renters' Rights Act – changes for private tenants

FROM THE 1ST MAY 2026 renting in England will be changing, new laws will be in force that will give renters stronger rights, better protection and more security in their homes.

What will be changing?

- **No more 'no-fault' evictions** – if you're in a private sector property, landlords will be unable to evict you without a valid reason.
- **No more fixed contracts** – all tenancies in the private sector will roll from month to month or week to week (depending on your contract). There will be no end date to give you more flexibility and tenants are able to end contracts with two months' notice.
- **Rent rules will be fairer** – landlords are only able to raise rent *once* per year, unfair raises can be challenged by renters.
- **No bidding wars** – landlords must advertise at a set price and stick to this price.
- **No large upfront payments** – landlords will only be able to ask for a maximum of one month's rent upfront.
- **No discrimination** – landlords will no longer be able to refuse tenants for being on benefits or for having children.
- **Pets allowed** – renters can now ask to have a pet in the property, and their landlord must consider it fairly.

Are landlords still protected?

Landlords will still be able to get their properties back for fair reasons including needing to sell, moving themselves or family into the property or if the tenant is in rent arrears or for anti-social behaviour.

Check your landlord is properly registered

From late 2026, a **Private Rented Sector Database** will be set up by the government so that you can check who you're renting from. Once the property is live and available for rent, you'll be able to search your landlord or property to check they're properly registered

What do I do if I have a problem with my landlord or property?

From 1st May 2026, all landlords will be responsible for sticking to the new laws. If you still experience issues, the **Private Landlord Ombudsman** will be launched in 2026 to help renters sort any complaints against landlords quickly and fairly.

If you can't resolve an issue with your landlord directly, an independent person will be assigned to resolve the complaint for you.

May 2026 PayPlan Blog #1

PayPlan®

We're here to help

If you are struggling with debts call us on 0800 072 1206.

We're open from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am – 3pm on Saturdays.

Alternatively, you can visit our www.payplan.com/bfawu to speak to us via live chat or WhatsApp

New laws will be in force that will give renters **stronger rights, better protection and more security in their homes.**



RISING FUEL COSTS

Petrol and diesel prices are rising fast – how to protect your budget

THE COST OF PETROL AND DIESEL is soaring, and for many households, it's adding pressure to already stretched budgets. Some drivers are now paying over £100 to fill up a diesel car.

Why have fuel prices risen?

One of the biggest drivers of the price rise is due to tensions in the Middle East and disruption to supply routes. However, fuel demand has also increased, with some fuel stations reporting shortages. As a result, people are panic-buying, adding further pressure on prices.

How does rising fuel prices affect my finances?

Rising fuel costs, unfortunately, don't just affect your car; they also impact:

- Food shopping prices due to delivery cost increases.
- Public transport fares may rise.
- Trades and services that may increase costs for customers as a result.

How can I save money on fuel?

Some ideas include:

- **Improve your driving efficiency**
Try to avoid harsh braking and fast acceleration, stick to a steady speed and use a higher gear where possible to reduce revolutions.
- **Keep on top of your car maintenance**
Having a regular car service as recommended by your manufacturer will help keep fuel consumption at its optimum level. In between services, you can check your oil level.
- **Stop making unnecessary journeys**
By planning your day to combine multiple errands into one trip and walking for short distances, you'll soon notice your fuel lasting longer. Where possible, you could even consider car sharing for school runs or your work commute. If you have public transport routes nearby, you may be able to switch some of your journeys to trains or buses.

- **Check your tyre pressure**

Having underinflated tyres will use more fuel. Checking your tyres regularly will improve your fuel efficiency and extend the tyre life, saving money in the long run. If you're unsure what your tyre pressure needs to be, it's usually noted on the inside of the driver's door or near your fuel cap.

- **Lighten the load**

Having extra weight in your car uses more fuel. Take out unnecessary items when not in use.

- **Shop around for the best price**

Fuel prices can vary by up to 20–30p per litre depending on location, with service stations usually being much higher. Free fuel comparison apps such as [Petrol Prices](#) or [Fuel Finder](#) will help you find the best price.

May 2026 PayPlan Blog #2

What can I do if fuel prices are pushing me into debt?

PayPlan®

We're here to help

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We're open from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am – 3pm on Saturdays.

Alternatively, you can visit our www.payplan.com/bfawu to speak to us via live chat or WhatsApp

Saving money on your fuel doesn't mean drastic changes.





The Right To Food UK Commission is an ambitious national effort to directly and unapologetically confront the scale and scope of food poverty and hunger in the UK today.

We are gathering evidence from communities, experts and organisations across the four nations to help develop a roadmap to securing a legal Right to Food.

We'd love to hear from you.

CALL FOR EVIDENCE! 

We want to hear from people with lived experience of food poverty in the UK.

Tell us what you think is working to improve access to food - and what isn't.




GENERAL STRIKE 100
NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP

VISIT OUR INTERACTIVE MAP



HAVE YOUR SAY, LEARN ABOUT THE STRUGGLE GET INVOLVED!

Could you be a rep for our brilliant union?

The strength of our Union lies in the quality and commitment of our people

- The rep is primarily a problem solver.
- A rep builds confidence and promotes mutual support.
- Confidence and mutual support are achieved when the rep involves other staff in the creative resolution of a member's problem or grievance.
- The rep encourages members to find solutions together by facilitating problem solving.
- The rep is also the key link between the membership and the leadership of branches.

Scan the code to get involved!



Scan the code to tell us about a **Branch Workplace Win**

Tell us about your workplace wins!

Whether it's a member getting support and representation when they needed it most, a rep negotiating better conditions, free tea and coffee, improved breaks, safer working conditions, or winning fair treatment at work **we want to celebrate it!**

Big or small, every workplace win matters – because every victory shows what happens when workers come together and organise collectively.

Sharing these successes helps other branches, reps and members learn from each other, build confidence and see what's possible in their own workplaces.

So if you've won something, solved a problem, supported a member or made a difference at work – **let us know!**



Scan the code to tell us about a **Member Win**



After many years of dedicated service, **Frank Loveday** has made the decision to retire from his role as Regional Officer.

Frank has served Region 1 and BFAWU with commitment, professionalism, and a genuine dedication to representing our members over the years. He has played a vital role in ensuring the region is operated effectively – supporting members, organising meetings, and helping guide the branches through both routine matters and challenging times.

The role of Regional Officer requires a great deal of time, patience, and responsibility. Frank has carried out these duties with great care and reliability. His efforts have helped strengthen the region and ensure that the members' voices were heard and represented.

On behalf of the BFAWU, we would like to express our sincere thanks to Frank for the time, hard work and dedication that he has given over the years. His contribution has been greatly appreciated and will not be forgotten.

We wish Frank Loveday all the very best for the future and thank him once again for his valued service to the BFAWU.

Jatinder Singh



FRANK LOVEDAY RETIRES!



WORK YOUR BRAIN

WORDSEARCH

How many words can you find?

H	E	A	R	T	F	R	A	N	K	Q
T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R	P	W	P
C	L	X	K	V	H	T	U	O	Y	C
O	O	O	R	J	O	I	N	L	G	H
D	R	M	O	D	E	R	N	I	S	E
E	E	N	W	C	W	E	L	T	T	M
T	N	A	R	G	I	M	M	I	R	I
E	T	A	E	H	N	E	N	C	I	C
L	E	U	F	B	S	N	Z	A	K	A
L	R	I	G	H	T	T	H	L	E	L
K	S	E	F	G	R	E	V	L	O	S

WORDS CAN GO IN ANY DIRECTION (inc diagonally)!

Clue: you will find all of the words in this Foodworker... if you look closely enough!

SUDOKU

Fill the 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contains all of the digits between 1 and 9

4					6			2
6				5			7	4
		5				9		
					9			
	6	1	2		3			
7	3				4		5	
	8							
			9			7	2	6
2					5			3

difficulty: *hard*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

CROSSWORD

1	2		3		4		5		6		7	
	8											
9									10			
11	12								13	14		
							15		16			
17			18			19					20	
	21											
22									23			

Across

- 7 Brandy distilled from cherries (6)
- 8 Large self-service store (11)
- 9 Like many Sherpas (8)
- 10 Pained expression (4)
- 11 On a lower storey (5)
- 13 Investigate closely (5)
- 17 Harvest (4)
- 19 Bed (8)
- 21 Audio system output device (11)
- 22 Concurs (6)
- 23 An unspecified person (6)

Down

- 2 Point in question (5)
- 3 Highest singing voice in women (7)
- 4 Set (6)
- 5 Defeated (6)
- 6 Capital of Japan (5)
- 7 Indigestion remedy (7)
- 12 Stopper to keep out noise (7)
- 14 Jailer (7)
- 15 Entertains (6)
- 16 Greek goddess of wisdom (6)
- 18 Dried plum (5)
- 20 Seductively beautiful woman (5)

Solutions to last issue's puzzles: SPRING 2026

SUDOKU: medium

6	9	5	2	1	8	3	4	7
4	2	3	7	9	5	6	1	8
7	1	8	6	3	4	2	5	9
8	3	6	4	7	1	5	9	2
9	5	1	8	2	6	7	3	4
2	7	4	9	5	3	1	8	6
1	4	7	5	8	2	9	6	3
3	6	2	1	4	9	8	7	5
5	8	9	3	6	7	4	2	1

CROSSWORD

1	S	2	T	3	R	4	D	5	E	6	S			
7	E	T	C	H	8	O	N	E	S	I	D	E	D	
	E		E		S		I		A		P			
9	U	N	D	E	R	E	S	T	I	M	A	T	E	
	C		H		T		Y		E		I			
10	T	H	R	11	A	T	Y	12	S	T	A	C	K	
					V		E	13	S		E			
14	O	G	L	E	S	16	C	H	A	R	R	17	E	D
	R		R		R	18	I		O		N			
19	C	O	N	C	E	N	T	R	A	20	T	I	O	N
	C		A		L		T		U		I			
21	M	E	S	S	H	A	L	L	22	N	I	G	H	
	R		T		Y		Y		E		H			

WORDSEARCH

- 1 GENERAL
- 2 STRIKE
- 3 ORGANISE
- 4 HOPE
- 5 MARTYR
- 6 DATES
- 7 ONLINE
- 8 WINS
- 9 DETAIL
- 10 BUILD
- 11 DEBTS
- 12 POWER
- 13 RIGHTS
- 14 CLIMATE
- 15 SAFER
- 16 FOOD
- 17 HATE
- 18 VOICE
- 19 YOUR
- 20 JOIN

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Don't miss out on your FREE £5,000 Accidental Death Cover

12 months free cover.
Annually renewable.

Always FREE.

Cover is for UK residents aged 18-69.



Scan the QR code or visit the
link below to sign up today

BFAWUProtect.com/JE



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JOIN US!

BAKERS
FOOD
AND ALLIED
WORKERS
UNION



If you or any of your work colleagues are interested in what the BFAWU can offer, scan the QR code to find out more and **Join this Great Union!**



If you're already a member: *IMPORTANT!*

It is important that you keep us updated with any changes to your name, address or contact details.

We send out regular all member emails via mailchimp, if you aren't receiving them, it is probably because we don't have an email address for you, or that we are using an old one!

If you think something has changed in the last 12 months or so, please do take a few minutes to update your details with us.

You can either do it using this QR code, or via your Branch Secretary

