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# PROGRAMME 2023



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# WHY JOIN A UNION?

Whether you make art or enjoy art, we all have the right to enjoy a rich cultural life.

Unions work to ensure that members access the pay, terms and conditions that they deserve and the opportunity to appreciate creativity and cultural experiences.

Equity fights for the workers that creates those creative and cultural experiences to flourish.

We are all workers, linked by our experiences in the workplace, our passion to work, and our desire to enjoy the fruits of our labour.



**To all artists: good work**  
**To all workers: good art**  
**To all people: Equity**

**Solidarity from Equity to all at With Banners Held High Festival 2023**




## SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SUSTAINABLE LIVING

### Introduction

This years With Banners Held High is proud to announce a great selection of speakers, performing artists, campaign stalls, food and drink stalls and for the first time children's activities organised by Grow Wakefield. We have 3 marching bands taking part in this years parade which will accompany the parade of trade union and campaign banners through the centre of Wakefield.

This years event will focus on the current climate crisis and cost of living crisis and a total lack of initiative from the current Government to tackle this crisis. Privatisation of the Public Utilities has created the need for profit and it is shareholder dividends that take priority over any concerns for the environment. Workers have also had to endure the biggest attack ever on employment law and this makes it more vital that every worker in every industry joins a trade union to fight these draconian anti-trade union laws.

This years event will be using the theme of Sustainable Energy, Sustainable Living and the need to provide quality well paid secure employment for future generations.

This is a proud Annual event for Wakefield and is a massive show of Solidarity from the whole of the trade union movement and is growing year on year and getting better and better every year. It is also a family event with music and speakers and children's activities that we are looking to further enhance in future years.

**Philip Boyes and Trevor Howard,**  
 With Banners Held High Joint Chairs.

# Organising at Cutlery Works with Sheffield Needs A Payrise

## Sheffield Needs A Pay Rise

**When I first began working as a bartender at Cutlery Works in January 2022 I had few complaints – I thought it was a standard bar job in a nicer venue than I was used to working in. After a few weeks the novelty began to fade. I still believed that it was a standard bar job, however I remembered that standards in the hospitality industry are incredibly low.**

Business was seemingly unpredictable, and my shifts were often either hectic or numbingly quiet with not much in between. On busy shifts we were understaffed, and on quiet shifts you might be sent home earlier than expected. This was enabled by the fact all in-house staff were on zero-hours contracts. Our hours and finances were hard to predict and, earning minimum wage, hard to live off.

Communication between upper management and staff was very poor. We lacked forums for staff feedback and were left in the dark about decisions made affecting our everyday work and lives. This lack of communication was key to our dissatisfaction and meant our employers were unaware of the extent of our complaints.

Employment standards in hospitality are so low that many people have become complacent and are reluctant to even make the first steps towards organising. At Cutlery Works, some doubted change could ever be achieved. For others, the conditions were better than their previous jobs so not worth challenging. However, many of us had worked in the hospitality industry for several years and knew that our conditions wouldn't improve unless we took action.

When we first started having casual conversations about organising and changing our workplace we were understaffed, working in an environment with little regard for health and safety and bosses who didn't always seem to regard us as human beings, so there was a lot of interest and enthusiasm.

With the support of Sheffield Needs A Payrise we wrote a collective grievance letter and presented it to our general manager in a "march on the boss". We aimed to improve our pay and conditions and create a more democratic workplace. Cutlery Works employed several methods of union busting but we kept pushing for change, calling on the support of the Sheffield Trades Council to confront their union busting in a "community call-out".

It takes a lot of energy and courage to organise in a workplace and industry with relatively little trade union activity. Presenting our collective grievance to our manager and going through the grievance process was nerve wracking not just because it wasn't something I, or any of us, had done before but also because we were directly confronting someone who had great control over our lives, most significantly our incomes.

We kept fighting and in August we won a pay rise from National Minimum Wage to National Living Wage, rotas two weeks in advance, health and safety and PPE improvements and guaranteed minimum hours contracts.

Since leaving Cutlery Works I've continued to work with Sheffield Needs A Payrise as a volunteer. When we canvas hospitality venues I often meet workers with the same defeatist attitude some of my co-workers had. I can now tell them not just that change is possible, but that it's already happening in venues around Sheffield. We know that it's easy to feel isolated in a precarious job but when you stand together with your co-workers you will find great strength in your unity and receive huge support from the trade movement not just in Sheffield but across Yorkshire and the nation.

Annie Lawson-Foley



**PROUD TO SUPPORT  
WITH BANNERS HELD HIGH**



For protection and security at work join GMB Union



join online

[www.gmb.org.uk/join](http://www.gmb.org.uk/join)



call us

0345 337 7777



request a form

[wakefield.office@gmb.org.uk](mailto:wakefield.office@gmb.org.uk)



**Solidarity from B06 GMB Organising Branch**

Sponsors Content

# GREETINGS TO THE WITH BANNERS HELD HIGH FESTIVAL



General Secretary: Mick Lynch

President: Alex Gordon

[www.rmt.org.uk](http://www.rmt.org.uk)

UNITE THE UNION  
North East, Yorkshire and Humber  
PROUD TO SPONSOR WITH BANNERS HELD HIGH



Karen Reay  
Regional Secretary

Patricia Tillotson  
Regional Chair



## Shining a Light on Energy Sustainable Energy, Sustainable living

**At With Banners Held High this year we think about the Energy we will need to build our Green Future. How can we generate this energy sustainably so that workers in this country, and across the World all live sustainably?**

Listening to the many voices talking about energy, there are so many conflicts evident.

What is clear, is that we are supposed to be reducing Carbon emissions to Zero, yet all reports show that this is not happening fast enough. As UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said, "We are racing headlong to Climate Catastrophe and our foot is on the accelerator". Capitalism and the drive to make profit are conspiring to twist the energy system at the expense of people and planet.

### **We need more renewable sustainable energy.**

Renewables generation is powered directly by the sun or lunar gravity: solar and wind, tidal and waves. These are all classed as properly renewable because they are available indefinitely into the future for as long as the sun shines and the moon circles the earth. The annual solar energy hitting the earth is many multiples of both current and future global energy demands. Add in tides and waves, and we have all the electricity generation capacity that we can imagine and more.

In many ways, you would think renewables are the perfect capitalist project - after the initial outlay there is a short payback period, then sit back and let the money roll in.

So why is capitalism pushing an energy system based on nuclear, gas, hydrogen and biomass instead of backing renewables?

**45 years of neoliberal economics has developed a system where the government increasingly feeds corporations and maintains the corporate grip on the economy. Objectivity and logic have long since left. The energy system is a great example of this.**

### **Public subsidy for private profit.**

This UK Government has put incentives in place, so that now corporations funnel public money straight into shareholder bank accounts. A great example of this is the "Contract for Difference" payment system that applies to biomass and nuclear. These payments cover the gap between the cost of electricity from renewables and the massive costs of nuclear generated electricity and biomass. This we have to pay, added into our electricity bill standing charge as a "contract for difference."

For example, Drax typically receives around £2,000,000 EVERY DAY direct from bill payers to fund the high costs of destroying the great northern hemisphere forests and shipping the wood pellets to Yorkshire.

Who benefits from the higher bills? Who benefits from deforestation? Who suffers from the wood dust? As always, the already rich benefit, workers and communities here and around the World, pay the price.

### **Oil and Gas.**

The fossil fuel industry has a different strategy - it pays almost no tax despite being the main cause of climate breakdown. Instead, it runs a huge PR industry to convince people that the world will end if we stop pumping oil. They have an army of lobbyists spreading lies, misinformation and bribes to ministers to maintain their industry well past the point of social and economic benefit. Our pensions prop up the industry, our tax system is rigged for their benefit not ours, and we pay again to repair the damage they cause. This strategy will lead in increasing costs for consumers and for both climate and nature.

**On top of this, fossil fuel companies have the right to sue governments for loss of profit through the Energy Charter Treaty when states enact laws to protect the climate. Some European countries have withdrawn from this treaty, but obviously not the UK.**

**Hydrogen.**

Hydrogen can be generated cleanly, using electrolysis powered by renewable energy. It is referred to as Green Hydrogen. But don't be fooled - most talk of hydrogen is to extend the life of the gas industry, making Blue or Grey hydrogen from methane. This will never be cheap, it will never be green, but it will keep the gas industry in business long past its sell by date and stopping us make the sustainable energy choices. As a secondary energy source hydrogen is so much less efficient than genuine renewable energy.

**Solutions.**

**There are answers to these problems. We need a just transition for workers in high carbon industries, either to transform the industry (so that we can re-engineer production of glass, steel etc.) or to transition the workforce into skilled, secure, well-paid work in a new green industry.**

**But we know that will not happen when corporations are in control. This is why we need strategic systems and infrastructure to be under OUR control, to be run for the collective good.**

We need a programme of nationalising energy, transport and health to manage the transition to zero carbon in a fair and just way. The only way to deliver a just transition for union members is through a strategically planned and publicly controlled system. To deliver this system, we need to mobilise our collective power through worker led transition plans and worker led political transformations.

**What next?**

Come and talk to us and others on the stalls.

Ask about Trade Union involvement in green policies, as green workplace reps, about influencing union policy.

Ask about a Just Transition.

Ask about the Energy Charter Treaty.

Ask about subsidies for biomass and the damage it does to the workforce and to disadvantaged communities.

Find out more about hydrogen and how carbon capture and storage is being twisted to greenwash fossil fuels.

Ask about how retrofitting homes can lower bills, improve health, cut emissions and provide thousands of skilled, green jobs.

We have actions you can take and campaigns you can get involved in.

And talk to others, your friends and fellow workers, and get them involved too!

**Just Transition Wakefield**

April 2023

**Educate, Organise and Agitate.**

**Supporting Trade Unions on strike to defend members jobs, working conditions and for better pay.**

**Bringing trade Unions Together across the Wakefield District.**

**Get your Trade Union Branch involved.**

**JOIN US**

**Discussing issues, organising for People and the Planet.**

**Hybrid meetings online and in-person at the Red Shed on the 2nd Wednesday of the month.**

**WFandDistrict-TUC@GMX.COM**



## Join Usdaw Today

The Union for retail and distribution workers

Usdaw is one of Britain's largest trade unions with over 350,000 members, including 50,000 in the North Eastern Region.



To join or find out more visit

[www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)

or call 0800 030 80 30

**General Secretary:** Paddy Lillis

**President:** Jane Jones

**Regional Secretary:** Joanne Thomas

Usdaw Unit 2, Temple Point Business Park,  
Bullerthorpe Lane, Leeds LS15 9JL

UsdawUnion



# EM&SI BRANCH

**UNITE ENGINEERING, MANUFACTURING  
& SERVICE INDUSTRY BRANCH**

**UNITE MEMBERS VALUE  
THE GOOD PRODUCTIONS OF  
WITH BANNERS HELD HIGH**

EM&SI Branch



**Working for its members**

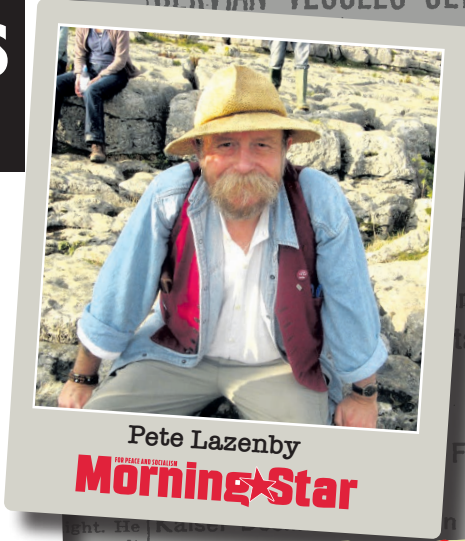
**EM&SI Branch meetings are held in Doncaster  
on every second Friday of the month.**

**Further details can be obtained from our  
Branch Secretary on 07531038659**



# POETRY, PRESS & PREJUDICE!

On the day I started work as a 17-years-old trainee reporter on a weekly newspaper in Otley in Wharfedale in June, 1967, pinned to the wall next to my battered Remington typewriter was a piece of yellowing paper.



Pete Lazenby  
Morning Star

“Thank God you cannot bribe or twist the honest British journalist, But seeing what the man will do unbribed, there’s no occasion to.”

I found later it was written by poet Humbert Wolfe who lived from 1886 to 1940. I didn’t know the context, but it’s stuck with me ever since. To me it expressed a view not of journalists – though we know there are some unpleasant characters amongst us – but of the Press. Here’s a couple of personal recollections. In 1972 I became a reporter on the Yorkshire Evening Post. On my first day I gained an inkling of what would be expected of me by my new employer, Yorkshire Post Newspapers.

The company had moved from its headquarters in Albion Street in Leeds city centre to its landmark Yorkshire Post Building in Wellington Street. It housed more than 1,000 workers. Every week around 30 new staff were collectively “inducted” into the company, with a short lecture from the company’s personnel manager (these were the days before “human resources”).

He said that a few years earlier the company had changed its name from Yorkshire Conservative Newspapers to Yorkshire Post Newspapers. He added: “I am here to tell you that only the name has changed.” In subsequent years I saw at first-hand how stories were manipulated in small ways, how photos could be cropped to give a false picture – years before the emergence of electronic media.

## Some of the instances now seem laughable, but here’s one...

When Arthur Scargill was standing to become President of the National Union of Mineworkers in 1982 there was one other candidate for the post, Trevor Bell. Bell was not a mineworker. He was a white-collar worker and a member of the colliery officials’ union COSA, which was part of the NUM. And he was of course the candidate supported by the right-wing media.

When stories about the election were to appear in the Yorkshire Evening Post the paper’s chief sub-editor at the time would shout “get that photo of Trevor in his pit gear!” A runner would hastily fetch from the library the photograph of Trevor Bell wearing pit gear, grimy with coal dust after one of his rare visits down a pit. Arthur, though, would be pictured wearing a suit, collar and tie.

The chief sub-editor actually believed that depicting Bell dressed as a miner and Arthur in a suit would influence the way Yorkshire’s 50,000 miners voted. It was so daft as to be laughable. It was also insulting to miners.

This recollection is minutiae compared to excesses among sections of the national media which has seen much of the Press dragged down from the gutter into the sewer. It has helped poison much broadcast “news” reporting.

In 2020 a comprehensive booklet: “Fix the Media – What we can do,” was produced by MediaNorth, formerly the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom. It gives an excellent analysis not only of the problem but suggests solutions to it. I recommend it. And of course I urge you to read the Morning Star.

-Pete Lazenby

## Final Reminder: WBHH Online Workshop Series:-

Tuesday 16th May at 7.30pm  
Sustainable Living - learning from successes-  
building energy efficient homes homes for all

Tuesday 23 May at 7pm  
Buses - the Sustainable transport solution -  
why we need better buses for all



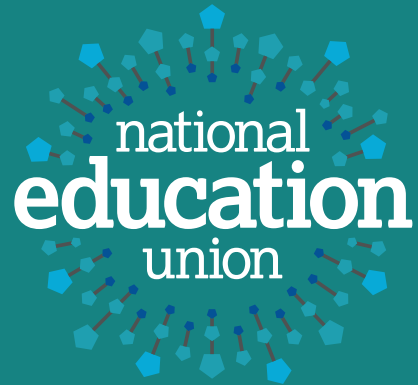
More info here... <http://linktr.ee/wbhh2023>

# 2023 SCHEDULE SUSTAINABLE ENERGY SUSTAINABLE LIVING



12:10	Welcome & housekeeping	Ian Clayton Broadcaster & writer (compere)
12:15	Opening speech	Denise Jeffery Leader, Wakefield Council
12:25	Speech 1	Jack Hemingway Deputy Leader, Wakefield Council
12:35	Speech 2	Karen Reay Regional Secretary, Unite the union North East & Yorkshire
12:45	Speech 3	Richard Burgon MP for Leeds East
13:55	Act 1	Joe Solo musician, poet
13:10	Speech 4	Kevin Courtney General Secretary, National Education Union
13:20	Speech 5	Ellie Drake Regional Organiser, Equity union North East, Yorkshire & Humberside,
13:30	Speech 6	Bill Adams Regional Secretary, Trades Union Congress, Yorkshire & the Humber
13:40	Act 2	Leeds People's Choir Songs of joy, struggle, liberation and peace
14:05	Speech 7	Rhiann Wheeler Health Campaigns Together & Royal College of Nursing Steward
14:15	Speech 8	Gaz Jackson RMT Regional Organiser Yorkshire & Lincolnshire
14:30	Act 3	Joe Solo Socialist Folk, Punk, Rock
15:15	Act 4	Bard Company Poetry, music and comedy
15:55	Thank you speech	Phil Boyes / Trevor Howard WBHH Chairs
16:00	END	END

# Wakefield NEU Proud To Support With Banners Held High





# ORGREAVE

## TRUTH AND JUSTICE CAMPAIGN



## JUSTICE FOR MINERS IS LONG OVERDUE

The mass support the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign (OTJC) receives is a real boost as we continue working hard to keep the 84/85 miners' strike and Orgreave under the political spotlight. We are proud to be at With Banners Held High again this year amongst comrades and friends.



Copyright: Darren Coffield 2020

### The relevance of Orgreave

We are continually reminded of the relevance of the year long 1984/5 Miners' Strike and justice for Orgreave by the many challenges of the economic, political and legal system today.

The inescapable issue of corruption, criminality and coverups in the Metropolitan Police is being laid bare on a daily basis. Mining communities all over Britain know only too well that many police forces, not just the Met, repeatedly abuse their power with little or no accountability. Officers who perpetrate and perpetuate violence and abuse have still been given, and are allowed to maintain positions of power.

In 1984/5 the Tories mobilised unprecedented resources to discredit and criminalise miners, the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) and its leaders. They used the full force of the state against the miners and our communities who were fighting against the Tory plan for mass pit closures and the destruction of trade unions and organised labour. The strike received phenomenal support throughout Britain and the world. Many have clear and raw memories of the injustices meted out by a state-directed paramilitary police force, leaving physical and emotional scars. Government involvement and the policing and outcome of that strike set the tone for industrial relations and the policing of strikes and demonstrations in Britain.

In 2023 we see the Tory neoliberal plan, developed throughout the 1980s, is being effectively executed. While poverty accelerates and the rich get richer, draconian policing laws are rapidly being introduced to attempt to stifle dissent and criminalise protest.

As homelessness and hunger increases, racism, xenophobia and a culture of scapegoating, hate crimes and fascism is on the rise.

All this against a backdrop of a right wing media regurgitating lies and propaganda to try to demonise and demoralise those of us who are struggling for a better world. Freedom to protest has to be essential in a democracy to initiate change and provide a platform for groups and opinions.

### What happened at Orgreave?

The NUM had been picketing the Orgreave coking plant on the border of Sheffield and Rotherham to prevent scab lorries moving the coke to the steelworks in Scunthorpe. They had held regular pickets and mobilised for a mass picket on 18 June 1984, just over three months into the strike. Thousands of miners, many wearing jeans and t-shirts, gathered at Orgreave on that hot summers day. They were lured into the field by the police who were ready and waiting for them. The atmosphere, which was initially good humoured, resulted in a brutal police ambush and police riot with the wrongful arrests of 95 picketing miners. Thousands of police in riot gear, including police mounted on horseback, police with dogs and police armed with shields and truncheons, violently attacked the miners. They chased, assaulted and incapacitated people at random. The miners were being severely punished by the state for fighting to save their jobs, industry and communities, not just for them but for all of us.

Many miners who were arrested were charged with offences that could have resulted in life sentences if convicted. Almost a year later, with all the worry and anguish for the miners, their families, comrades and friends, the cases went to court but the police evidence was so unreliable that the trial collapsed as the prosecution had no choice but to offer no evidence and the miners were acquitted. However, neither the police or the government ever admitted any wrongdoing and no officers were ever prosecuted or disciplined for their violence, lies and perjury.

## The campaign for truth and justice

The courageous Hillsborough campaign and the outcome of the Hillsborough Independent Panel gave renewed hope for the OTJC to set up in 2012 to press again for an inquiry into what happened at Orgreave. The NUM, social justice activists, lawyers and politicians since 1984 have tried to expose that what happened at Orgreave was one of the most serious miscarriages of justice in an industrial dispute. An inquiry into what the Tory government engineered and micromanaged, and the police operations at Orgreave, is essential to get truth and justice for the miners and our communities. This is not just for the communities and families so deeply affected throughout Britain but because truth and justice is in the public interest and what we should rely on in a democratic society.

Many attending WBHH have joined us at our numerous events. Support and solidarity continues from major Trade Unions, Trades Councils, branches, and activists. Many Labour councils have called on various Tory Home Secretaries to order an inquiry and politicians also continue to show support by using parliamentary processes to promote the need for an Orgreave inquiry. The Tories have repeatedly refused to hold any kind of inquiry. Our social media, web page and media articles as well as meetings, debates, conferences, rallies, exhibitions, demonstrations, pickets and events throughout Britain ensures our profile and solidarity for others is maintained. Our dynamic campaign also involves us organising many music, art, comedy, theatre and other cultural activities. In addition to support from comrades in Ireland, Wales and Scotland, we have connections and support in the US, Germany, France, Norway, Sweden and Denmark and our publicity and merchandise has been circulated worldwide. We also have strong links and solidarity with many other justice campaigns and regularly show our solidarity and support for strikers on their demonstrations and picket lines.

## The crucial role of women

**The women's role throughout the miners' strike was absolutely essential.** Women Against Pit Closures (WAPC) and women's support groups were formed all over Britain. Many women in addition to WAPC played a sustained and active role in supporting the strike through their community, political organisations and trade unions. The women organised events, meetings and rallies, fundraised, collected and provided food, went on pickets, marched and spoke in support of the strike. This was life changing and unprecedented for many of us. WAPC and women activists put socialist feminist ideas into practice in an industrial dispute and empowered women to take on leading roles in communities traditionally dominated by men.

The women's resolve became stronger as hardship bit deeper and the strike got longer, emphasising the crucial role of women in industrial struggle. Many women involved in the strike had previously not been politically active and even quite hesitant yet they became prominent, creative and gifted individuals. This experience enabled many of the women to develop in their future lives and their example and the role played by many women in our movement and our campaign today is as crucial as ever.

## Never give up

Our continued campaign for truth and justice adds to an awareness amongst younger generations who see that the injustices they campaign against have many similarities with the miners' struggle. It is heartening to see hundreds of thousands of workers mobilising and striking on a massive scale for better services, jobs, pay and conditions.

**Come along and join us and a line up of impressive speakers on Saturday June 17th 2023 in Sheffield for our annual Anniversary march and rally. Bring your trade union, campaign and community banners and join with us to demand truth and justice.**

**2024 is the 40th anniversary of the miners' strike and we will be involved in a number of events and activities to commemorate and celebrate the strike. Keep a look out for events you can take part in.**

**Kate Flannery**  
**Secretary**

Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign  
<https://otjc.org.uk>



**proudly supports With Banners Held High.**

**We are a union for the unwaged and  
you can join us at:**

**<https://join.unitetheunion.org/>**

Sponsors Content



# ORGREAVE ANNUAL MARCH AND RALLY



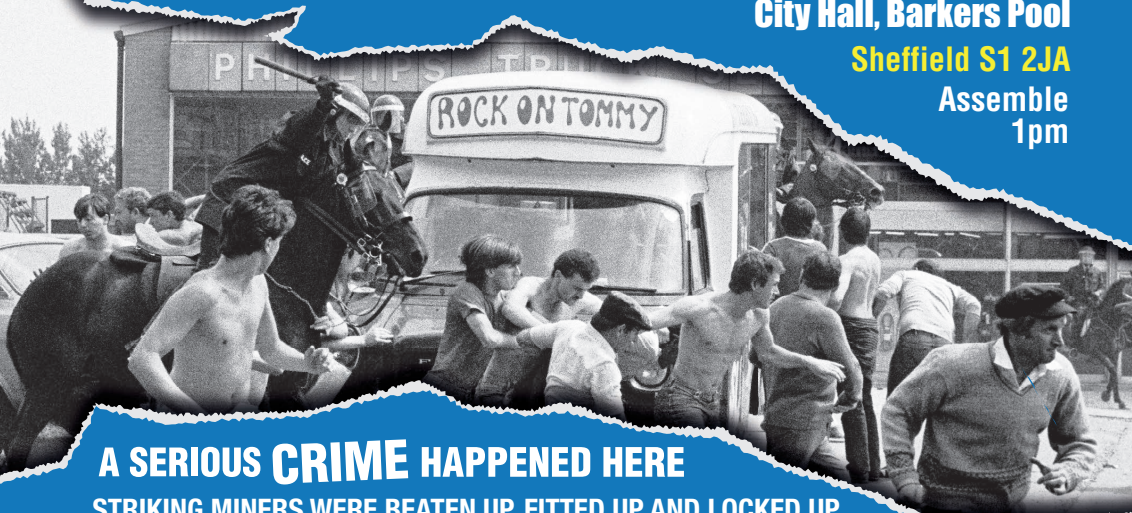
#OrgreaveJustice

Saturday 17 June 2023

City Hall, Barkers Pool

Sheffield S1 2JA

Assemble 1pm



### A SERIOUS CRIME HAPPENED HERE

STRIKING MINERS WERE BEATEN UP, FITTED UP AND LOCKED UP.

© Martin Jenkinson Images / www.pressphotos.co.uk

## SUPPORT US IN OUR CAMPAIGN FOR TRUTH AND JUSTICE SUPPORT OUR CALL FOR AN ORGREAVE INQUIRY

Come along and support the Annual Orgreave Rally organised by the Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign, commemorating the 39th anniversary of the Miners' Strike and the police riot at Orgreave. Please bring banners, placards, drums, whistles, family and friends.

Led by the Unite Brass Band, come and march with us through Sheffield City Centre and support our call for an inquiry for truth and justice for striking miners brutalised by the state and police at the Orgreave Coking plant on 18 June 1984.

#### SPEAKERS

**Yvette Williams**  
Director, Justice For Grenfell

**Morag Livingstone**  
Film Director, Author & Activist

**Neil Findley**  
Former Member of the Scottish Parliament

**John Dunn**  
Arrested striking miner, Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign

**Mark Serwotka**  
General Secretary - Public & Commercial Services Union (PCS)

**Chris Kitchen**  
General Secretary - National Union of Mineworkers (NUM)

**Jodie Beck**  
Policy & Campaigns Officer - Liberty

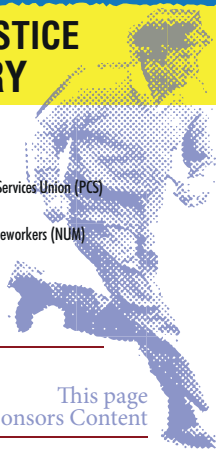
#### COMPERES

**Chris Peace and Joe Rollin**  
Orgreave Truth and Justice Campaign

#### MUSIC

**Unite Brass Band**  
PCS Samba Band

This page  
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**UNISON**  
Yorkshire and  
Humberside

# Fraternal greetings to all at With Banners Held High Festival from all at UNISON

In these uncertain times there's never been a better time to join UNISON.

For as little as £1.30 a month our members get:

- advice, support and help at work
- a helpline that is open until midnight
- legal help for you at work and your family at home
- plus a wide range of exclusive member discounts

Annual salary	Monthly cost
Up to £2,000	£1.30
£2,001–£5,000	£3.50
£5,001–£8,000	£5.30
£8,001–£11,000	£6.60
£11,001–£14,000	£7.85
£14,001–£17,000	£9.70
£17,001–£20,000	£11.50
£20,001–£25,000	£14.00
£25,001–£30,000	£17.25
£30,001–£35,000	£20.30
over £35,000	£22.50

Join online at [joinunison.org](https://joinunison.org)  
or call free on 0800 0 857 857

Sponsors Content

## The Kinsley Evictions 1905 Three Months of Evictions; Three and a half Years Strike

From 1904 – 1907 a continuous dispute ensued at the Fitzwilliam and Hemsworth collieries near Wakefield as to how much the miners should be paid for getting coal. Early on, the dispute went to court where the Leeds Stipendiary Magistrate (Mr Atkinson) made an award. The award was accepted, but then Management reneged on the agreement causing the dispute to escalate into a strike and lockout which resulted in the coal owners evicting over 100 miners and their families from their colliery owned homes. The practice in Victorian and Edwardian days of providing housing for workers seems, at first glance, to be an act of benevolence and philanthropy. However, the very opposite is the truth as it gave the masters complete control of their employees lives.



From April 1904 things had been unsettled; the miners were paying five shillings (25p) a week rent which left hardly anything else to keep house and home together, and then the coal owners pressed for substantial reductions in pay which the miners said amounted to 50% of earnings. Stoppages took place with the Managing Director refusing to meet the union. Things went on in this unsettled state until management brought things to a head in July 1905.

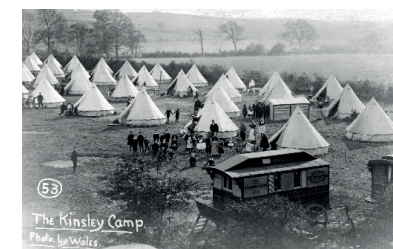
It was reported that on Saturday July 22nd at Pontefract West Riding Court, eviction notices had been requested against 43 striking colliers of the Hemsworth and Fitzwilliam Colliery Company. Mr W H. Nicholls the colliery traffic manager said if these men would pay their rents and return to work the eviction notices would be withdrawn. Mr Raley of Barnsley (in defence of the men) said this was coercing the men to return to work. The following week 520 men working in the Haigh Moor seam handed in their notices. The company then retaliated by giving notice to 140 surface and ancillary staff with the intention of closing the whole works pending a negotiated settlement. The stage was now set for the Masters to attempt to break the workers and displace their families onto the streets without conscience or mercy.

Uniquely, the dispute and evictions in the small pit village of Kinsley near Hemsworth was captured in photographs and printed onto post cards. Thus, although unusual for those days, the whole dispute went viral across the country making everyone aware of the working and living conditions of the miners. This attracted support from Keir Hardie and the fledgling Labour Party.

## The Evictions

The first batch of evictions was carried out on Tuesday August 15th 1905 with further evictions taking place at later dates. The families were to live in tents which had been erected on the adjacent land and due to the rain, waterproof coverings had to be purchased. Water for domestic use had to be carried in buckets from the spring at Shay which was a great distance away, so the site would have to be connected to the water supply and sanitary arrangements made.

Further evictions took place during the following weeks. In one house on Wednesday August 23rd there was a little boy lying in bed who was too ill to be moved. Wednesday September 6th was a day of rain which started as drizzle and worsened throughout the day. Even though the Police showed as much consideration as possible, which had always been the case, they were under orders, and the evictions were to be executed. Therefore, the colliers, their families, and Mothers with babes in arms were turned out of their homes with their furniture and bedding placed on the King's highway in the torrential rain.



## Solidarity

Now the evictions were in progress with the officials of authority doing their worst, another organisation called Working Class Solidarity was moving into action. Mr Thomas Elstone, the Landlord of the Kinsley Hotel proved to be a hero. He arranged for the hotel ballroom to be turned into a dormitory to sleep all children between the ages of 5 and 10, and the relief committee provided a bed for each child. Mr Elstone said he would provide breakfasts for the children each day until the trouble ceased, and intended to raise funds to provide dinners. Mrs Potts of the Gospel Mission made an appeal for children's clothing and arranged for repairs to be done. This however was not all, because while the good people of the area were doing their best to help the miners, solidarity was spreading onto the national stage.

Nipsey money was a term for all monies paid out to striking miners, and funds were now coming in from all parts of the country made available by increased donations by lodges of workers. Choirs were organised next to collect in the regional towns and villages with the aim of providing boots and clothing for the children. On one particular Monday four choirs were sent to Huddersfield, Dewsbury, Halifax and York. Sometimes, in order to save money, the choirs would stay over three or four days at a time sleeping in chapels and mission rooms.



In this period of history the workhouse system run by the Board of Guardians was still in place. However, right through the dispute they had refused to provide any financial relief to either man, woman or child arguing that the men had work they could attend. On Saturday 7th October Mr Keir Hardie M.P and Ben Turner the Labour Party candidate for Dewsbury paid a visit to Kinsley. Keir Hardie was reported to have made a moving speech saying that the Board of Guardians must provide relief for the underfed children, and in his opinion they were defying the Local Government Board by refusing to do so.

During the dispute meetings were held around the district of Hemsworth and Kinsley. At these meetings the Eviction Committee fully explained to the public the position of the Miners and their evicted families. Notable Trade Unionists, M.P's, and Trades Councils all put their shoulder to the wheel in supporting the families and getting the message out to the people of the country that the situation was not the fault of the Miners, but that of a brutal and immoral employer. A meeting at Barnsley in May 1906 was convened with the purpose of raising support for the evicted Miners and their families. The meeting was addressed by Mr Herbert Smith (President) and Mr John Dixon (Secretary) of the Yorkshire Miners Association. Mr Ben Turner, Alderman of Dewsbury, also spoke and expressed his satisfaction that there was now a Labour Party in Parliament and that moves were ahead to pass legislation that would prevent the deplorable evictions which were taking place at Kinsley.

## The end of the Evictions

While the above was taking place there were moves by the Miners' Federation to secure housing for the evicted families and it was reported in the Barnsley Chronicle on 17th October 1906 that there had been acceptance of the Federation's offer to lease houses on Bett's Rows. At first there was some reluctance to have anything to do with the houses, but a dreadful storm a few days after changed people's minds and the Miners started to apply for the keys. Within a short time all were re-housed in Bett's Rows on New Street, King Street and Bond Street. So ended the 3 terrible months of evictions, but the strike continued in total for 3 and half years.

Although workers are no longer evicted into tents they are still treated in the same disgusting way by a capitalist system which operates exactly the same now as it did then. We can see this in the way that the P&O workers were thrown out of their jobs illegally in 2022. Long standing loyal employees treated like criminals by their employers who are just as brutal as the ones in 1905. Working people can only defend themselves in one way, and that is to join a Trade Union.

**I urge you all to join a Trade Union, take part in its activities, and march with banners held high.**

In Solidarity  
Michael A. Wood



**Museum**  
collections

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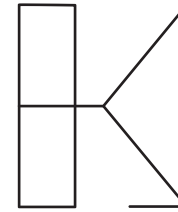
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