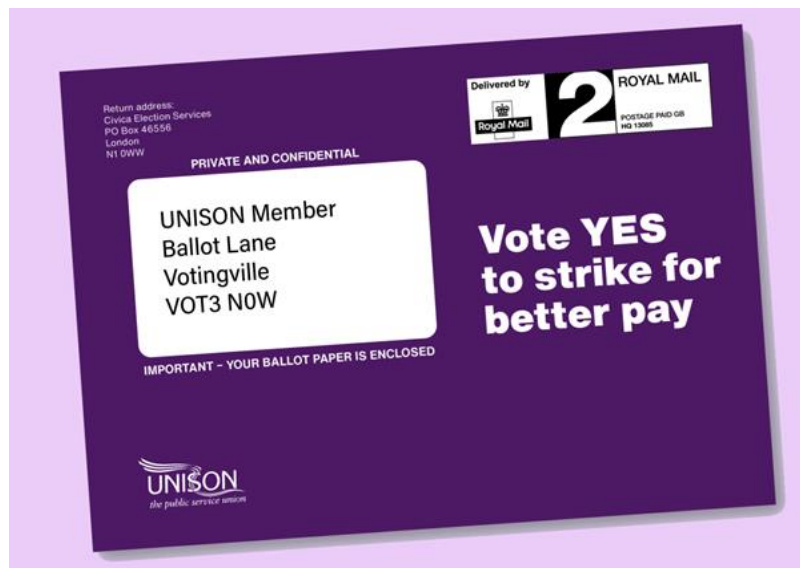


The Purple Envelope Has Landed!



Members employed by LBB, in schools and BELS are starting to receive their pay ballot. **As other unions have received bigger pay offers based on the fact they have/ have had national strike action, we urge you to vote YES and return your ballot paper.**

The mass phoning round of members has begun. Please support those putting in their time phoning you by responding to their messages/ phone calls.

When you post your ballot paper, either email contactus@barnetunison.org.uk or let your rep at work know and ask them to pass on the information. This will save us a phone call!

Or volunteer to speak to colleagues where you work and find out if they've posted and be a point of contact for the branch so instead of contacting an entire team we just contact one person in the team.

UNISON National Pay ballot : Frequently Asked Questions 2024

1. What was the UNISON pay claim?

UNISON, alongside the other Local Government trade unions Unite and GMB, submitted a claim for an increase of £3,000 or 10%, whichever is the highest at every pay point. In addition, the claim also included a 2 hour reduction in the working week with no pay detriment, an additional day annual leave, and reviews of discriminatory pay gaps

2. What did the employers offer?

The employers offered an increase of £1,481 or 2.5%, whichever is the highest and rejected everything else.

3. Why is UNISON balloting us?

Yet again, the pay offer from our employers is another pay cut in real terms. We've had years of pay cuts and we have to say enough is enough. School and council workers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are being balloted.

4. When will I get my ballot paper?

The ballot opened on **4 September**. Ballot papers will start arriving over the next few days – they are being sent out in batches because there's about **360,000 UNISON** members in schools and councils!

5. Is UNISON recommending how to vote?

Yes, and **YES!** UNISON has rejected the employers offer, and is recommending to all members to vote **YES** for strike action

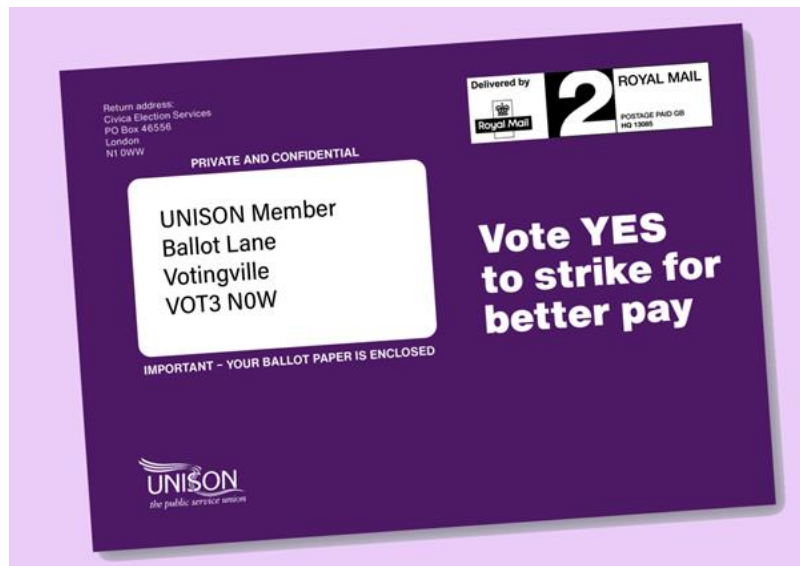
6. Shouldn't UNISON be negotiating first?

UNISON reps spent weeks negotiating with the employers, but they wouldn't increase their offer. So now we need to make it clear how serious we are about getting a decent pay rise.

7. Will my vote really make a difference?

Definitely – every single vote will make a difference. That's because we have some really restrictive anti-union laws – so we can't vote online, and over 50% of members must vote.

8. How will I know when I get my ballot paper?



It will arrive in an A5 bright purple envelope, it will have the UNISON logo on the front and will also say in large letters **Stand Together For Better Pay, Council and School Pay 2024** on the front. It should be hard to miss!

9. How do I vote?

In the bright purple envelope, you will have a ballot paper – you put a X in one of the boxes (preferably **YES**) and then use the pre-paid, pre-addressed envelope to post the paper back to CES who are running the ballot for UNISON.

10. When do I need to return my ballot paper?

Your ballot paper must be returned before **16 October 10am**. CES need to have received it by then, so really just complete and post it back as soon as you receive it.

11. What if I don't get a ballot paper?

If you haven't had a ballot paper by **17 September**, then call the Hotline immediately on **0800 0857 857** and they will check your address and send out a replacement paper

12. I've heard people say it's a disaggregated ballot? What's that?

A disaggregated ballot means that we are all being balloted by employer. So for instance in Barnet, we have over 20 separate ballots – some smaller ones in schools that pay NJC pay, plus one for council workers and school workers still employed by Barnet. This is the same in every branch in the country. We need to get over **50%** in as many of those ballots as possible.

13. If a workmate joins now will they get a ballot paper?

Someone not already in UNISON has until **3 October** to join if they want to have a vote. They can join here: [Join UNISON and get essential cover](#)

14. Can people not in UNISON go on strike?

Yes, but we would always encourage someone to be in a union if they are going to strike. Plus, they wouldn't be eligible for any strike pay unless they join the union taking strike action!

15. Can agency/contract workers join and strike?

Yes, agency workers can join UNISON and can go on strike

16. Will I get strike pay?

UNISON pays £50 a day strike pay. This amount can be changed depending on how many members are taking strike action. As soon as the ballot result is known, there will be discussions and decisions made about where strikes will be and about strike pay. If we get over **50% turnout** and a **YES** vote for action, we will keep you updated about strike dates and pay. Details on how to claim it will be available when needed.

17. If we strike, we'll lose money even with strike pay. Is it worth striking?

When we take strike action, we win more money overall than we lose. We know it's difficult to lose money, but without taking action we know we'll be worse off this year already. However, if we stand together, get the vote out and fight back, we can win more.

18. When we win, will the pay be backdated?

Yes, back to 1 April 2024

19. Do you know when we'll get the money?

That will depend on when the employers give in and agree to our pay claim!

20. If someone isn't in UNISON will they also get the pay rise?

Yes, but we have more chance of getting a better pay rise if we are stronger, so ask anyone not in UNISON to join and get involved to help us win for everyone!

21. Where can I find out more?

You can come to the visit the Barnet UNISON media channels where we are publishing updated information about the strike ballot on a regular basis.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/barnet_unison

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BarnetUNISON>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/barnetunison/>

Website: <https://www.barnetunison.me.uk/wp/>

Council Budget

Everyone working for the Council on emails will have received an email about the difficult position of the Council budget.

UNISON will be submitting its suggestions for saving money in due course and it will be things like...Do we really need 2 Chief Executive Officers? Multiple Directors in service areas?

Interestingly we pay lots of money for increasing numbers of, presumably, very intelligent people to find out the biggest pressure is... Housing.

Not enough houses = more people in temporary accommodation = bigger bills for councils to make up the shortfall on Housing Benefit as it does not cover the full cost of rent = mega (and guaranteed) bucks for private landlords.

Apparently the solution is unbelievably difficult to come up with and is very complex.

We suppose

- ending Right to Buy,
- bringing in rent controls and capping rents,
- improving the ability of Councils to bring into use the 1000s of empty properties

Are potential solutions which are deemed as simplistic? So simplistic our main political parties prefer the ongoing leeching of public money into the pockets of the already wealthy rather than campaign for these measures.

We're clearly not paid enough money to understand that level of complexity!

Are You an Assessment and Enablement Officer?

Below are two articles about a strike taking place in Lancashire. The workers are called social care support workers; in Barnet we call the AEOs.

Read the articles and contact Barnet UNISON if you have any questions or views as to what Barnet UNISON AEOs want here in Barnet email us at contactus@barnetunison.org.uk

Support workers strike at county over pay dispute

Up to 200 Lancashire social care support workers begin three-day strike

Helen Davies, UNISON Branch Chair.

Get set for Green UNISON Week by becoming a citizen scientist

Greg Marshall, the chair of UNISON's Environment Agency sector committee, explains how to become a citizen scientist, as we near Green UNISON Week



With the end of summer now just days away, it's time to think about Green UNISON Week. It takes place from 13-20 September, and this year the week is highlighting citizen science.

Citizen science is simply volunteers getting involved in science, whether it be collecting data or campaigning. Green UNISON Week hopes to highlight the movement and present opportunities to get involved.

Greg Marshall (pictured above) is a senior advisor on water for England's Environment Agency (EA) and chair of UNISON's EA sector committee.

He says that, "Citizen science can play an important role in supporting organisations. It can help build knowledge to either drive campaigns, expose issues or, indeed, support regulators – as happens at the EA – to improve nature, improve the environment that they're in."

[Click here to read further](#)

Stop the far right – No fascists in London – Saturday 28 September



[Click here to read further](#)



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