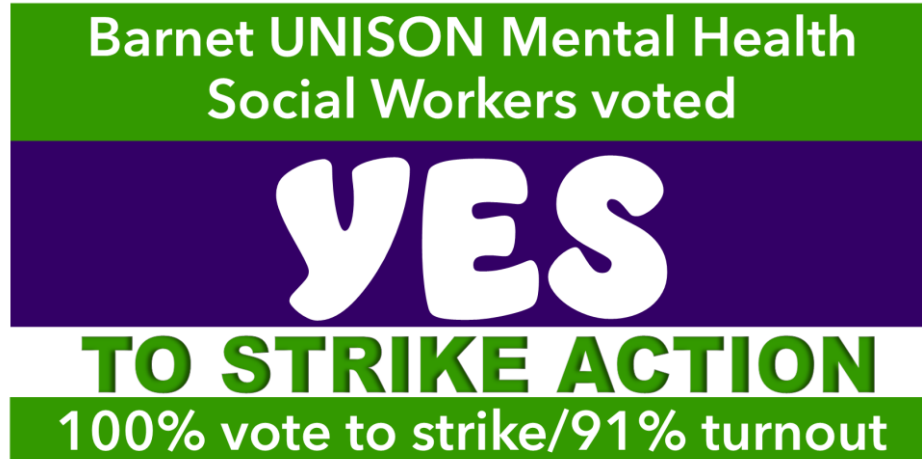


## **Breaking News: Barnet UNISON Mental Health social worker re-ballot results**



Our Barnet UNISON Mental Health social workers re-ballot results are now in.  
We had a **91% turn out** with a **100% VOTE** for strike action.

Barnet UNISON Mental Health social workers have already taken **27 days** of strike action which equates to approximately **4,050 lost contact days** for Mental health service users in Barnet.

Today UNISON submitted the results to the Barnet Council Chief Executive. UNISON has **agreed** to go into talks with Barnet Council and ACAS. UNISON have **agreed** a couple of dates in early March.

UNISON has from the outset been prepared to negotiate to reach a resolution to what has become the **longest running** Mental Health social worker strike in **UNISON's history**.

Barnet UNISON has agreed a **new strike timetable** with our members which will begin in April in the unfortunate event that we are unable to reach a resolution. The strike timetable would be a **significant increase in the number of strike days** taken by the social workers so far.

- From 15 April to 26 April 2024 (two weeks).
- From 13 May to 1 June 2024 (three weeks).
- From 17 June to 12 July 2024. (four weeks).

Our members are **100% behind UNISONs negotiating team** and remain hopeful that a positive resolution can be secured to avoid any further strike action.

More news later.

## Social Care and Repair Workers 87% Vote Yes to Action on Pay



**“If the those at the top can’t pay up then one of them should go so we do have money. We don’t need so many big Daddies.”**

Anju, The Barnet Group UNISON rep

**On a turnout of 70%, 98% agreed with Barnet UNISON’s pay claim and 87% said they were willing to take strike action in favour of the pay claim.** The overwhelming majority of these are care and support workers.

Workers in The Barnet Group who are **affected by the London Living Wage, having no enhanced rates of pay for working nights, bank holidays or overtime rates** were surveyed in an indicative ballot for strength of feeling over these issues. Barnet UNISON’s pay claim was put to them.

Shockingly **the lowest paid** in The Barnet Group were given **no pay rise for the whole of 2023!** Paying the new rate of the London Living Wage 6 months after the new rate was announced with no backdate does not help the lowest paid.

The pay claim is:

1. **Backdate** the London Living Wage increase to £13.15 to the 1/11/23 and maintain differentials between other grades in YCB.
2. Pay Overtime Rates of **time and a half** Monday to Saturday and **double time** Sundays and Bank Holidays.
3. **Pay enhanced rates** of 25% Saturday 6am to 10pm; 50% Sunday all day; 100% Bank holiday (25% = time and a quarter; 50% = time and a half; 100% = double time)
4. Pay an **increased Rate** of time and a third for night working (10pm-6am).

Barnet UNISON hopes that the results of the survey will lead to productive talks where consideration will be given to the demands. If no such consideration will be given we will progress to a formal ballot of these members with a view to taking strike action.

On hearing the results this is what some of our reps had to say:

**“It’s a good result for us. Actions speak louder than words. We work so hard, we deserve it. We get no thank you’s.”**

Tracy, The Barnet Group UNISON rep.

**“It’s time to act. It’s a call from the trenches.”**

Pauline, The Barnet Group UNISON rep

**“The COVID heroes have spoken. The Barnet Group needs to listen.”**

Patrick Hunter, Assistant Branch Secretary for Barnet UNISON

**“Most of these workers are skilled workers and yet they have rates of pay which are lower than for unskilled work. Is it because they are women? Is it because they are predominantly Black? If Equalities actually mean something then this needs to be sorted.”**

Helen Davies, Chair of Barnet UNISON.

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## **Barnet UNISON Annual General Meeting 2024**

Many thanks to those who turned up and were patient whilst we sorted out the technical glitches! This was the first hybrid meeting of Barnet UNISON and it worked...in the end.

After approving the minutes of the AGM, we paid tribute to Nicky Mahn, UNISON rep of many years who died just before Christmas and took time to remember other colleagues who are no longer with us.

The Branch Plan and Branch accounts, budgets, new reps and delegations to conferences were all approved unanimously.

Our Branch Secretary took us through the key moments for the branch last year.

Colleagues were not happy to hear that the groups consistently facing terrible treatment are our low paid Black female members. Last year the Kosher kitchen was closed with no notice, with the Council turning its back on a workforce which had previously worked directly for the Council. Now we have another group of predominantly Black female workers told they are at risk of losing their jobs with very short notice. These are the Enablement workers in Your Choice Barnet.

If you have not already signed the petition for these workers, please do so now:

<https://chnq.it/Mmpzn8H958>

The campaigns highlighted in articles above: The Mental Health Worker dispute and

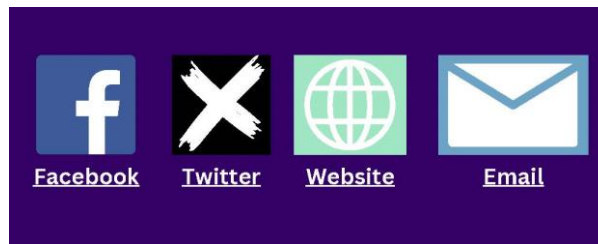
The Barnet Group pay survey were also mentioned as key campaigns for our branch. The Branch Secretary spent some time in his report going over last year’s National Pay Campaign and the work which went into delivering the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest ballot

result in England and Wales. However, we will need to refine our efforts this coming year if we want to improve on our result as last year we failed by just 6 votes in being eligible to take strike action. This matters because we are constantly telling the employer that pay is critical to our members. If people do not return ballot papers it begins to look like pay does not matter that much...

A highlight of the meeting was when the Repairs rep, Tony, announced that his small team of colleagues have done a collection for the Mental Health Social Workers and have donated £135. This is a fantastic act of solidarity, and it would be incredible if this could be repeated across other teams. The Mental Health Social Workers expressed their gratitude.

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