

YOUTH FIGHT FOR JOBS

Special summer hospitality bulletin

For years, hospitality staff have been overworked, mistreated and underpaid. Now the bosses are using Covid lockdowns as an excuse to attack our already poor conditions.

The cost of living is soaring, and at the same time workers in the trade unions have shown that organising and striking gets results and victories from the bosses. In Unite the Union alone, workers won £25 million worth of pay rises in just 100 days at the end of last year.

The current surge in industrial action has introduced the potential power of trade unions to a new generation. Strike action by the likes of rail workers, train drivers, refuse workers and BT staff have shown that when workers stop, so does society; they have highlighted where power really lies – in the organised working class.

The hospitality sector has the youngest workforce out of any industry. Youth Fight for Jobs (YFJ) wants to help bring this new generation of workers into the trade unions as part of the fight for decent jobs and pay for all.



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YFJ members in hospitality have proudly fought to boost unionisation within our hyper-precarious sector. We have been involved in setting up the Hospitality Combine in Unite, and our members previously participated in the Fast Food Rights campaign organised by the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU).

Elsewhere, we have seen young hospitality workers taking historic strike action (and winning!) over unfair tipping policies in chains such as TGI Fridays and Pizza Express.

In Brighton, strike action at just two Wetherspoon's led to a national pay increase for nightshift workers, as well as the scrapping of discriminatory youth rates. And we have also seen success with Unite's Get ME Home Safely campaign, with North Ayrshire and Newcastle councils so far forced to pledge to take up the campaign's demands for night-time workers' safety.

Hospitality workers are on the move. But we need to demand and fight for more. For a start, workers need to be able to afford to live. That's why YFJ demands a £15-an-hour minimum wage now, with no exemptions. We reject the industry standard of using tips to 'top up' low pay – essentially a way for the bosses to increase their profits by having their workers' wages subsidised through the already squeezed incomes of ordinary customers. Tips should be a bonus on top of a guaranteed living wage, not a fill-in.

We call for democratically elected workplace committees to decide the distribution of tips, as well as rotas. These committees could also be in charge of workplace safety. Just as the recent heat wave has highlighted, the safety of hospitality workers – who were made to come to work in dangerous heat – is always put on the back burner to increase profits.

Likewise, instances of sexual harassment – a sector-wide scourge as highlighted in the Unite #NotOnTheMenu campaign – are too often brushed aside by unaccountable managements in the name of sales and brand reputability. We support the demand for zero-tolerance sexual harassment policies and training, overseen by elected workplace reps, in addition to free transport for all workers coming to and from work.

YFJ also fights for the scrapping of zero-hour contracts, which give the bosses flexibility while we get instability – in our incomes and living patterns. Instead, workers need guaranteed hours and guaranteed pay.

And how can we win all this? First, we have to organise in our workplaces and fight to recruit every hospitality worker to their union, so that we can launch a mass movement to:

- End low pay. For trade union struggle for a £15/hr minimum wage. Abolish youth rates!
- End job insecurity and underemployment. Scrap zero-hour contracts!
- Establish democratically elected workplace committees to oversee tips, rotas, and workplace safety!
- Provide free transport for workers coming to and from work!
- Make the 1% pay for the cost of living crisis – for democratic public ownership of major industries so they can be run in the interests of the 99%, not the bosses!

We think these demands can help inspire a new layer of young hospitality workers to join their union, to bolster the new wave of working-class struggle that is opening up in our sector, in Britain, and across the world.

We also know that under capitalism, low pay, job precarity and workplace harassment will always be on the cards for hospitality workers, as they are for all workers everywhere. That's why YFJ campaigns not just for union-led struggle to improve our living standards in the here-and-now, but for the complete socialist transformation of society.

If you want to help YFJ hospitality members in our fight to unionise our sector and win a decent future for ourselves and all workers, then get in touch!

YOUTH FIGHT FOR JOBS

Get involved with Youth Fight for Jobs

- Are you a young worker currently fighting back in your workplace?
- Do you want to discuss how the trade unions can lead the fightback among young people?
- Are you a young trade unionist wondering how you can build your union in your workplace, or get more involved in your trade union?

Youth Fight For Jobs wants to hear from all young people prepared to fight for a decent future.

Visit:

youthfightforjobs.com
for resources and to get in touch!

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