

Day 40



Barnet UNISON Mental Health Social Workers have taken **39 days** of strike action over an eight-month period. On 13 May 2024 they began a further three weeks of strike action which will mean they will have taken a total of **52 days of strike action**. This is an extraordinary amount of strike action in any workplace but to be happening in mental health services it is shocking and disturbing. This dispute should have ended months ago but despite UNISON trying to secure ways to reach a positive settlement, Barnet Council continues to frustrate any hopes of reaching a resolution. This

Why is strike ongoing—Part One

coming strike action will see our members taking **seven weeks of strike action over a nine-week period**. As news of this historic strike action spreads across the trade union movement supporters keep asking: **“What is preventing a resolution?”**

1. “Who is on strike?”

The mental health social workers and their other work colleagues (assessment and enablement officers) who are taking strike action all belong to three frontline mental health teams.

2. “How many staff are we talking about?”

22 social workers which includes two assessment and enablement officers.

3. “Why are they on strike?”

For the past two years there has been an exodus of experienced mental health social workers. 18 months ago, UNISON raised this as an issue with senior officers who responded by saying there was no issue. UNISON proposed that the three teams needed a recruitment and retention payment to try and stop the ongoing loss of experienced and inexperienced mental health social workers.

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