

Firefighter

The magazine of the Fire Brigades Union

7% + 5%
July 2022 July 2023

United we stand

Mobilisation of FBU members key to improvements
See p12

FBU MEMBERS IN
EARTHQUAKE RESCUES
See p8

THE FIGHT CONTINUES FOR
FIREFIGHTERS' PENSIONS
See p14

FIGHTING DISCRIMINATION
IN THE SERVICE
See p18

April/May 2023



www.fbu.org.uk

UNITY GETS RESULTS

Since the publication of the last issue of *Firefighter*, we have settled our pay dispute.

In a two-week ballot leading up to 6 March, 96% of FBU members voted to accept the revised offer on an 83% turnout.

We moved our employers repeatedly after the initial 2% offer last summer, finally pushing them to offer 7% from July 2022 and a further 5% from this July. In addition, we have obtained a number of commitments to negotiate further on CPD, control, retained and pay progression, which are now being advanced.

It is worth reminding ourselves how we got this far – by standing united and moving firmly towards strike action, delivering rock solid majorities and turnouts in every single ballot. Most members will now have received their back pay, though we are still pushing some employers who have been slow to implement it.

THE WAR ON WORKERS

The outcome of our pay campaign was the result of our ability to take effective strike action and to negotiate directly with our employers through collective bargaining (we do not have a pay review body).

The Westminster government is planning to attack both of these – via the Minimum Service Levels Bill and through the progression of its White Paper on the fire and rescue service.

In its first budget in March, the Sunak government had an opportunity to change course. Instead, it offered more of the same – a war on workers and handouts for the rich. The latest possible date for a general election is January 2025, and this government can do a lot of damage in that time if left unchallenged.

We cannot afford to relax. We must take the energy and unity of our pay campaign and use it to fight for the



future both of the service and our rights as workers.

NO COMPROMISE ON EQUALITY

Since the publication of the LFB Independent Culture Review in November, a flood of reports have reached the media of discrimination, harassment and abuse in the fire and rescue service. The HMI-CFRS report in late March added more grim details to the picture.

While the reports are shocking, many of the cases will not come as a surprise to our members who have been on the receiving end of abuse, or the union reps who have fought their corner.

As a union, we will fight to challenge discrimination, bullying and harassment – and that means asserting our collective power. We are unapologetic in pointing out that the problem goes right to the top – in a lack of action

and a sense of impunity at the most senior levels of management.

INJURED ON THE FRONT LINE

On 22 March, we received reports of a serious on-duty incident when a fire engine crashed near Bakewell, Derbyshire. One member has life-changing injuries. Our thoughts are with her, and we will continue to be on hand to provide support in the time ahead.

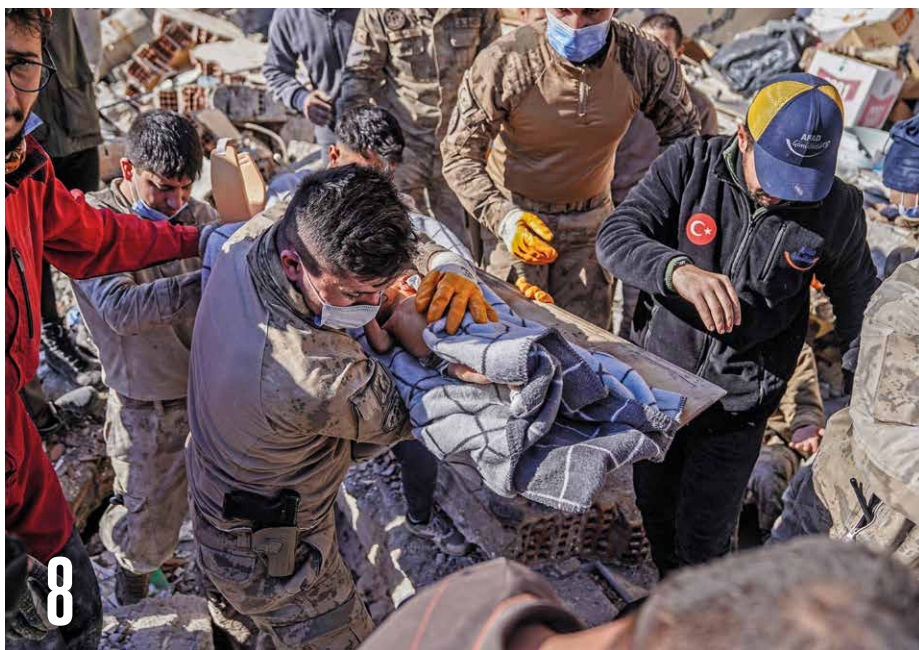


Did you know ...?

If the government increased the existing surcharge on bank profits from 3% to 35%, in line with the energy profits levy, this would raise £67bn over the next five years

Source: Guardian newspaper
bit.ly/Gdn-bank-windfall





SOPA IMAGES/ALAMY



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JANNA STRICK



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NEWS

FAREWELL ANDY

Andy Dark says goodbye after 18 years as union's assistant general secretary **P6**



DECON TESTING

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BUDGET



FBU members at a pay rally in London

FBU slams government's 'war on workers' in first budget

The first budget of the Sunak government, delivered on 15 March, might have been an opportunity to set out a change of course.

The government set out to “reassure the markets” after Liz Truss’s disastrous budget last autumn.

But “reassuring the markets”, in the language of this government, meant austerity – higher taxes, lower wages, and no respite from the cuts made since the Conservatives returned to power in 2010.

For many, poverty – including in-work poverty – is already the daily reality.

In 2010, the Trussell Trust – the UK’s biggest foodbank provider – had 35 foodbank centres. By the end of the last decade, it had 1,300.

Since 2010, the fire and rescue service has lost around one in five jobs.

Firefighters know first-hand the reality created by this lack of investment and

cuts to the service.

In the NHS, in youth services, to schools and across the public sector, a similar story can be told.

Some of the moves announced in this budget to increase childcare provision will be of some benefit to working people. But by and large, it offered more of the same.

Responding to the budget, FBU general secretary Matt Wrack said that a “multi-millionaire chancellor” had “declared war on hard pressed workers, with this Budget of cuts.”

In 2010, the Trussell Trust – the UK’s biggest foodbank provider – had 35 foodbank centres. By the end of the last decade, it had 1,300

He said that the government “has learned nothing” from the wave of strikes that have swept the country in the past year.

Referring to the FBU’s recent dispute, he said: “Firefighters forced the employers into making an improved pay offer on the back of an overwhelming vote for strike action.”

“However, just over a week after this dispute was settled, the Tories are at it again, with a budget that adopts the same cuts-driven approach to public sector pay and services.”

He continued: “The chancellor has stuck up two fingers to workers with this budget that does nothing for the low paid and poverty-stricken families during the cost-of-living crisis.”

“The Fire Brigades Union will resist any attacks on the pay, conditions and jobs of our members, as well as cuts to services.”

Campaigning pays off as council cancels plans to close control

Fire control and firefighter members in Cornwall have saved the service's fire control centre through months of organising and campaigning.

Cornwall council was planning to outsource emergency fire calls to outside the region. FBU members condemned this as a threat to public safety and vital fire control jobs that risked increased response times.

Local officials and members launched action across the region.

Fire control members compiled a report highlighting the varied and essential nature of their work.

Members hosted visits from Cornwall councillors, demonstrating how their professional skills, adaptability and local

knowledge help to ensure successful resolutions to serious incidents.

FBU members in other roles attended rallies in numbers outside council meetings, and provided witness evidence of the importance of fire control to all aspects of fire and rescue.

As a result of this lobbying, a cross-party committee of councillors unanimously recommended to keep the control centre open 24/7 and to improve it with new jobs, IT and funding. Members and the public then contacted their local councillors to demand this recommendation was upheld.

On 22 March, Cornwall council's cabinet voted to reverse plans to close the fire control centre.



Cornwall FBU members and supporters celebrate success

Lobbies and protests stop cuts

As firefighters rallied outside, Nottinghamshire council reversed £2m of cuts to the local fire service.

FBU members in the region won this U-turn by taking action against the threat. Planned cuts would have seen several fire stations lose firefighters, cover time and appliances.

After the initial announcement of plans for the cuts, members

attended a meeting of the combined fire authority, calling for the proposals to be shelved and demanding local authorities join the union in asking for greater investment.

Disappointingly at the time, the fire authority railroaded its proposals through with only a few votes against.

Immediately after this meeting FBU members, together with supportive

local councillors, began mobilising, building a public presence on the streets.

Months of lobbying and protesting concluded with a meeting attended by MPs from across the county, alongside the FBU leadership, union members, the chief fire officer and the chair of the authority. This proved effective, with the fire authority subsequently voting to stop the cuts.

Sounding off



Safe passage for refugees

Paul O'Connor of the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS) explains why it is fighting the government in court

Since 2021 PCS has been engaged in litigation against the Home Office on behalf of our members who deliver the UK's asylum and immigration system and of vulnerable refugees whom the government seeks to demonise.

We prevented the government from implementing dangerous and unlawful "pushback" manoeuvres that would have cost lives.

Our judicial review proceedings over plans to deport refugees to Rwanda, a cruel and costly initiative, prevented the deportation of eight individual refugees.

Litigation protected our members from having to implement inhumane and illegal policies.

PCS, alongside Care4Calais, has developed a "Safe Passage Policy" for Channel crossings that would remove the need for dangerous crossings. Ministers' refusal to adopt it shows they have no interest in stopping the crossings. They intend to make demonisation of refugees the background to the next general election.

The UK can afford to take care of its citizens and take its fair share of refugees. An ageing population and skills shortages mean that enabling refugees to become productive citizens in this country would help it prosper.

This must be reinforced by collective bargaining with unions in all sectors of the economy to ensure minimum standards for pay, terms and conditions. This would prevent the exploitation of workers, no matter where they are from.

FBU ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY ANDY DARK



Andy Dark at FBU annual conference in 2022 and in 2002

Andy Dark says farewell after 18 years as union's assistant general secretary

Andy Dark joined the London Fire Brigade on 17 August 1981 and was enrolled in the FBU the next day. He became a branch representative in 1982 and became a member of the divisional level joint committees for industrial relations and health and safety in 1983.

He became a divisional level FBU official in 1984. He held a divisional level official's position until he became the acting regional chair for London in 2004 before becoming elected to the substantive post in January 2005.

He was elected assistant general secretary in a ballot which concluded on 26 September 2005. He was subsequently re-elected in 2010, 2015 and 2020.

He said: "I want to wish the very best for all members and staff of the union and thank

all officials past and present for the friendship, assistance, commitment and patience over the last 40 or so years.

"In equal measure I want to express my gratitude to all staff, again past and present, for their help over the years. In particular I want to thank my PA, Jo Huggins and Sharon Lester, the general secretary's PA, who stands in for Jo. Both of whom have kept me on track and out of trouble.

"As with all staff and officials, they have made the job as easy as they could for me. If people track back to those too-frequent occasions when I made a mistake, you will find that Jo and Sharon will both have been on leave on those days."

Andy retires on 23 April – his 60th birthday.

■ **Ben Selby, new assistant general secretary**
– page 16

In brief

FBU accident, injury and death benefit fund

Soon after the Second World War the Fire Brigades Union set up a special fund – the accident, injury and death benefit fund (AIF) – to support family members if a firefighter is killed or seriously injured. For a small monthly sum, if a member is seriously injured, the fund is there to help them and their family. If you are an FBU member, make sure you are in the fund. It does something that is at the heart of our union values – helping each other out when needed.

■ To join fill in this form – you can download it from the FBU website: bit.ly/FBU-AIF-form

Firefighters' Memorial Day

Firefighters' Memorial Day falls on 4 May and honours the sacrifice of firefighters who have lost their lives in the line of duty, acknowledging the courage and dedication of generations of firefighters, including those who serve our communities today. A wreath-laying will take place on the day at the National Firefighters' Memorial by St Paul's Cathedral with representatives from the FBU and the Firefighters Memorial Trust.

■ Please share with us photos of members observing a minute's silence outside their fire stations – send to press@fbu.org.uk

ANTI-UNION LAWS

FBU calls for movement of non-compliance with anti union laws

As *Firefighter* went to press, the Minimum Service Levels Bill was on its way to becoming law.

Under it, "minimum service regulations" in fire and rescue, health, education, transport, nuclear decommissioning and border security will enable employers to sack union members if they do not work on strike days. Unions will have to police members' attendance at work.

The UK already has the most restrictive anti-union laws in Europe, and the new one would be a severe blow to democratic rights. The FBU has called for a mass campaign of non-compliance and on the TUC to initiate it.

FBU general secretary Matt Wrack described the Bill as a "deliberate attempt to strengthen the position of employers and severely weaken the position of workers. They are doing

this for one purpose," he said, "to drive down wages."

He continued: "A mass movement of non-compliance can defeat this attack on working people by making the legislation unworkable.

"The TUC can lead this movement of resistance, first by calling an emergency congress, followed by a national demonstration, and a sustained campaign of non-cooperation."



Tyne and Wear firefighters training to rescue casualties from collapsed buildings

Inset: DECON health monitoring

Members in Tyne and Wear have become the first UK firefighters to participate in health monitoring as part of DECON, the FBU campaign to protect firefighters from diseases caused by exposure to contaminants in fire.

This ground-breaking research is conducted by the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan), and commissioned by the FBU. Led by world experts in fire chemistry and toxicology, including Professor Anna Stec, the research will involve testing thousands of firefighters across the UK for cancer and other life-threatening diseases.

Participating firefighters are volunteering to provide blood and urine samples to be analysed. The first samples were taken at the end of February.

The results will be used to identify the number of firefighters with occupational cancers and other diseases resulting from exposure to toxic contaminants in fire.



News Focus

First firefighters start DECON monitoring

FBU officials are co-ordinating with UCLan researchers to kick start the project in the region, with the support of the Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service. The deputy chief fire officer welcomed the project as a “huge step forward” for firefighter safety”.

Despite the World Health Organisation ruling that occupational exposure as a firefighter is carcinogenic, the research is the first of its kind in the UK.

In January, scientific

reports commissioned by the union found that instances of cancer among firefighters aged 35-39 are up to 323% higher than in the general population in the same age category.

Firefighters were found to be significantly more likely to die from cancer, heart attacks, stroke, and several other diseases.

Health monitoring can catch rare cancers earlier, increasing the effectiveness of treatment and chances of recovery, but there is

currently no dedicated annual health monitoring for UK firefighters.

The UK still does not have “presumptive legislation” in place – laws which recognise cancer as an occupational disease amongst firefighters.

Such laws would mean that firefighters and their families would receive compensation if diagnosed.

In the USA 48 of 50 states have this legislation. Countries across the world have followed suit, including Canada, Australia, and Poland.

In light of this research, the FBU is calling on the government and fire bosses for annual health monitoring for all UK firefighters.

This vital measure is one of the demands of the wider DECON campaign, alongside fighting for protection from exposure to contaminants through training and PPE; proper recording of firefighter diseases; and legislation for compensation.

In the early hours of 6 February, massive 7.8 magnitude earthquakes hit southern Turkey near the Syrian border, bringing devastation to both countries. Buildings and huge swathes of cities were turned to rubble. Thousands of people were crushed to death, trapped in collapsed buildings, or instantly made homeless.

Alive from the rubble



Rescuers carry a 20-day-old baby who was freed from wreckage 59 hours after the earthquake. After the baby, who was trapped with his mother, was rescued he was taken to an ambulance where he was treated and reported to be in good health. Efforts to rescue his mother continued.

IMAGE SOPA/ALAMY

The day after the earthquake struck firefighters from 14 UK fire and rescue services flew to Turkey to help in the 77-strong UK International Search and Rescue team (UKISAR). They were joined by medics, a vet, a structural engineer and four rescue dogs and their handlers. Firefighters who volunteer for UKISAR,

which responds to accidents and disasters on behalf of the UK government, undergo rigorous training and are on perpetual standby. They know the call could come anytime.

But, as London firefighter and LGBT+ rep Tracy Doyle put it, no amount of training can prepare you for the reality of “handballing rubble” in the quest to save lives amid scenes of acute desperation.

A firefighter for 21 years, she is used to dealing with road crashes and major incidents in Croydon. But the “catastrophic devastation” confronting rescue teams in Turkey – bodies piled up alongside roads, distraught family members desperately seeking loved ones, stray dogs rummaging among ruins – she found “unimaginable” before witnessing it – and, along with other team members, getting stuck in.

The UK team was deployed to Antakya, capital of Hatay province – one of the hardest hit cities, where 3,100 buildings collapsed killing many thousands of people.

GRUELLING RACE

Against this grim backdrop, the UK contingent – split into four teams – got to work, looking for casualties in collapsed buildings, sending in dogs trained to sniff out life not death in a gruelling race against time. Fractured sleep came in freezing tents as the temperature dropped to -6°C at night.

Volunteer interpreters, such as Gamze, a 24-year-old English teacher, became the “go to” person for Tracy’s team. She and other local helpers “proved invaluable”. They “spoke to people desperate to find relatives, explained things, stayed calm and that allowed us to carry on with our search and rescue”.

Cheshire firefighter John Monaghan was in the team that rescued a 91-year-old woman from a second floor flat in a partially collapsed building, the day after arriving in the devastated city.

John entered the building where the old lady had been trapped for three days. Fellow Cheshire firefighter Andrew Clarke helped lower her out to safety with a “makeshift stretcher” – a piece of fencing – and into a waiting ambulance. “She was still in good



UKISAR teams in Antakya, Hatay province



FBU LGBT+ rep and part of the UKISAR team Tracy Doyle, with volunteer interpreter Gamze

spirits, though quite dehydrated”.

The two men also played a part in a lengthy, nerve-shredding rescue that involved most of the UK team five days after the earthquake hit, eventually liberating a woman and a man trapped after a hotel collapsed onto their flat. It took nearly 20 hours, with teams working intense 20-minute shifts, tunnelling through concrete. The woman was rescued first, then the man, whose legs had been trapped under rubble.

For Robin Bates, from Hampshire and Isle of



Wight fire and rescue service, one of the things he found most difficult to deal with was the reaction of families when rescue dogs could not sniff life, so teams did not enter the building. “We had to move on to try and reach live people. That was one of the really hardest things.”

HONOURED TO HAVE BEEN OF USE

Back home, in Cheshire, John recalls the tremendous humanity displayed by local volunteers who came to help – and how “the stench of death” set in as the passed. And, alongside Tracy, Andrew, and Robin, how glad and honoured he felt to have been of use.

The teams rescued eight people – and the dogs helped teams from other countries save three more. It was UK’s most successful rescue

Cheshire firefighters Andrew Clarke and John Monaghan with UKISAR team members lower a 91 year old woman from her partially collapsed building on a makeshift stretcher

since UKISAR was founded 30 years ago.

By March 20, more than 57,300 deaths had been confirmed in Turkey and Syria and 121,000 injured.

Antakya is a historic crossroad of civilisations, known as Antioch in former times. It has been repeatedly destroyed by earthquakes and rebuilt over history. Mosques and churches have again been crushed; historical buildings shattered.

Back in Croydon, Tracy is encouraging people to raise money for the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) to get medical treatment, food, shelter and clean water to those who desperately need it. The union has donated £10,000.

She recently heard some distressing news from Gamze, who had engaged so actively with search and rescue. When another earthquake hit on 20 February, her home collapsed. She is now living in one tent and teaching in another. Many, many more in the region will be sharing a similar plight.

Volunteer interpreter Gamze is now living in one tent and teaching in another. Many, many more in the region will be sharing a similar plight.

FBU general secretary **Matt Wrack** reflects on what the union learned from the recent pay dispute

Accepting the off

By now, most FBU members should have received their backdated 2022-23 pay increase of 7% and know they are due another 5% in July. Members overwhelmingly accepted the employer's pay offer through the consultative ballot. The fact that four out of five of the entire membership positively voted for the deal is testament to collective will and the sound judgement of our union.

This is the right time to reflect on the lessons of the dispute – not least because we still have much to do. Although the new pay scales have been rolled out, there are tough negotiations ahead on pay for retained and control firefighters, pay progression and future demands from employers on our members.

There are opportunities to negotiate further pay rises through the national joint council (NJC), but the union is under no illusions about the hurdles we face. The union's officials are already hard at work on these matters. But we have also taken a moment to evaluate the recent pay campaign and what we can learn for the next stage.

TIMELINE

It is worth remembering that the FBU moved the employers a long way during the dispute. The initial offer in June 2022 was for 2%. The employers made a revised offer of 5% in October. The London Fire

Commissioner made his own 6% and 5% offer (but only to London members) in January. After a long day of intense negotiations at the NJC in February, the employers offered 7% and 5%, with other matters tabled for the first time. The pay offer included no strings.

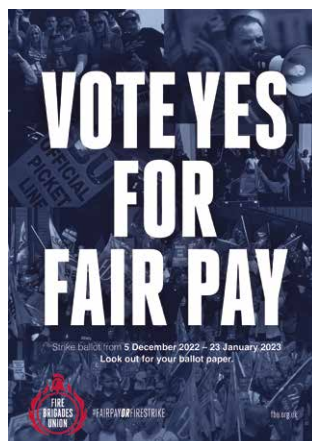
The key to winning these improvements was the mobilisation of FBU members. After the initial 2% offer, the union held consultation meetings with members, who made it clear they could not accept it. Further meetings in the autumn, when the union prepared for our strike ballot, led to the improved offer. Members again made it clear through the first consultative ballot that this was not acceptable, rejecting it by 79% on a 78% turnout.

The strike ballot was absolutely critical in moving employers again in the new year. The result of 88% voting for strikes on a 73% turnout (and higher in Northern Ireland) gave a clear message: the union was united and ready to take action. Without the mobilisation of members, we would have won nothing. The principal lesson: it was FBU members who won everything we gained from the dispute.

LEADERSHIP

The FBU's elected leaders are rightly challenged when we do not deliver. However, we should also acknowledge the irreplaceable role our elected

FBU poster



FBU members
rally outside
Surrey county
hall, Kingston
upon Thames

PHOTO: JESS HURD

er and fighting on

representatives played at all levels. Our local reps in fire stations, control rooms and training centres listened to members' concerns and kept them informed of developments. Brigade and regional officials organised countless meetings and briefings, so that the voices of members were heard and acted upon.

The executive council (EC) had the heavy responsibility of making the big strategic calls. I think it is fair to say they got those right. It was right to reject 2%, but right to consult on 5%. We were right to ballot for strike action and to reject the effort in London to divide members. In the context of increasing inflation, the EC was right not to set a rigid figure, but to put the pressure on employers



MARK THOMAS

FBU members
rally for fair pay

to make a reasonable offer. Negotiators at the NJC gave everything to squeeze the maximum out of the employers

FBU officials learned from past disputes. The union did not over-promise and then under-deliver. We used solid research, figures and evidence to build our case. There was constant, two-way communication with members with every new development, with regular bulletins, meetings and videos. When the February offer came, the EC was right to consult members. We did not sell the deal, but rightly recommended it as the best available, even if we had organised protracted strikes.

STILL FIGHTING

Firefighters won the best UK-wide pay settlement so far in the public sector for 2022-23 and on current forecasts, one of the best in 2022-23. But the union cannot be complacent. We need to renew and refresh our workplace organisation, so we are ready for the next phase of campaigning.

The union will not bask or rest on its laurels. The Westminster government, through its White Paper, wants to take away our right to strike and impose chief fire officer diktat.

The FBU has to fight for the sustained investment in the fire and rescue service necessary for the communities we serve and to improve our members' pay and conditions. Whoever is in government in the years ahead, only the FBU will secure our industry and give firefighters the professional voice with those in power. The fight goes on.

There are tough negotiations ahead on pay for retained and control firefighters, pay progression and future demands from employers

The fight for your pension continues

National officer **Mark Rowe** spells out the current position on firefighters' retirement prospects



Pensions in the fire and rescue service have been under attack for decades. We are now expected to retire later and receive less. Much of this agenda has been pursued in the name of “modernisation”. Really, it is about squeezing workers – cuts. Firefighters’ pension contributions have always been higher than the average worker’s, but now the difference is even more stark. Civil servants earning between £32,000 and £56,000 pay 5.45% of their wages to their pension. NHS workers on a similar wage pay something like 9%.

But the average firefighter pays 12.9% in contributions. This is a major hit to

our incomes and a significant portion of our pay. Realistically, due to the high risk nature of our work, opting out of the security of an occupational pension is not an option.

The FBU has fought hard on pensions. Since the industrial dispute of 2014-5, pensions have remained a priority. We have committed substantial resources to legal action on the subject and have repeatedly beaten the government in court.

VICTORIES IN THE COURTS

In December 2018, the FBU won a substantial case against the government when the Court of Appeal ruled that firefighters forcibly transferred under transitional protection arrangements into the newer, worse scheme, had the right

to switch back to their old scheme if they chose to do so. This gave thousands of members seven years back in their legacy scheme.

The 2015 “reforms” meant that some members were forced to switch to the new scheme under transitional protection arrangements while others were not – and this difference (due to age) was in practice discriminatory. We took the government to court arguing precisely this. The FBU initiated more than 6,000 employment tribunal claims, charging that the changes amounted to unlawful discrimination on the basis of age, race and sex. We won, and our victory was finally upheld in June 2019.

In order to get compensation for members (injury to feelings claims), we have had to register mass employment tribunal claims, and members have registered to be a part of these claims via two surveys, one conducted in 2015 and another in 2020.

Legal action for the latter batch is still ongoing. In December, we reported in *Firefighter* that 9,000 members are due to receive at least £3,750 in compensation, with many receiving more.

COMPLEX PROCESS

We are now pursuing the task of getting that compensation paid as quickly as possible. Fire and rescue authorities have decided to process the payments themselves, and the process is complex: each claimant’s identity must be checked and they must individually consent to the payment.

In many cases, members will have to be tracked down if their email address has expired, changed, or was wrongly



MARK THOMAS

February 2015: Firefighters at a rally in London before lobbying MPs over their pensions



February, 2015, Preston, Lancashire. FBU members take industrial action when, after more than three years of talks, they were facing a 'stark choice' of being sacked or having their pension severely reduced, the union said



December 2014: FBU members at a briefing in the houses of parliament before lobbying MPs about pension issues

HAZEL DUNLOP

recorded or if they have changed address and/or contact telephone number.

The first set of pay-outs will only apply to the first set of claimants (who filled in the survey in 2015) and, for now, only to those in England and Wales. This is around 5,300 people.

The claims in Scotland and Northern Ireland remain stayed. Members there can expect, eventually, to receive the same level of compensation.

For the second batch of claimants (from the survey in 2020) the picture is complicated by the fact that the government is arguing that they should receive a lower level of compensation. The FBU is disputing this, and fighting for an equal settlement.

Some members will not remember whether they are a claimant, or which batch they are in, and a special email

address is to be set up for members to enquire about this. A circular will be issued with details of how and when to do this so members are asked to await the circular before contacting the union.

THE 'PENSIONS TRAP'

The "pensions trap" is a problem for firefighters who have membership of both the 1992 scheme and the 2015 scheme. Whatever choice they make at the age of 50 or 55, they stand to lose out. The example we provided to

the Home Office is a member who has accrued 25 years' pensionable service in the 1992 scheme by 31 March 2022. This member was born, say, in 1977 and joined the fire and rescue service in 1997 at the age of 20.

On 31 March 2022 they are therefore aged 45, and not yet able to draw their 1992 scheme benefits. Five years later, at the age of 50, they can do so. By that stage they have also accrued five years' membership of the 2015 scheme.

However, whatever they do, they stand to lose tens of thousands of pounds because of the gaps between the schemes in terms of when they kick in and the lump sum calculations.

If they delay retirement so that they can benefit from both schemes, they will lose out. If the accrued 1992 scheme pension is worth £15,000 (this figure will vary), delaying payment by 10 years represents a loss of £150,000. But if they do not delay, they lose out in other ways – via massive deductions to their pension and complications with lump sums.

We know that our work around pensions is highly technical, and can often make for a dry read. But it is of huge importance to everyone in the fire and rescue service – we'll continue to fight on it, and we'll continue to keep you updated every step of the way.

Our pensions work is highly technical, and can make for a dry read, but it is of huge importance – we'll continue to fight on it, and we'll continue to keep you updated

From the station floor to union HQ

Ben Selby, the union's newly elected assistant general secretary, and his friend and colleague Shaun Yates talk to **Francis Beckett**

When the teachers' trade union education centre in Lincolnshire, Stoke Rochford Hall, caught fire in January 2005, two of the first firefighters on the scene were 34-year-old Shaun Yates and Ben Selby, just 20. They put on their breathing apparatus and made their way to the third floor.

"Then we saw the glass and the door frames glowing orange, and we could see the fire was fully involved," says Shaun. As they sprayed water on it, "the ceiling started to disintegrate".

They took a split-second decision to withdraw, getting out just in time before the ceiling joists fell in, and ran down the stairs before the stairs, too, were engulfed. They found their way out with the help of a colleague who shouted out directions.

For Ben Selby, "it showed me the risks of the job I'd chosen." He and his older colleague became close friends. Shaun was best man at Ben's wedding, and the two families (Ben is now married to a teacher, with an eight-year-old daughter and a three-year-old son) still find time for a get together every few months.

Today Shaun, now 52, is temporary station manager at Boston fire station. Ben, 38, is the newly elected assistant general secretary of the FBU.

Just a year after the Stoke Rochford fire, while Shaun was away on a course, Ben went to a horrific crash on the A52 close to the Lincolnshire-Leicestershire border. A minibus full of migrant workers collided with three lorries, and seven people died. "I saw 200 yards of devastation. It's still quite hard to talk about," he tells me, and I don't press him, but I ask Shaun and he says: "Looking at a dead body isn't as hard as looking at body parts."

Ben was 18 when he joined the fire service as a retained firefighter in Grantham. "I wanted to do something exciting, to support the community, to work with people, do something different every day." He left Grantham for the regional office having served the town as a retained firefighter on both the blue and green watches.

Pretty soon into his service career he was getting involved with the union, and he is still a member of the Labour party, though deeply disillusioned with Keir

'My politics come from the experience of having close family members who were migrants'



Ben Selby in Calais, France with FBU members on a solidarity mission to Care4Calais, a volunteer-run charity working with refugees in the UK, France and Belgium

Starmer's leadership. He has a Twitter account where he frequently comes to the defence of much-abused migrants.

Like many trade union activists, all that comes out of his family background.

His father's mother was forced to flee her native Indonesia during the civil war that followed the Second World War, leaving the leper colony her parents had helped create – they were "working class people doing what they could for lepers in Indonesia," he says. By boat they travelled to mainland Europe before

Ben Selby speaks at a rally outside Downing Street protesting against new laws designed to restrict the right to strike

VUK VALCIC/ZUMA PRESS/ALAMY



reaching Britain. His grandmother was an important figure in his life right up to her death last year, aged 96.

“My politics come from the experience of having close family members who were migrants,” he says. “It took them a long time to get here, and their experience of setting up somewhere strange is not too different from what we see today when we look to those seeking sanctuary from war, persecution, the climate crisis and looking to improve the lives of their loved ones.”

The lessons were reinforced by his mother’s Yorkshire mining family, and by his father’s death, a few years ago, of lung cancer caused by asbestosis, probably at least in part a legacy of his



MARK THOMAS



ANDREW WARD

Ben Selby (top) speaking at FBU annual conference in 2016 and (above) at the Labour party conference in 2019

work as a heating engineer.

Before getting too deeply into union work, he consulted his friend Shaun. “I told him he’d be great at it but warned it could be very thankless,” says Shaun. “But I knew he’d do a great job.”

As a union official, Ben found himself fighting plans to impose co-responding, where some firefighters had pay docked over the issue.

“It was important to the whole union, and looking back I am proud of my participation, although small, in it.”

Later on, he was heavily involved in the successful campaign against a cuts package in Lincolnshire, which prevented the closure of fire stations.

Ben has been a Lincolnshire firefighter for 20 years. Between 2012 and 2019 he had spells as brigade chair and secretary in Lincolnshire, the regional secretary for the East Midlands region, before joining the union’s executive in January 2019 and becoming vice president in 2021.

Now he has a big new job: assistant general secretary. What will he be like? Shaun Yates probably knows better than anyone.

“He’ll be excellent. He’s got an old head on young shoulders. He’s meticulous and dedicated. That’s what he’s like,” says Shaun.

Discrimination, harassment and abuse are a threat to health and safety, just like contaminants and unsafe working practices, says FBU vice-president and AGS elect **Ben Selby**



On the right side

Being a trade unionist is about knowing whose side you are on. When pay and jobs are cut by the government, we fight for better. When employers undermine health and safety, we run campaigns and enter dispute. When NHS workers, posties or teachers go on strike, we don't stay neutral – we show up and we back workers on picket lines.

The fight to build and defend unity among our members is just as fundamental to the trade union movement – and as a union we will pick the side of equality and solidarity.

Since the publication of the London Fire Brigade's *Independent Culture Review* in November, the working environment in the service has come under scrutiny.

It unearthed reports and allegations of misogyny, racism, homophobia and abuse in our workplaces.

The revelations contained in the review shocked the public. It told of how a black firefighter had had a noose put above his locker, and a Muslim firefighter had a terrorist hotline sign stuck on his.

It recorded how women faced sexual harassment and unsolicited explicit messages and “ran a daily gauntlet of sexual abuse”, according to its author Nazir Afzal OBE when he was interviewed by the BBC.

ROUTINELY BULLIED

It heard from LGBT+ firefighters who said they were routinely bullied in the course of their job.

When *File on Four* investigated misogyny in the fire service in February this year, it uncovered issues all over the country. One firefighter told of being bullied to the point of suicide by her male colleagues. Another woman talked about how she was told by a colleague

that “women will be the downfall of the fire service”, and sexually harassed. Another firefighter said she had fire axes thrown at her on drill, and that her colleagues would soak her with the hose at such high pressure that she got bruises.

The HMI-CFRS report, published in late March this year, told a similar story.

This situation is appalling, but for some people reading this – not least those who have been on the receiving end of this abuse and mistreatment – it will not come as a surprise.

As a union, the FBU represents complainants all the time, and the story is familiar: bullying, harassment and discrimination have gone unreported or overlooked. Some of those with authority in the workplace have abused their positions and escaped accountability. Complainants have found themselves under investigation or subject to disciplinarys.



IAN MARLOW

Our reps and officials have witnessed first-hand the failure of fire and rescue service employers to properly address these issues. Some Fire Service leaders are part of the problem, and have systematically failed to address discrimination, harassment and bullying in the service.

The values of firefighting should be about looking after each other, helping people, showing solidarity and being a team.

For many firefighters that is the reality, it's understandable that they feel both proud of the work they do and instinctively protective of the reputation of the fire and rescue service.

But it is utterly shameful that for many women, people of black and ethnic minority backgrounds, members of the LGBT+ community, and those with disabilities or neurodivergence, the fire and rescue service is simply not a safe place to be.

There can be no shying away from the reality of this situation. It is an indictment of how little has been done within the fire service, and how little faith complainants have in internal processes, that they have felt compelled to go to the media to tell their story. Hearing those stories is never comfortable, but it is necessary – and I applaud the bravery of the people who have come forward. It gives us an opportunity to fight for something better, and places an obligation on us all to act.

In the FBU, we have developed

equality sections for women, LGBT+ and black and ethnic minority members – and these groups will always play a leading role in developing our campaigning around these issues. We have also developed a framework for promoting equalities in our casework – All Different All Equal – and this has meant confronting discrimination and harassment, including in our own ranks.

We are therefore examining our own record as a union, and looking at our own rules and policies and how they are applied.

But there is an urgent need to do more. For some months now, I have been chairing an LFB Culture Review Working Group, which is looking at the recommendations of the *London Culture Review* and at the broader issue of fire service culture.

DEMOCRATIC STRUCTURES

The working group includes the FBU equality sections and representatives of other affected groups. Through it, and through our other democratic structures, we will now begin the work of addressing this issue in earnest. Equalities will be a focus of our annual conference in May, with delegates debating how to drive forward an agenda of transformation in the fire service.

The Inclusive Fire Service Group, set up by the national joint council, has already done some good work and we will look to raise this issue through our collective bargaining process.

Firefighters have the right to work without fear of being mistreated because of their gender identity, ethnicity, sexuality, disability or neurodiversity – or bullied or abused while doing their job. Just as much as fire contaminants and unsafe working practices, this kind of toxic culture is a matter of health and safety in the workplace.

Abuse and discrimination have no place in the fire service or our union. It is the duty of the FBU – from the station and the control room to the top of the union – not just to acknowledge these issues and to challenge them, but to fight to transform the fire and rescue service, and to put affected groups in the driving seat of that process. Winning this fight will mean addressing the failings at the very top of the service.

It is the duty of the FBU not just to acknowledge these issues and to challenge them, but to fight to transform the fire and rescue service

International Women's Day saw the opening of this year's women's TUC conference.

Kerry McCrone, women's rep for West Area, Scotland, reports



FBU delegates (l-r) Kerry McCrone, Georgie Fielding and Leoni Munslow at the TUC women's conference

FBU at TUC women's conference

FBU delegates Georgie Fielding, Kerry McCrone and Leoni Munslow took to the rostrum to discuss a range of issues affecting FBU members and the wider community at this year's TUC women's conference.

A key theme this year was sexual harassment, discrimination and bullying in the workplace. Sister McCrone seconded a Musicians Union motion on the misuse of non-disclosure agreements and calls for promotion of the Can't Buy My Silence campaign.

Continuing this theme, a fringe event, #MeTU, was attended by the delegation. It discussed issues within trade unions following an inquiry into allegations of sexual harassment and bullying in the TSSA transport union.

Sister Fielding highlighted to conference the findings of the *London Culture Review* and the work required to address the issues members are facing in the fire and rescue service.

Sister Fielding also spoke to support the Royal College of Podiatry's motion on appropriate sports footwear for women, highlighting the FBU's work on fire kit specifically for women and

the need to continue this work into appropriate footwear as a health and safety priority for women firefighters. She "looked forward to a time where she would wear fire boots which were no longer just small men's but with a slimmer calf".

She also highlighted the need for workplaces to be endometriosis friendly and how debilitating this condition can be for working women across all sectors and workplaces.

Sister Munslow supported Unison's motion on defending and improving maternity rights and the current work being carried out by London Fire Brigade women FBU reps with the LFB commissioner to improve maternity pay

The national women's committee will continue to campaign for all fire and rescue services to improve maternity pay and provisions across the UK

and leave for women firefighters.

The FBU national women's committee will continue to campaign for all fire and rescue services to improve maternity pay and provisions across the UK.

Improving access to the industrial injuries benefit scheme was also on the agenda with Sister McCrone informing conference of the research commissioned by the FBU into fire contaminants and the shocking findings showing firefighters' increased risks of cancers, strokes and heart attacks.

She spoke to second this motion in the hope that firefighters would have greater access to this benefit following the research stating that no one should be at detriment following a diagnosis of cancer resulting from doing their job.

Conference drew to a close with a show of solidarity to the women and girls of Iraq in an online discussion with women from across the global trade union movement providing information to all conference delegates on practical ways in which the trade union and labour movement can assist them with their fights for equality.



Meet the rep

Maccyla Turner North West
national women's committee rep

1. What made you want to become a rep?

I was asked regularly to become a women's rep and every time I declined. I had no interest in being a face of a trade union until around five to six years ago. There was an issue within the brigade, I felt I was treated unfairly. Although the eventual outcome was as I'd expect, the way it went through truly affected me, so by becoming a rep, I want to be able to support others and ensure they are treated fairly.

2. What is your proudest moment as a rep?

I don't really have any particular moments. Being a rep isn't about me and what I do. I see it as a collective effort where we all work to get the best results for our members.

3. Who are your ultimate heroes?

No ultimate heroes as such, but my family and childhood friend (you know who you are) gave me the drive I have today. They made me push myself to become better and prove wrong those who didn't see my potential.

4. Describe yourself in three words.

(Brutally) honest, determined, stubborn (although I'm working on that).

5. What was the last conversation you had that made you think differently about something?

I have these conversations regularly on my watch. Whether in training, incidents or around the mess table, I am open to challenging conversations and, often, firefighters will make me think differently.

6. What's your favourite band or musician?

I love all sorts of music and throughout my childhood there was various Bon Jovi and Guns N Roses being blasted out of my boombox. But one of my all-time greatest bands has to be Runrig, and I was devastated when they retired a few years back.

7. If you weren't a firefighter, what would you be?

I joined the army at 19 and then the fire service at 32. Both times my "back up plan" was the police so I guess that!

8. If you could travel back or forward in time, where and when would you travel to and why?

1999 – After leaving the Army, I did various jobs for seven or eight years and always wished I had joined the fire service sooner... but only knowing what I know now!



Legal Beagle

Accidents at work – know your rights

Thompsons solicitors see first-hand the impact on workers (and their families) when management treat health and safety as just a box-ticking exercise. That is why we fight the cases but also campaign with the FBU to promote proper health and safety in the workplace.

Making a legal claim

All employers have a legal responsibility to protect employees from workplace accidents and injuries.

The law says employers should avoid risks entirely if this is possible and, if not, should minimise the risk of injury to the lowest level "reasonably practicable".

When accidents happen, make sure any claim has the best chance of winning by ensuring that the workplace accident report is completed by the victim in their own words, that they seek medical advice and keep receipts for any injury-related expenses. The sooner they obtain legal advice, the better.

Your FBU legal package offers access to independent legal advice from personal injury specialists for you for any accident or disease claim and for your family for any non-work accident or disease claim. In any work accident the union's lawyers work with FBU reps to maximise the chances of success and, unlike with any non-union law firm, whatever the claim you and your family keep 100% of your compensation.

Contact

FBU Freephone legal advice:
0808 100 6061

In Scotland: 0800 089 1331

[thompsonstradeunion.law/
trade-unions/fbu](http://thompsonstradeunion.law/trade-unions/fbu)

Can you capture our working life?

We are looking, once again, for well composed images that show one or more aspects of a firefighter's working life whether striking, dramatic, creative, personal or humorous, with an emphasis, where appropriate, of firefighters in the correct PPE.

With kind sponsorship from College Hill printers, there will be one first prize of £500 and two runners up prizes of £100.

Please read the full competition terms at: fbu.org.uk/news/2023/03/28/photo-competition-2023

COMPETITION TERMS

This year's FBU photo contest closes on 28 July 2023. By submitting an entry, each entrant agrees to the official rules (see below).

WHO MAY ENTER

The competition is only open to current FBU members.

HOW TO ENTER

You can enter online or by



Last year's winner: Dalton Mill Fire by Chris Wilson

post. Please include your full name, address, membership number, contact telephone number and email address. Clearly mark your entry Photo Competition 2023 and include a short description of your picture, detailing where it was taken and the story behind the photo.

Digital images must be high resolution and have a

minimum size of 3,000 pixels on their longest edge.

Physical prints or slides must be of sufficient quality and resolution to be printed at large size. Original negatives for prints must be available.

Email: firefighter@fbu.org.uk with "FBU photo comp 2023" as the subject line.

Post: FAO Anna Zych, FBU Head Office, Bradley House, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston-upon-Thames KT2 7AE.

CONTEST PRIZES

The winner will receive £500.

Two runners up will receive £100.

JUDGING

The judges will be Matt Wrack, FBU general secretary, Garech Butler from our sponsors College Hill Press, Anna Zych from the FBU communications team as well as editor and designer Alan Slingsby and professional photographer Stefano Cagnoni.

RULES

1. This competition is only open to FBU members whose membership fees are up to date.
2. All entries must be the original work of the entrant and must not infringe on the rights of any other party.
3. Each image entered must be the work of the individual submitting it and must not have been published elsewhere nor have won a prize in any other photographic competition.
4. It is the responsibility of each entrant to ensure that any image they submit has been taken with the permission of all people recognisable in it and that the image does not infringe the copyright of any third party or any laws.
5. Copyright in all images submitted will remain with the entrant. But each entrant grants a worldwide, irrevocable, perpetual licence to the Fire Brigades Union to feature any or all of the submitted images in any of its publications, websites and/or in any other material published by the union.
6. There is no limit on the number of entries per person.
7. Entries will be considered from fire service photographers.
8. The competition closes 28 July 2023.
9. We cannot guarantee entries can be returned.
10. The decision of the judges will be final and no correspondence will be entered into.
11. Entrants must warrant that they took the photograph they submit and that they own its copyright.
12. Submission of an entry will be taken as acceptance of the rules of the competition.

MEMBER'S MESSAGE

An email from an FBU member

THANK YOU TO THE FBU

I would personally like to thank all involved with the current negotiations that led to the pay rise.

Your professionalism in keeping everyone in the loop immediately after meetings and results was excellent!

Thank you!

Dillin
Wales

FUNDRAISER



Peter Wilson, front right, with Oliver and his brothers Owen and Oscar, red watch and the rowing machine

Firefighters rally round for Oliver

Victor red watch, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, rowed 216 kilometres (134 miles) on a Concept 2 rowing machine in full fire kit to raise money for Oliver, who was diagnosed with stage 4 neuroblastoma (an extremely rare and aggressive form of childhood cancer).

After this effort last September, firefighters from Tyne and Wear and Leicestershire FRSs have continued fundraising completing a two-leg 180-mile relay run in fire kit.

Oliver's family are looking to raise £260k to pay for him to have additional treatment in the United States. To date more than £160k has been raised, but there is still a way to go.

Oliver is the nephew of FBU member Peter Wilson, a crew manager at Sunderland Central community fire station.

■ To donate, go to: justgiving.com/campaign/Oliversfightagainstneuroblastoma





Wrack on the Road



■ 24 February – with a rally of firefighters outside, Nottinghamshire Council announced a reversal of £2m of cuts to the Notts fire service



■ 15/16 March – Inverness and Aberdeen branch meetings



■ 27 March – Matt Wrack with Jarrow MP Kate Osborne supporting Show Racism the Red Card

● theredcard.org

■ 29 March – All-party parliamentary group meeting in Westminster – Matt and national officer Riccardo la Torre gave a presentation on excess cancer mortality and incidence in firefighters

COMING UP:

■ 4 May – Firefighters memorial day

■ 10–12 May – FBU annual conference

FBU subs to increase in line with pay award

As of 1 May this year, FBU membership contributions will be increased in line with the 2022 pay award and payments will be adjusted accordingly. This is in accordance with FBU rule B2.

Although the 2022 pay award was backdated to 1 July 2022, membership contribution increases will not be backdated and the new rate will only start from 1 May.

The FBU relies on members' contributions to support and deliver for them in all that we do.

In the last year, our fight for fair pay delivered a 7% pay rise backdated to July 2022 and a further 5% pay rise from 1 July 2023 – all without the need to strike.

We are also heavily involved in campaigns to protect firefighters' rights to strike and collective bargaining, areas which were vital to deliver on pay.

Members' contributions also provide the union with the legal support necessary to win compensation for injured members and their families and to support members in legal disputes over unfair treatment at work.

In 2022, the union was able to deliver for 152 FBU members and their families who were awarded a total of nearly £2.5m in compensation.

In the last year the FBU has been working with its legal advisors to continue to give members a strong voice

in the Grenfell tower and Manchester arena public inquiries and to bring judicial review proceedings against dangerous changes to breathing apparatus procedures.

The FBU gives members strength through a collective voice and provides direct support in the workplace through a network of trained reps who hold management to account, preventing the introduction of unsafe and badly thought out policies.

Nationally, our ground-breaking work on firefighter safety continues with new research being undertaken and the firefighters cancer and disease registry [uclan.ac.uk/research/activity/fcdr] gathering detailed data on serious illnesses affecting firefighters. The union's innovative DECON campaign continues to gain momentum and helps firefighters stay safe in and out of work.

"All this work highlights our continued commitment to fight for and protect every single member, a commitment that has been at the heart of our union for more than 100 years," said national officer Tam McFarlane.

Details of additional member benefits are on the membership page of the union website.

■ If you have any questions, please contact your brigade or regional officials whose contact details are also on the website – fbu.org.uk



Most of the budget's been allocated to retired millionaires, so I'm afraid there's nothing left for you

25-year badges



Dean Pepper (r), blue watch, Workington, Cumbria, receives his 25-year badge from colleague Ricky Lightfoot



Ali Hosie (l), green watch, Dalkeith, Edinburgh, receives his 25-year badge from regional chair Gus Sproul



Andy Rae (r), Falkirk and West Lothian, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from regional chair Gus Sproul



Bob Hunter (r), green watch, Dalkeith, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from regional chair Gus Sproul



Martin Winston-Hockley (l), blue watch, Croydon, London, receives his 25-year badge from south east area organiser Martin Thompson with colleagues looking on



Shayne Toulson (l), red watch, Elm Lane, South Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Rick Green



Iain Ballantine (r), green watch, Castlemilk, Glasgow, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary David Gillies



Alan Grogan (l), and **Tony Pearson** (r), Dewsbury, West Yorkshire, with their 25-year badges



Martin Davey (r), green watch, Lewisham, London, receives his 25-year badge from London regional secretary Jon Lambe



Peter Thompson (l), blue watch, Croydon, London, receives his 25-year badge from London south east area organiser Martin Thompson



Rob Lloyd (r), red watch, Twickenham, London, receives his 25-year badge from SW London area secretary Dave Young



Michael 'Ned' Kelly (l), red watch, Finchley, London, receives his 25-year badge from station officer Mark Smith



Martin Selwood (r), green watch, Forest Hill, London, receives his 25-year badge from Lewisham borough secretary James Gouldsworthy



Darren Hill (centre), red watch, Sutton, London, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Luke Kyriakides (l) and Sutton borough rep Lee Coombe



Lee York (r), East Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Jake Kaye, with (l-r), Tom Glandfield, David Gowar, Steve Liszka, Tym Bromley, John Davidson, Jason LeGoff, Chris-Scott Smith, Jon Lee and Josh Caswell



Jon Lee (r), East Sussex, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Jake Kaye, with (l-r), Tom Glandfield, David Gowar, Steve Liszka, Tym Bromley, John Davidson, Jason LeGoff, Chris-Scott Smith, Lee York and Josh Caswell



Graham Crow (r), white watch, Southall, London, receives his 25-year badge from London NW area organiser Brian Flanagan



Philip Shee (r), red watch, Wolverhampton, West Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Morgan Taylor alongside red watch colleagues



Mathew Herrin (r), West Yorkshire brigade chair, receives his 25-year badge from Yorkshire and Humberside executive council member Pete Smith with fellow brigade committee members looking on



Chris Brown (r), Andover, Hampshire and Isle of Wight, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Mark Joret, with colleagues (l-r) Geoff Edwards, Ian Morris, Rich Green, Jon Wickens and Callum Feltham



Sally Hammond, the first woman wholetime firefighter to join Suffolk 27 years ago, and former women's and officers' rep, receives her 25-year badge from brigade chair Phil Johnston (r) and brigade secretary, Kev Driver (l), with white watch members of Ipswich East station and protection department looking on



Brian Flanagan (r), London North West Area organiser, receives his 25-year badge from regional secretary Jon Lambe with the London regional committee looking on



Mark David (l), red watch, Bridgend, South Wales, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Sean Cayford with red, white and green watch members looking on



Justin Rolls (l), Weymouth, Dorset, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Kate Scott with (l-r) Henry Whittaker, Jake Sadler, Jonny Murray and Dan O'Rourke



Lee Gannon (l), blue watch, Salford, receives his 25-year badge from branch chair Dave Allsey, alongside fellow watch members (l-r), Jake Howard, Matt Wadeson, Jack Brook, Rob Means, Marc Grebbin and Mathew Campbell



Howard Stephens (l), white watch, Barnet and **John O'Hare** (r), white watch, Mill Hill, receive their 25-year badges from North West London area organiser Brian Flanagan



Mark Lamb (r), Lymm, Birchwood and Stockton Heath, Cheshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Kev Grace with Lymm green watch colleagues looking on



Mark Studd (r), red watch, Wakefield, West Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair Matt Herrin, with members of Wakefield red and green watch



Martin Taylor (r), white watch, Sidcup, London, receives his 25-year badge from London South East area health and safety official Barry Jackson

40-year badge



Chris Marsay (l), Loftus, Cleveland, receives his 40-year badge from brigade secretary **Dave Howe** with colleagues looking on



Kevin Johnston (r), since retired, Penrith HQ, Cumbria, receives his 25-year badge from officers' branch chair **Mark Nicholson**



Martin Rollinson (l), Hunslet, West Yorkshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser **Ryan Binks**



John Hughes (r), white watch, technical response unit, Leigh, Manchester, receives his 25-year badge from brigade chair **Ross Strother** in Wilton Quarry

Please send high resolution digital files or prints to: firefighter@fbu.org.uk or Firefighter, FBU, 68 Coombe Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT2 7AE

For your image to look its best, we need the original, full-resolution image. One lifted from a website may not do justice to a unique occasion. We do our best with images that are low resolution, taken directly into a bright light or suffer from camera-shake, or have other problems, but cannot perform miracles. Please include details for each image – full names of everyone who is in it; their station/brigade/watch etc; where they are in the picture (eg: left to right); their union posts/branch if relevant; and where/when it was taken.

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0117 935 5132, 13rs@fbu.org.uk

Change of address or next of kin

Advise your brigade organiser of any
change of address and head office of
changes to next of kin or nominations
for benefits

FBU FREEPHONE LEGAL ADVICE LINE

England, Wales and N Ireland

0800 100 6061

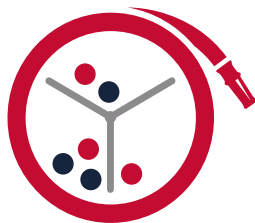
Scotland 0800 089 1331

The line provides advice for personal
injury, family law, wills, conveyancing,
personal finance and consumer issues.
For disciplinary and employment-
related queries contact your local FBU
representative.



THOMPSONS
SOLICITORS

**BY PLAYING THE
FIREFIGHTERS
100 LOTTERY YOU
ARE HELPING TO
CHANGE LIVES**



FIREFIGHTERS 100 LOTTERY

FIRE BRIGADES UNION | SERVING FIREFIGHTERS SINCE 1918

The Firefighters 100 Lottery is a weekly online lottery created to support firefighters, their bereaved families and to honour the bravery and sacrifice of firefighters killed in the line of duty

In addition to weekly cash prizes – you could win an ‘Apple bundle’ – an iPhone 14 Pro and an Apple Watch Series 8 – in the 29 April draw

**For more details of this prize and to buy tickets go to
www.firefighters100lottery.co.uk**

A donation of £10k has been made from the Firefighters 100 Lottery to the Disaster Emergency Committee (DEC) to help survivors in the aftermath of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria

