

Firefighter

The magazine of the Fire Brigades Union

The terrible choice

How cuts to crewing put firefighters
into impossible situations

See p10

U.S. WORKERS
V ELON MUSK
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MENTAL HEALTH:
YOUR STORY MATTERS
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April-May 2025



www.fbu.org.uk

The cover story of this edition of *Firefighter* will be familiar to many FBU members. In many areas, it is no longer guaranteed that there will be enough firefighters on a fire engine to safely tackle an incident.

As we report on page 10, firefighters attending incidents as part of a crew of four, or even three, are sometimes left in an impossible position, risking disciplinary action and their own safety if they try to do their jobs.

As we went to print, a series of wildfires here in the UK provided a stark reminder of what the future may look like. Extreme weather events will become more common as our climate changes, and so will the threat to public safety.

POSITIVE CHANGE

We are seeing positive changes in the government's approach to how our fire service is run. The move of fire out of the Home Office and into the Department of Housing, Communities & Local Government, means that we no longer share a minister with policing. We have already had a good dialogue with Alex Norris,

our new minister. The FBU is a 'full member' of the Ministerial Advisory Group, the new body which will develop national standards in the fire service. This status gives us genuine influence, and parity with groups such as the LGA and NFCC.

We will use this influence to argue that new standards must include crewing levels and response times.

PAY

However, progress will be severely limited without investment. This year, the government increased fire service funding by just 1.4% – another real-terms

funding cut. We must fight for something better.

Since 2010, firefighters have lost around 12% of the value of their pay. There are a host of wider issues. While we have made progress on RDS pay, retention is still a massive issue. The national baseline for maternity pay (26 weeks on full pay) is only half-way to the 52 weeks that women firefighters need.

Control pay still does not have parity. Development and trainee pay is getting dangerously close to the minimum wage.

The FBU negotiates pay directly with fire service employers, not with central



Steve Wright

Up to standard



Did you know?

New research by the Met Office shows that the damaging fires during the UK's record-breaking 2022 heatwave were made at least six times more likely due to human-caused climate change.

government. This is important. At meetings of the National Joint Council (NJC), we have made the case for a pay rise, and have been able to pursue discussion on pay progression and the role of firefighters. These will continue.

The FBU's strategy on pay will continue to be developed as a key priority.

SHIFT CHANGES

In Mid and West Wales and Gloucestershire, FBU members are fighting management's attempts to impose changes to shift patterns. These will make life harder for firefighters – especially those with caring responsibilities – with no benefit to the public. Members have the full support of the FBU nationally in their campaign. We report more on page 5.

IN PARLIAMENT

The FBU's Westminster parliamentary group is a network of MPs allied to the union. They intervene on our behalf on issues like pensions, funding, pay, and fire service policy.

The group met on 1 April, and Kim Johnson, MP for Liverpool Riverside, was elected as its new chair. Congratulations to Kim, who I look forward to working closely with in the years to come; and thank you to Zarah Sultana, who did great work in the role.



FBU members are fighting changes to shift patterns in Gloucestershire (see page 5)



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Firefighter

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NEWS

PENSIONS

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WELFARE CUTS

Tax wealth and U-turn on cuts, says FBU



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The Grenfell 'wall of truth' memorial

GRENFELL RECOMMENDATIONS

Fire leaves Home Office as government accepts Grenfell recommendations

Government responsibility for the fire and rescue service moved from the Home Office to the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government on 1 April 2025. The FBU welcomed this as an important first step to repairing the damage done to the fire and rescue service by recent governments.

In a statement to parliament, Prime Minister Keir Starmer said that "this change will bring

responsibility for building safety and fire under a single Secretary of State, providing for a more coherent approach to keeping people safe from fire in their homes."

BUILDING SAFETY

The move was a recommendation of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry's final report, published in September 2024. It places responsibility for both fire and building safety under one government department, which the government

says will allow for more coordination.

Ministers issued an official response to the Phase 2 report of the Grenfell Tower Inquiry at the end of February, accepting 28 of the 37 recommendations "in full" and the remaining 9 "in principle". The FBU has responded in support of this, since some recommendations require consultation and changes to the law. The union has also said that central government needs to go much further,

particularly on reversing deregulation.

Labour's plan includes establishing a new single construction regulator; investigating seven companies for potential debarment from public contracts; and promising to strengthen transparency and accountability in building safety.

The government accepted a recommendation to establish a College of Fire and Rescue in principle, and plans to consult on proposals from summer 2025. The FBU has told MPs that any new college must be a public body, not a private company, and the union must be involved as the voice of firefighters.

REVERSE DEREGULATION

Ministers have still not resolved what will happen to private bodies such as the Building Research Establishment, which test and certificate products and were criticised by the Inquiry for prioritising commercial interests above safety.

MPs have raised additional concerns in parliament, including the issue of personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs), which disability campaigners say are still inadequate.

Responding to the announcements, FBU general secretary Steve Wright said that to prevent a repeat of the fire, "government at all levels must listen to the voices of residents. The deregulation of recent years must be reversed to prevent profiteers from putting lives at risk."

WALES



Firefighters and supporters protest over shift changes

Fightback over 'exhausting' 12-hour shifts

Firefighters in Mid and West Wales are fighting to scrap plans to change shift patterns, with the fire service threatening to enforce "exhausting" new 12-hour shifts.

Over 200 firefighters and supporters gathered at a rally outside headquarters in March and over 4,000 people have signed a petition.

Mid and West Wales FBU is considering all options to fight the changes, including industrial action, with branches meeting to decide next steps. Tom Wass, Mid and West Wales brigade organiser, says "hardworking firefighters fear

that they will be forced to leave the profession", with management ignoring childcare issues.

FBU reps say senior management is continuing to "downplay and dismiss claims of bullying and nepotism" detailed in a damning culture review, with members calling for change to the "boys' club" at the top instead of changes to shifts.

Duncan Stewart-Ball, FBU regional secretary for Wales said that "the fire authority must start listening to firefighters and holding the chief fire officer and senior management to account".

GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Shift changes: 'Council must start listening'

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service is forging ahead with changing wholtime firefighters shifts from 8am to 7pm instead of 9am to 6pm, despite the county council fire scrutiny panel recommending that these plans are scrapped.

The council's fire scrutiny committee published a report into the proposed changes this March, recommending that the council cabinet's plans to change shift patterns should be abandoned.

Firefighters rallied outside the committee's meeting, calling for chief fire officer Mark Preece to listen to the scrutiny panel and to firefighters.

Councillors raised concerns around the plans impacting morale in the service; a lack of childcare provision; the detrimental effect on firefighters' family lives; the significant impact on women in the workforce; and the toll the



Firefighters rally outside the meeting

changes would take on firefighters' physical and mental health. The council cabinet decision to accept or overturn the recommendation has now been delayed until after May due to local elections. However deputy chief fire officer Nathaniel Hooton has insisted that the service will not heed the recommendation, and will continue to push through the changes.

Kate Yhnell, FBU brigade organiser for Gloucestershire said that "the FBU will continue to fight until the council and chief fire officer start listening and drop the plans."



Sounding Off

We're rescuers, not enforcers

*No firefighter joins the fire and rescue service to prevent people from protesting, says **Mark Chapman**, FBU Southern regional secretary*

As a humanitarian service, our primary aim is to prevent suffering and loss caused by fires and other disasters. But in recent years, we have seen repeated incidents of crews being called to assist the police in removing protestors. This is outside of the role of a firefighter, risking the public seeing us as an authoritarian arm of the law and losing trust.

Since 2023, a huge wave of protests in the UK has called for the government to stop arming Israel. Firefighters have repeatedly been called to assist police in removing activists from arms company factories that produce weapons used in the bombing of Palestine.

NO EMERGENCY

Earlier this year at an incident in Oxford, I saw how attendance at similar incidents can put fire crews in a difficult position.

Protestors had entered a library building, and firefighters were called to respond to an automatic fire alarm activation. When the fire service insisted on keeping crews on the scene, this spread confusion about their role in the incident – which reached the local press.

If there is no emergency – no fire, disaster, or rescue to perform – there is no need for firefighters to be on the scene. Dragging protestors off rooftops isn't rescuing them, it's assisting in their arrest.

The right to protest is a fundamental democratic right. Throughout our union's 100-year history, firefighters have taken to the streets in our thousands to demand better pay and conditions, and resist attacks on our pensions.

By refusing to assist with the removal of protestors, we stand up for our role as a humanitarian service and our civil right to protest.



Steve Wright with MPs from the FBU parliamentary group, which met on 1 April

PENSIONS

Slow pension claims processing leaves firefighters out of pocket

The Fire Brigades Union has called on the government to intervene after it emerged that slow processing of pensions claims is leaving thousands of retired firefighters out of pocket by as much as hundreds of pounds a month.

In a letter to Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, Steve Wright, Fire Brigades Union general secretary warned that “members who have already retired [...] are likely currently in receipt of a pension that is far lower than the amount they are entitled to.”

In 2015, the government imposed a new, less generous pension scheme on firefighters.

But as a result of a landmark FBU legal win in 2018, around 10,500 affected firefighters are entitled to transfer seven additional years of contributions back into the old pension scheme.

However, for firefighters to move their contributions, they need to first receive a Remediable Service Statement (RSS) which gives crucial information on the likely impact of moving, or not moving, their balance.

The legal deadline for the delivery of RSSs was 31 March 2025. However, some FBU members are now being informed that this deadline will not be met. This leaves some retired firefighters continuing to receive a far lower pension than they should be receiving until the situation is resolved.

FBU national officer Mark Rowe said it was “bad enough that firefighters had a less generous pension scheme imposed on them in 2015.”

He added: “As a minimum, they have a right to expect that their legal rights will be upheld. The government must now intervene.”

COVID INQUIRY

Call for members' pandemic stories

The FBU is asking members to contribute their own personal stories of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Covid public inquiry is reaching a critical stage, and is gathering evidence of how the pandemic affected key workers. The FBU has provided evidence to the inquiry in its own right and through the TUC, which is a core participant.

Firefighters and emergency control staff kept the fire and rescue service fully operational throughout the pandemic. They moved the dead, drove ambulances and delivered medicine,

under a national agreement negotiated by the FBU. More than 200,000 people died from Covid-19 in the UK – one of the worst death rates among comparable countries.

The Covid-19 inquiry has appealed to key workers to tell their story of what happened during the pandemic at work, in control rooms, on stations, training centres or headquarters. This is called “Every Story Matters”. The form is open until Friday 23 May 2025.

■ covid19.public-inquiry.uk/every-story-matters/

In brief

SCOTLAND FIGHTS FOR 52

Firefighters in Scotland are pushing for the Scottish government to provide 52 weeks maternity pay, as part of the Fight 52 campaign. Scotland FBU has launched a survey of women in the service to collate evidence to back the demand.

FIREFIGHTERS BACK BIN WORKERS

The Fire Brigades Union offered its support to striking bin workers in Birmingham this April, during an ongoing dispute over pay.

Councillor Roger Harmer, leader of the Liberal Democrats in Birmingham recently argued that the army or fire service should be brought in to clear obstructions and waste. The FBU said it would advise members not to carry out any strike-breaking work, describing Cllr Harmer's remarks as “clueless”.

FBU LAUNCHES PODCAST

The FBU will soon be producing a regular podcast every month, with special additional episodes covering other topics. Members are invited to suggest topics of interest – email podcast@fbu.org.uk

SUFFOLK PAY ERRORS

Since 2017, firefighters in Suffolk have reported pay errors, including pension deductions, holiday pay miscalculations, late payment, and issues related to promotions and sick leave. In 2023, pension contribution errors left some employees with underpayments totalling four figures.

In February, the FBU went public. Phil Johnston, Suffolk FBU brigade chair, said: “The inspectorate's report into Suffolk shone a light on the failings of senior management. Failing to put an end to the pay errors was one of these. Highlighting this publicly has encouraged leaders of the fire service and council employers to put measures in place to stop any reoccurrence. Following talks, we hope the payment issues will be resolved – but we will keep a watchful eye.”



The anti-cuts movement is back on the streets

The Fire Brigades Union has urged the government to change course after chancellor Rachel Reeves committed to cutting billions of pounds from the welfare budget in her Spring Statement on 26 March.

The welfare cuts, which will amount to around £5 billion, are largely targeted at disability benefit. They will make it much more difficult to qualify for Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and will roughly halve the additional payments made through universal credit to those unable to work.

STANDING IN SOLIDARITY

Steve Wright, FBU general secretary, said that the cuts were “shameful” and that “the Fire Brigades Union stands in solidarity with disability benefit claimants and other vulnerable people who will suffer from these cuts.”

Hundreds of protesters gathered outside parliament as Reeves was delivering the Spring Statement. Addressing the crowd,



News Focus

Wealth tax not welfare cuts, says FBU

Ellen Morrison-Smith from Disabled People Against the Cuts (DPAC) said: “This is not about reform. Let’s be absolutely clear. This is about cuts that cost lives.”

'The Fire Brigades Union stands in solidarity with disability benefit claimants and other vulnerable people who will suffer from these cuts'

The government estimates that 370,000 people will lose their PIP payments, costing them an average of £4,500 per year. 2.25m people will lose about £500 a year from the freezing of the incapacity top up to universal credit. And it is expected that around 730,000 future claimants will lose an average of £3,000 a year each from cuts to universal credit.

A POLITICAL CHOICE

Speaking to reporters, chancellor Rachel Reeves said that she was “absolutely certain that our reforms, instead of pushing people into poverty, are going to get people into work.”

The Trussell Trust, which runs most of the UK’s food banks, warned that “people at food banks have told us they are terrified of how they might survive.”

In a statement, the FBU’s Disabled and Neurodivergent members’ forum said: “This is not an economic necessity – it is a political choice.

“Billions of pounds have been found for defence spending in recent weeks, as well as pay rises for MPs, while billionaires, the super-wealthy, and big corporations continue to get away without paying their fair share.”

FBU general secretary Steve Wright has called on the government to introduce a wealth tax to fund welfare spending, as well as investing in public services and delivering fair pay for firefighters and other workers.

“Workers struggling to afford the basics will not accept falling living standards from Labour,” he said.

MPs are expected to vote on the changes before the summer.

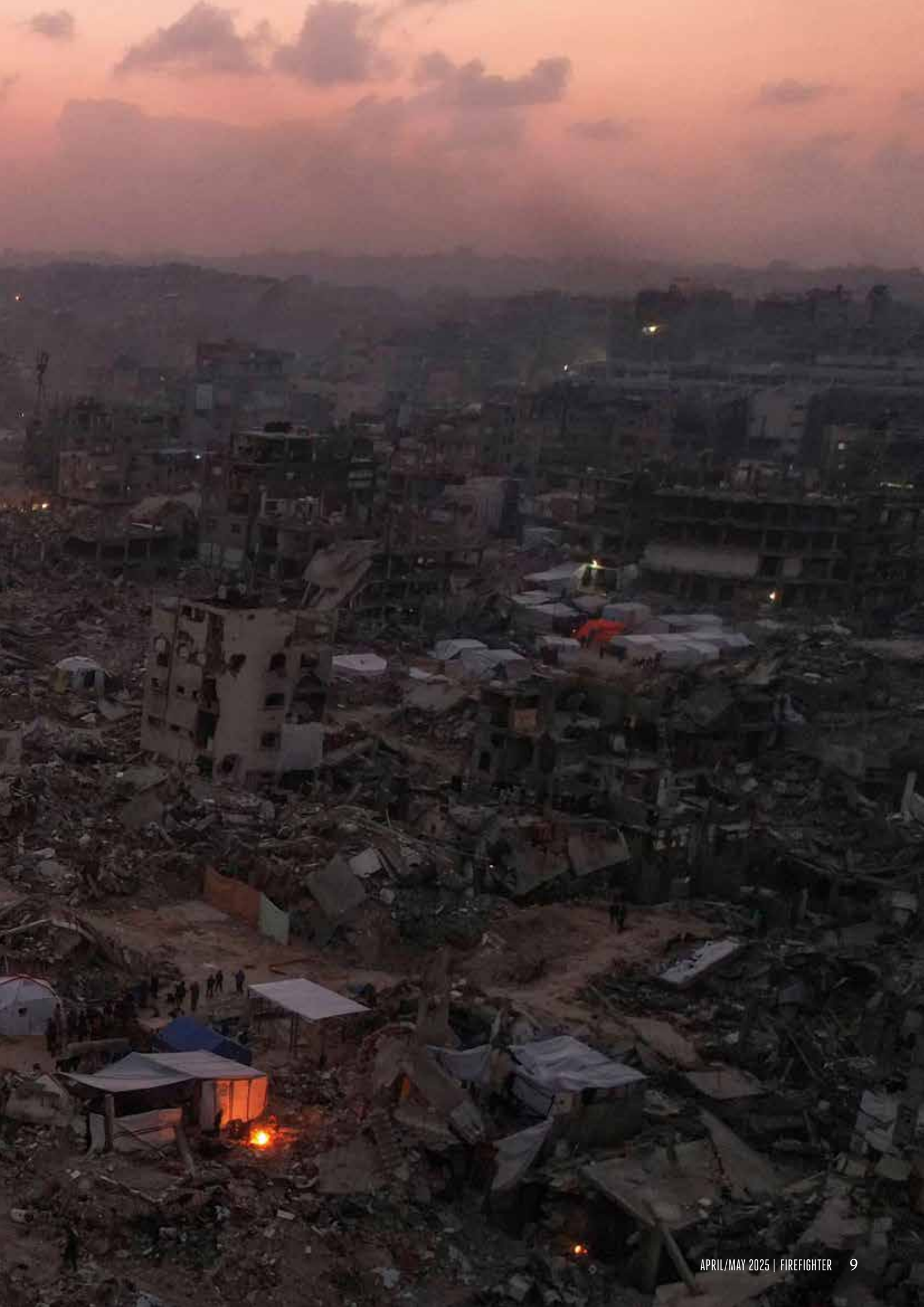
An aerial photograph taken by a drone shows a vast landscape of rubble and destruction in Gaza. The sky is a mix of orange and grey, suggesting a sunset or the smoke of fires. In the foreground and middle ground, there are numerous small fires burning, and several tents are visible, some of which appear to be makeshift or damaged. The background shows a dense urban area with many buildings that have been reduced to ruins. The overall scene is one of devastation and hardship.

THE BIG PICTURE

Humanitarian crisis in Gaza

An aerial photograph taken by a drone shows fires and tents amongst the rubble of bombed buildings in Jabalia, Gaza. Nine in 10 homes have been destroyed or damaged since October 2023, according to UN figures.

On 23 March, Israeli forces opened fire at a fire truck and five ambulances on a rescue operation near Rafah, killing 15 medics and rescue workers. These killings add to a total death toll of over 50,000, around 2% of the Gaza Strip's population.



CREWING

5, 4, 3...

COUNTDOWN TO

When fire and rescue services send firefighters out in crews of just three on a fire engine, lives are on the line. **Firefighter** reports





DISASTER

A hotel is burning. People are still inside and need help to get out. Many of them don't speak English as their first language and are panicking. Your crew is first on the scene, but there are only three of you on the fire engine. You aren't able to follow standard procedures because you don't have the number of firefighters needed to safely operate breathing apparatus and enter the building.

You don't know when the next fire engine will arrive. You stand outside and the three of you look up at the smoke, knowing that the hotel could turn into a death trap at any moment.

What would you do?

LIVES ON THE LINE

No firefighter should ever have to face this nightmare. But in Staffordshire, three firefighters found themselves in this exact situation.

This happened during the early days of a trial that Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service launched in June 2023, joining an increasing number of fire services sending retained firefighters out in 'crews of three'.

Fortunately, another fire engine arrived at the incident a few minutes later – saving the crew from a terrible dilemma. No lives were lost. But this was not an isolated incident, and although the service stated that firefighters in reduced crews wouldn't be sent to building fires, they still can and do end up there.

BAD LUCK COMES IN THREES

Firefighters in this position face a terrible choice: stand outside, or enter the burning building, despite operational policy and training.

June 2023, Cambridgeshire: a crew

of three is sent to a fire in a residential flat. It wasn't known whether anyone was inside, and smoke was billowing from the window. The crew followed the procedure outlined by the service, preparing a water supply and standing by for firefighters equipped with breathing apparatus. They had to wait for an agonising nine minutes before the next appliance arrived from a neighbouring county, aware that every second counted.

But when crews know for certain that someone is in the building, they are likely to put their lives at risk and go in.

In the autumn last year, a crew of three Staffordshire firefighters was sent to a house fire – despite the service assuring that they wouldn't be – with reports of a person still inside. They arrived to find police attempting to break down the door, so they intervened, gained entry and rescued the resident. Without proper breathing apparatus procedures, they were lucky to have escaped without injury or worse.

"Whether crews of three become the new normal depends on whether firefighters – retained and wholetime – unite to end the practice everywhere."

If a fire service is run on the basis of luck, it is only a matter of time before avoidable injuries or deaths occur.

JUSTIFYING CUTS

Reducing the size of fire crews enables fire chiefs to make cuts to resources while "fudging the numbers", says Martin Starkey, Staffordshire FBU brigade secretary, who is fighting the policy alongside members in his region.

"Lowering standards so that a smaller crew is allowed to be deployed means that more fire engines appear to be 'available'. But behind these inflated figures, the reality is that there are fewer firefighters available to save lives," he explains.

Response times also appear to improve, but the time it takes to adequately respond gets worse. A crew of three may be able to arrive at an incident first, decreasing the average time recorded for the first fire engine to arrive at an incident. But this time doesn't reflect when firefighters can start responding to a serious fire, because they must wait for back-up.

UNITE TO FIGHT

While retained firefighters are being sent out in crews of three more often, this is a threat to all firefighters. In the last two decades, the fire service has moved from the safe, professional standard of five per engine to a situation in which four, or even three, is becoming normalised.

In Merseyside last year, FBU members had to fend off plans to send out wholetime firefighters in crews of three. With a huge rally outside a fire authority meeting, they were able to push back a vote on the policy.

Whether crews of three become the new normal depends on whether firefighters – retained and wholetime – unite to end the practice everywhere.

NATIONAL STANDARDS

The FBU is calling for the Labour government to roll out national standards for crewing. By lobbying MPs, FBU members can make sure this gets on the agenda.

But while pressure builds in parliament, there is much to be done on the ground. To prevent crewing cuts, firefighters everywhere can make it clear that "crew deficient" means "safety deficient".

■ Support Staffordshire FBU members' campaign: fbu.org.uk/campaigns/stop-crews-three-Staffordshire



I'm a federal worker, and I feel like a canary in the coal mine right now—because what they're doing to us is going to happen to the entire American public." That's how Chris Dols, who works for the US Army Corps of Engineers and is the president of a local chapter of the International

Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers, began his video response to Elon Musk announcing mass government cuts and job losses.

When Trump appointed Musk to lead a new "Department of Government Efficiency" (DOGE), he launched a series of vicious attacks on workers. These aren't just a threat to the specific federal (public sector) workers in the current line of fire. This is an ideological assault on the very principle of public services and presents real danger for workers everywhere.

"EFFICIENCY" = ATTACKS

Billionaires, not federal employees, are hoarding America's wealth: total yearly pay for all 2.3 million civilian federal employees (\$271 billion) is significantly less than Elon Musk's personal net worth of \$412 billion.

Musk's reckless operation threatens enormous numbers of Americans. Without federal workers at sufficiently funded agencies, no one in the US would be able to receive benefits such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, or workplace safety protections, among many other essential services. Local schools and hospitals all across the country also depend on federal funding. Due to Trump's budget chaos, health clinics across the US have already been forced to close.

The good news is that federal workers are surging into their unions. Over 14,000 workers

FACT CORNER

Billionaires, not federal employees, are hoarding America's wealth: total yearly pay for all 2.3 million civilian federal employees (\$271 billion) is significantly less than Elon Musk's personal net worth of \$412 billion.

Elon Musk's 'DOGE' department has been firing federal government workers



MUSK

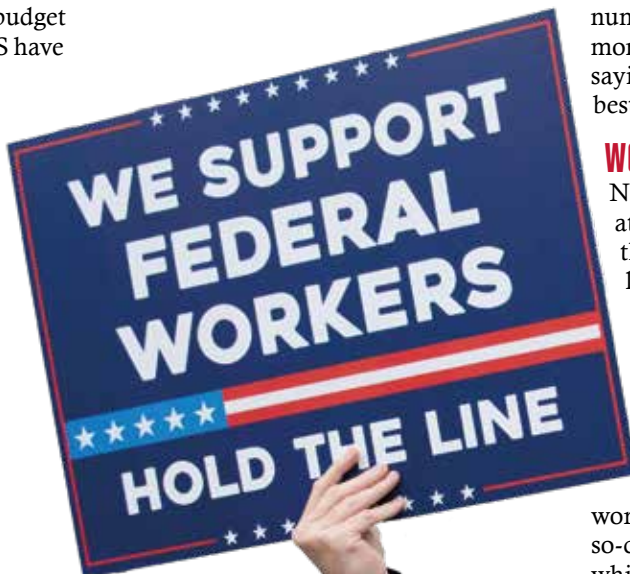
As UK politicians start to echo Trump and Musk's attacks on public sector workers, **Eric Blanc** writes on how workers are starting to fight back in the US – and what we can learn

joined the American Federation of Government Employees in the first month of this year, nearly totalling the number who joined in the previous 12 months. As the trade union movement saying goes, sometimes "the boss is the best organiser".

WORKERS FIGHT BACK

No matter which lackeys are installed at the top of government agencies, they still ultimately depend on the labour of their employees. And workers' resistance has already put a wrench in Musk's operations.

Refusing to succumb to intimidation, unions of federal employees have sued to stop Musk. With union encouragement, most federal workers have rejected DOGE's so-called buyout scheme, through which they would "voluntarily" resign.





ALAMY

The attacks have been met with trade union protests across the US involving a wide range of unions, from civil service to education workers

and community supporters — wore the same colour and posted selfies and group photos with messages about their cause. This generated momentum and showed the community the human face of the workforce.

Try to go viral

The red state strikes were initiated and coordinated largely over viral Facebook groups. Worker activists grabbed people's attention through public actions and catchy digital content, getting co-workers involved organising similar actions via digital tools. In person and local organising was still crucial, but these movements needed digital tools and a big social media presence to coordinate and win at scale.

Persuade and involve the community

To seize the attention of the public and dispel narratives about “privileged, lazy public sector workers,” these movements understood that the only way for them to win big was by consistently emphasizing how their work — and their demands — benefited the larger community.

Get disruptive if necessary

Nobody wants to strike, especially when doing so could negatively impact community members. But since Republican legislators continued to refuse to back down, ultimately educators felt they had to walk out to save their schools. And with overwhelming popular support, they won big.

It's hard to exaggerate the stakes. But by standing up in large numbers to defend federal workers and their services, we can isolate and eventually defeat Musk and Trump.

If we don't, the consequences will be felt across the world.

■ Read more in Eric Blanc's new book, *We Are The Union: How Worker-to-Worker Organizing is Revitalizing Labor and Winning Big* (University of California Press, 2025)

These are important first steps. But it's going to take organising and pressure from these workers to win.

How can federal workers win over the public and defeat these attacks on their jobs and essential services? Their best bet is to replicate the tactics that made possible the successful 2018 teachers' strikes in West Virginia, Oklahoma, Arizona, and beyond.

BUILDING ON WINS

Through these actions, public-sector workers beat back right-wing attacks on their profession and won major pay and student funding wins that affected millions, even though they took place in Republican-controlled states where unions were weak and public-sector strikes illegal. Here are the main lessons of their strikes:

Overcome scare tactics by speaking out

Fearing retaliation from above, most teachers in 2018 were initially scared to make their voices heard. But a few

bold colleagues broke the climate of intimidation by taking a public stand early on. Nobody was fired or disciplined. Their early courage created space for countless more to speak out.

Escalate your actions

Especially because so many workers were initially scared, the movements grew by taking easy actions that could involve the largest number of workers. One tactic was “RedForEd” days in which everybody — both employees

"Public sector workers beat back right-wing attacks on their profession and won"

Mental health YOUR STORY MATTERS

Rebecca Lewington, fire control member and FBU regional secretary for the Eastern region, on why she's filling out the FBU and UCLan's mental health survey



My name is Rebecca and I'm a Watch Manager in Bedfordshire Fire Control Room. Like many fire service workers, I've struggled with my mental health as a result of the pressures of work on the frontline.

I know that many of us feel forced to suffer in silence, which is why I'm sharing my story – in the hope that you will share yours.

We feel the impact of austerity every day. Our workloads have increased, while the number of staff available to do the work has shrunk. The weight of these cuts is resting on our shoulders, and it's a heavy burden to bear.

I went from being part of a standard control room of 5 people per watch to only 4 people available on shift. I took on more roles and



recognising I wasn't OK and putting me on sick leave for me to get the help I needed.

All over the UK, firefighters and fire control staff have stories like mine.

Workers who have reached burnout, yet are still carrying out a job making decisions that affect people's lives. People who are suffering with depression and anxiety because of the immense pressure they are under at work but feel like they can't take the time off they need to recover.

Staff who are suffering from PTSD because of an incident they dealt with at work, but don't have adequate mental health support in place in their fire service. But it doesn't have to be this way.

We can win investment in and commitment to creating better mental health support in every workplace. We can make sure that there are measures put in place to address the underlying causes of poor mental health in the fire service.

But to do that, we need to understand the extent

of the problem and the solutions to address it.

You never know who around you could be suffering and not opening up. The more we speak out about mental health, the less it will become a stigma.

That's why it's so important that we all do our part and fill in this survey.

"I bottled up how I was feeling and tried to carry on."

responsibilities, including training new recruits while on the job. As well fewer control staff, there are fewer firefighters, and at times I started shifts with a sense of dread that there wouldn't be enough crews available should we get a major incident.

I was under immense pressure and really struggling, but I didn't want to let my colleagues down who were also carrying the load. I bottled up how I was feeling and tried to carry on.

When people on my watch asked me what was wrong, I would just say that I was fine.

Several times a day, I was so stressed I was going into the bathroom to cry, then returning to work. One day, someone came into our control room and made a flippant remark that our control room might be shutting, and it was like a switch had been flipped in my head. The feelings I had been trying to push down hit me all at once.

I told my manager how I was feeling but there was little he could do help me. It took an officer I'd known for a long time coming into the control room,



**Take the anonymous
survey online**
redcap.link/37ci3es8



About the survey

The FBU has commissioned the University of Central Lancashire to undertake one of the biggest research projects of its kind into mental health in the UK fire and rescue service.

We need to build on the evidence of the mental health crisis – and what's causing it – to secure the support firefighters need.

Here's what we already know:

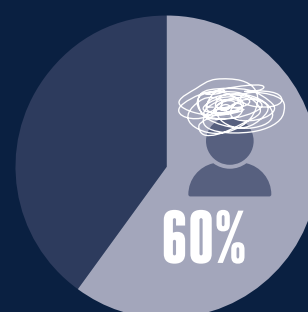
One in four adults experience a mental health problem each year



Suicide is the **biggest cause of death in men under 50**

60% of fire service workers have experience of mental health problems

(Mind, 2019)



TEAM SPIRIT

Bow Jackson, Exeter City Women F.C. captain and FBU member, spoke to **Steve Morgan** about life as a firefighting footballer

Bow Jackson's energetic presence, even via video link, is electric. But then tackling problems with a winningly infectious, can-do attitude has been her calling card across her career as a professional footballer turned firefighter.

These days Jackson juggles captaincy of Exeter City Women FC – champions last season, close to a second successive promotion from English football's third tier to the Championship this time around – with the day job as a fitness instructor and retained firefighter for Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue.

ON THE PITCH

It's a whirlwind life, but despite turning 30 last August – "I'm the old girl of the team now" she says of her semi-pro status – she has no intention of easing up. "I always joke to the girls that say I'm old that once they catch up with my stats, I'll think about retiring," she laughs.

She marked that 30th birthday, incidentally, by climbing Kilimanjaro with whole-time firefighting partner Theo, crew manager at Crediton fire

station, where the pair are based. They'll certainly be sorry to lose her at Exeter when she does decide to hang up her boots. Her arrival marked the latest chapter in a fine career in which she made her league debut for Yeovil Town Ladies in 2017 against Arsenal – marking US legend and World Cup winner Heather O'Reilly (just the 231 caps) – and played a season with Calgary Foothills in Canada before a stint with Plymouth.

This latest move has proved a real boon for both parties: a devout Devonian at a fast-developing club, with an emphasis on strong community roots. And the combination of football and fire – where teamwork is so critical for both roles – is a blend that Jackson loves.

CHANGING THE GAME

Though a huge advocate for fair play and a champion of community work, she

Bow Jackson juggles life as a football player, fitness instructor and retained firefighter





Jackson with the next generation of players

Jackson plays for Exeter City Women, which is rising rapidly up the pyramid

focuses her energies on changing the game by getting stuck in. On the pitch and at the fire station, she is part of a new generation chipping away at conventional expectations, challenging viewpoints and trying to change mindsets.

She recalls once, during her Women's Super League days with Yeovil, covering a school session as a favour in lieu of the regular coach. On arrival, she was asked where the 'real' coach was. "Where's the boy? You've got to go and coach the girls." One quick conversation later about having played Arsenal earlier that week and the matter was put swiftly to bed. "It's about proving people wrong," she says. "I've never seen it as 'I can't do this,

or I can't do that' – I've always looked for the positives, made the best of my opportunities and tried to see what I can do."

FOOTIE GROUND TO FIREGROUND

Jackson combines her on-call hours with a full working week as brigade fitness advisor. She has a UEFA 'B' coaching licence and also finds time to fit in punditry work for BBC Radio Devon on the men's game. If that doesn't leave much time to relax – "spare time? What's that?" she laughs – she revels in the two different yet overlapping working roles. Of course, there's the traditional leg-pulling. "Oh, I get the mickey taken out of me, at every turn of the way," she says. "At football it's 'Oh, you're a firefighter.' At fire it's:

"I get to take all the experience learned from my fire colleagues to my youngsters at the football"

'Oh, you're a footballer.'

"In football, I'm the old girl, but in the fire service I'm the guppy, which is great – I get to use all the experience learned from my colleagues at fire and go and take that to my youngsters at the football."

LEADING THE WAY

Lessons learned in her fire role are invaluable – she recalls the first time she led a call-out, a moment that made her as proud as her professional debut. "That was only a little kitchen fire – I didn't drag six people out and save all the cats," she says. "But you never forget the first time. And it [fire-service work] levels you, you see things most people won't see in a lifetime, so it makes you appreciate your life," she says. "And" she chuckles, "I've saved a cat since!"

Whatever her future holds, be it making saving tackles, or saving lives, Bow Jackson has proved herself what fellow pundits call an MVP – a most-valuable player.

"One of my coaches always used to say: 'be hungry and humble' – that's kind of how I live," she says. "Always want to learn, always want to be better – but never forget where you came from, or the example you set to the person who's following you."



Brick by brick

The reopening of Redhills Durham is a reminder of how Britain's trade unions built their own networks of welfare, art and culture, writes **Rhian E. Jones**

Coalmining has played an essential part in shaping Durham. Beyond the county's picture-postcard city, cathedral and university, the Durham coalfield was one of the largest in Europe, home to hundreds of thousands of workers from all over the world.

In 1869, these workers came together to unionise as the Durham Miners' Association and, a few years later, established the Durham Miners' Gala as an annual celebration of trade union culture and working-class life. From 1915, the union's headquarters was the Miners' New Hall, a grand Baroque-style building

in the centre of Durham – also known as Redhills.

DEMOCRACY, DIGNITY AND SELF-RESPECT

Now Grade II-listed and included in Historic England's "100 Irreplaceable Places", Redhills was built to impress. Its construction began in 1914, funded through subscriptions from miners. A year later, the hall was complete as a place for assembly and debate, along with offices and housing for DMA staff.

Under a copper-domed roof, its interior featured white marble, gleaming tiles and oak panelling, with artworks showcasing the union's history. The building's centrepiece was the "Pitman's Parliament", a debating chamber with individual seats for each of the over 300 Durham collieries as their

delegates had their say in the union's decision-making. Redhills represented the pride, dignity and self-respect of mineworkers, and demanded the same respect from the bosses who profited from their labour.

A NEW ERA

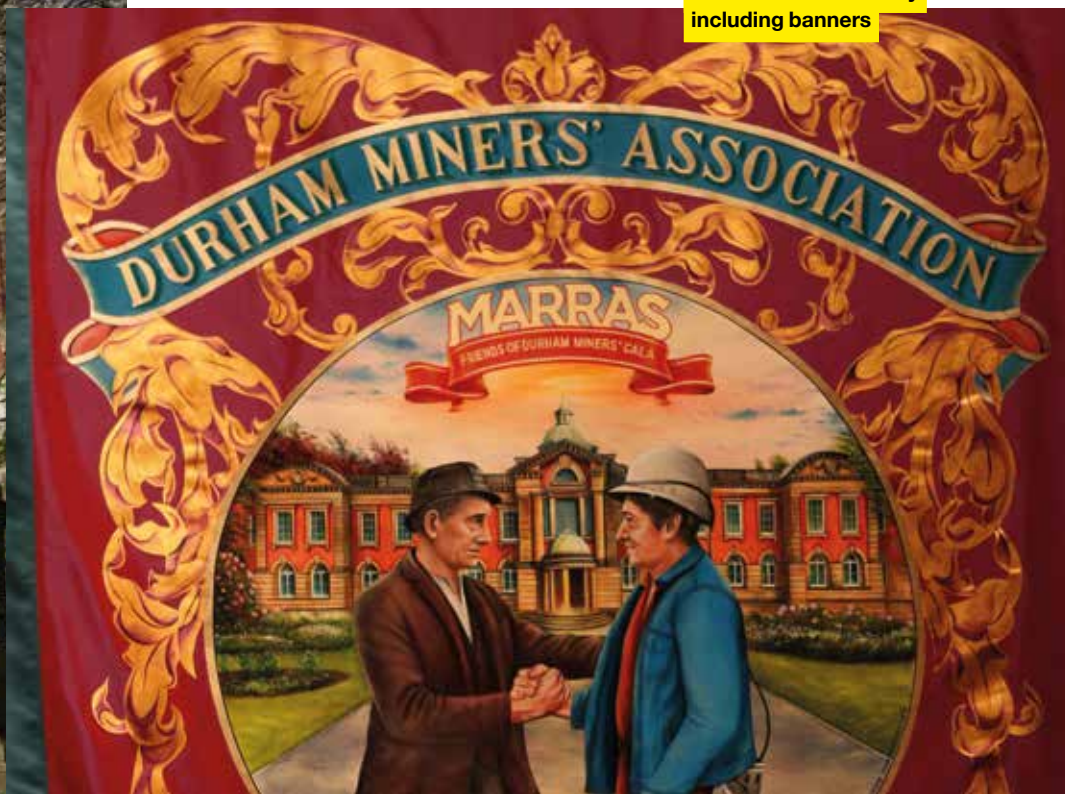
After Durham's last colliery closed in the early 1990s, the future of Redhills looked uncertain. With the end of mining as an industry, the union's work and the building's functions switched to continuing the annual Miners' Gala and overseeing compensation claims for former miners who had sustained illness or injury while at work, while some of its offices were rented out to local charities.

In 2020, the Redhills charity, established to preserve Durham's mining past, developed a plan to return Redhills to its former glory. A programme of renovation and restoration work began, funded by over £4m from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and match-funding from Durham County Council, combined with public donations. The project's



ALAMY

The building contains a wealth of union history including banners



RICHARD SAKER/ALAMY

Redhills was home to the 'Pitman's Parliament', where mineworkers assembled for union decision-making

completion will see the hall reopen to the public this summer as a centre for local heritage, music and art.

WELFARE: HOW WORKERS LED THE WAY

This new era for Redhills draws on a long history – not only that of the building itself, but a broader legacy of institutions created by trade unions to supply their members with welfare, culture and leisure. Similar spaces – often known as miners' institutes or workmen's halls – stand in varying states of disrepair across post-industrial parts of the country, but they were once vibrant symbols of a strong, ambitious and organised working class.

Before Britain's welfare state was created, people had only themselves and their communities to rely on when they became ill, unemployed or too old to work. But trade unions had the resources, the structure, and the will

to step in and provide vital services. Through membership subscriptions, they set up compensation funds for the families of miners killed or injured at work, built convalescent and retirement homes for ill or elderly miners, and arranged healthcare free at the point of use. This proto-welfare state later provided a model for the establishment of the NHS.

Alongside welfare provision, the halls and institutes that unions created – with members sometimes doing the construction work themselves – were centres for social life and self-improvement. They not only hosted political meetings but could house libraries, adult education classes, and even bars, cinemas and sports facilities.

NEW LIFE AFTER THATCHER

Today, after decades of deindustrialisation and underinvestment, the landscape of Britain's former coalfields can look bleak. The decline of industry and the power of unions has meant the collapse of the particular forms of working-class culture and community life that they underpinned. But the revival of



At the Durham Miners' Gala back in 1974

HOMER SYKES/ALAMY

"This proto-welfare state later provided a model for the establishment of the NHS."

Redhills – now intended as a hub for culture, entertainment and democratic debate as well as heritage – is a sign that not all is lost.

Revitalising places like Redhills under the direction of local communities could be part of an alternative to the neglect of post-industrial areas by governments. Already an important reminder of what past generations of organised workers could achieve, these buildings also have something to offer the present and future of working-class people.

Fire chiefs must not be allowed to mark their own homework on equality

Kasey LeGall, interim secretary of the Black and Ethnic Minority Members section, on fire service culture reviews, mental health, and driving change through the union

In recent years, an increasing number of fire and rescue services have commissioned “culture reviews”, investigating discrimination and inequality in the workplace.

We have welcomed these reviews because we want to see real change: a safer, fairer and more just culture across all fire and rescue services. And let’s be absolutely clear: as trade unionists, we never condone the unacceptable behaviours that these reviews continue to expose.

We urge all FBU members to stand by the union’s rule book by standing up to racism, ableism, misogyny, homophobia and transphobia — and by actively advocating for all underrepresented groups.

However, while we fully support culture reviews, we strongly oppose the way they are being conducted. The National Fire Chiefs Council and individual fire services cannot be allowed to “mark their own homework” by commissioning reports that are not truly independent. It is also concerning that senior leaders are producing toolkits to tackle racism and other equality issues without proper consultation with the FBU sections.

Equality must not be an afterthought: it must be given the same priority as industrial matters at the bargaining table.

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health is another critical issue demanding urgent attention. All firefighters must have access to high quality mental health support, but we know that many services are failing to provide it.

Black and ethnic minority members are particularly impacted, facing additional obstacles when it comes to getting help. That’s why we are currently investigating the increasing number of suicides and the mental health crises among Black men.

This is a difficult but necessary conversation, and we must push



Equality must not be an afterthought: it must be given the same priority as industrial matters

for better understanding, provision and support.

REACHING NEW MEMBERS

B&EMM is also focused on recruiting more members to our section across the UK. By joining the section, B&EMM members can be part of building workplace solidarity and campaigning for improvements in our service and beyond.

We call on our comrades within brigade committees and regional structures to help us reach as many members as possible. Together, we can build a stronger, more connected movement.

Finally, we are excited to announce B&EMM School 2025, taking place from October 29 – 31. Save the date! This event is a crucial opportunity to learn, network, and organise. We encourage all B&EMM members to apply to attend and be part of shaping our future.

■ To contact your local B&EMM representatives, visit the FBU website: www.fbu.org.uk/sections/black-and-ethnic-minority-members



Meet the rep

Tom Wass, brigade organiser, Mid and West Wales

What made you want to become a rep?

I transferred to Mid and West Wales five years ago. There was no FBU rep at my station. Having started my career in Essex, seeing the benefit of the union and how important it is to have a functioning branch I stepped up to be the rep – and haven't looked back!

What is your proudest moment as a rep?

I am proud of helping members in Mid and West Wales to have a voice against fire service management who have chosen to stop listening to the frontline. As part of our ongoing dispute with management we organised a rally which was attended by over 200 people. Seeing a coachload of FBU members turning up with placards was fantastic!

What have you learned during your most recent campaign?

Use all the resources available. The help and support we have received from regional and national officials, and staff – including national organiser Matt Partridge and the campaign/communications team – has been invaluable.

Who are your working-class heroes?

I admire anyone who stands up and does the right thing. Standing up for what is right can be a bit scary, and may be

lonely at times, but the people that do are heroes.

What piece of advice would you give a new rep?

Firstly, WELL DONE for taking on the role! Secondly, don't fear the imposter syndrome. All officials were new in role once and the members you represent will be super pleased that you have taken on the role.

Describe yourself in three words.

Friendly, principled, determined.

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

As part of our campaign we have been visiting retained stations to build engagement and recruitment. The threat of stations being downgraded is a massive worry for retained crews. Having a van, parked in a lock-up which can only carry out an exterior attack at fires is a huge concern for crews who want to protect the service they provide to their communities. We need to do more to stand up for our retained members.

If you had the aux cord at a rally, what song would you play?

The Bartender and the Thief by Stereophonics.



What's new?

Shift patterns

There is no UK-wide standard when it comes to firefighters' working hours, meaning that each fire and rescue service can set shift patterns depending on local arrangements.

This year, chief fire officers in both Gloucestershire and Mid and West Wales have targeted firefighters' working hours.

In each case, threats to change shift patterns have been issued without consulting or listening to the views of firefighters: ignoring ample evidence that the new hours will have a negative impact on the workforce and the service.

In a policy statement passed at FBU conference in 2023, the executive council described many recent changes to shifts as "motivated by spite, arrogance [and] disrespect", often used as a means of bullying the workforce.

In 2018, the FBU won a legal battle against South Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service requiring firefighters to work "Victorian" 96-hour shifts.

So while attacks on the terms and conditions of firefighters are not new, these ongoing battles show a renewed interest in the imposition of punishing shift patterns. FBU members are making it clear that any chief pursuing this agenda will have a fight on their hands.



A shifts protest in Gloucestershire



President's dispatch

FBU president
Ian Murray on having
your say at conference

Conference is the parliament of our union: the decision-making body that gives members the ultimate say over the FBU's priorities. It is your opportunity to shape the union, decide our policies and rules, and set our focus for the year to come.

Each year, the executive council submits policy statements to be voted on, which look at the bigger picture and outline proposed strategies. Resolutions are also written and brought by members through branch and brigade structures across the union. This year is a 'rule change' conference, meaning proposed alterations to our rule book have also been submitted.

Elected delegates from brigades across the UK will then speak on these resolutions, rule changes and policy statements before debating and voting commences.

All members can play a role in the process by reading the final agenda once it's issued, and making your voice heard through brigade or sectional structures. Your delegates are there to represent members in your brigade or section – so let them know what think they should support or oppose.

Our democratic process is what keeps our union strong: be part of that proud tradition.

■ **FBU conference will be held on 20 – 23 May 2025, Blackpool**

COMPETITION



2024's winning photo by Stuart Stenhouse

FBU photo competition 2025 now open

We are looking 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, on 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. This year's contest closes on 25 July 2025.

By submitting an entry, each entrant agrees to the official rules. Follow the link below or scan the code to see the rules and how to enter. The competition is only open to current FBU members.

■ Email your entries to firefighter@fbu.org.uk
■ bit.ly/FBU-photocomp-2025



UNION DEMOCRACY

Steve Wright confirmed as general secretary

The certification officer instructed the FBU to re-run the general secretary election following an accidental omission meaning that some members did not receive a ballot paper. Both candidates were written to with regards to standing again. Steve Wright confirmed he would, and Matt Wrack declined, meaning that Steve Wright has been confirmed as general secretary.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

ROOT direct debits

We want to inform our valued Retired and Out of Trade (ROOT) members of an important update regarding your FBU membership payments.

Following an increase in bank fees, this summer we will be switching from taking a monthly payment of £2, to an annual payment of £24 for your membership.

By consolidating your payments, the union will save thousands of pounds in transaction fees. These savings will enable us to continue being a valued and professional voice for our members.

UPCOMING EVENTS



■ Firefighters memorial day, 4 May: Please join the minute's silence at midday

■ Register for Young Members' Summer School before 30 May: bit.ly/fbu-youngmembersschool



Wright on the Road

■ **10 March** FBU organisers' school, hearing from trade unionists fighting the far right in the US

■ **11-13 March** Spoke to representatives from across the fire and rescue sector and delivered a talk on the need for fire service funding at the Local Government Association fire conference

■ **13 March** Attended the FBU North East regional committee meeting

■ **18 March** Ministerial Advisory Group meeting at the Home Office



■ **24-25 March** Greater Manchester brigade committee meeting and branch visits

■ **1 April** Updated MPs on campaigns at a meeting of the FBU parliamentary group

COMING UP

■ **25 April** Attending Suffolk brigade committee meeting

■ **28 April-2 May** Addressing the UN in Geneva on the topic of firefighters' exposure to contaminants

■ **6 May** Hosting a health and safety event in London with Australian firefighters

■ **19-23 May** FBU Conference

Shifting grounds

Station Cat on a fire chief's changing story

Older Merseyside readers will remember Malcolm Saunders as the fire chief who took early retirement in 2002 after provoking a strike. They may have thought they would never hear from him again, but an extraordinary statement he has made on a Reform Party podcast has thrust him straight back into the centre of controversy.

As the Liverpool Echo reported at the time, "The FBU were horrified at the idea that people with no operational experience" could be promoted to run the fire service, as Saunders wished. The National Joint Council ruled unanimously against it, but Saunders pressed on anyway, and lost the resulting strike.

Soon afterwards, he took early retirement, and took his full pension because he was retiring on health grounds – though he had vigorously opposed the practise of giving firefighters their full pension package if they retired on health grounds, calling it "morally repugnant." Apparently what was immoral for firefighters was fine for their boss.

Saunders, who earned around £100,000 in 2002, received a lump sum pay-off of £200,000 and a pension of £41,000 a year. Cllr Peter Corcoran, the fire authority chairman, said: "It would



not have been given if a medical officer had not agreed that this is what he was entitled to." A letter from a medical expert was read out at the meeting where it was agreed.

Now, 23 years later, Saunders has been interviewed in a Reform Party podcast by the Reform Party candidate for West Wirral, Ken Ferguson. Saunders tells Ferguson: "I got shoved out." This is very different from retiring on health grounds.

So was he entitled to the full pension? Or can he, no doubt with relief, hand back the money and no longer feel "morally repugnant"?

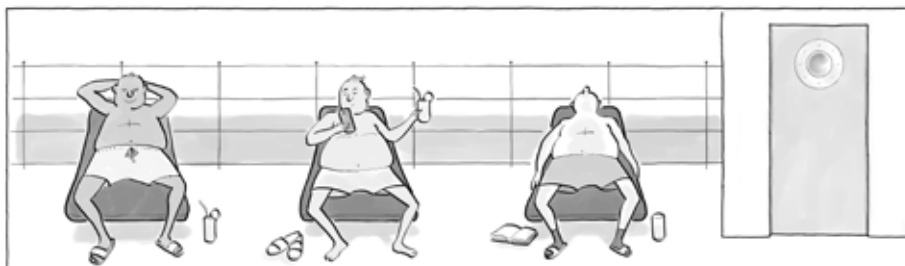
The podcast clip, posted to Youtube in March but recorded before the 2024 election, was supposed to boost Ferguson's chances of election as the Reform Party candidate for West Wirral.

Ferguson uses it to call for the fire service to be replaced by a "hybrid" fire service run by the army; says that the fire service cannot be improved until the FBU has been "broken"; and claims that there are far too many firefighters.

Station Cat rang Ferguson and asked how he would make do with fewer firefighters. He said car fires and the like can often "be dealt with by one chap on a bike" – no doubt the sort of deep thinking about public services we can expect from the Reform Party.



CREWS OF 3 FIREFIGHTERS



CRUISE OF 3 CHIEF FIRE OFFICERS

25-year badges



Dan Morgan (r) green watch, Camels Head fire station, Devon & Somerset receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Dave Lock (l)



Emma Harvey (r) blue watch, Camels Head fire station & Brigade Women's Rep for Devon & Somerset, receives her 25-year badge from Dave Lock (l)



Tony Evans (r), Northamptonshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Dave Hull (l)



Rob Hilton (r), Salfords, Surrey receives his 25 year-badge from brigade organiser Simon Harris (l)



Alan Allmark (r) receives his 25-year badge from FBU officer rep Peter Johnson



Pete Stone (l), Poole green watch, Dorset and Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Adam Moss, alongside colleagues (l-r) Dave O'Bryan, Ryan Cuff, Mark Greenham and Mark Downing



Stephen Nicol (l), Redhill Park green watch, Dorset and Wiltshire, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Adam Moss, alongside colleagues (l-r) Daniel Wigley and Jason Reynolds



Daz Wigley (r), green watch, Barnsley receive his 25-year badge from branch chair Joe Campbell (l) with members of Barnsley branch



Gary Knuppel (centre), North Wales training department, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Gavin Roberts with colleagues looking on



David Bruce (l), Amber Watch, Paisley receives his 25-year badge from Lewis Childs (r)



David Edgar (r) receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Jack Morris (l), surrounded by members of Walsall White



Stephen Reid (l), Thurso Fire Station, Highlands, Scotland receives his 25-year badge from North Area organiser region 1 Will Burt (r)



Andy Lambert (l), Conwy fire station, North Wales receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Gavin Roberts



Andy Watson (l) receives his 25-year badge from Dave Lewis (r) on top of Sugarloaf Mountain



Steve Bayliss (r), blue watch, Bridgwater branch rep, receives his 25-year badge from brigade organiser Dave Lock (l)



Scott Wade, Operational Resource Team, receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Matt Nicholls, with blue watch comrades



Andy Daybell (l), HQ, Lincolnshire receives his 25-year badge from brigade secretary Karl Keuneke (r)



Richie Elson (l), Canterbury, Kent, receives his 25-year badge from Canterbury branch chair and Region 11 fairness at work rep Matt Drinkwater (r), with colleagues looking on



Adam King (l) of the Ops Intelligence Department, receives his 25-year badge from rep Dave Lock, with green watch colleagues in Taunton, Devon and Somerset



Angus Taylor (r), Tayport fire station, Scotland, receives his 25-year badge from station rep Kenny Culross



Rob Norman (r), Bickinhill fire station, West Midlands receives his 25-year badge from FBU rep James Silver (l), Technical Rescue Unit, West Midlands Fire Service



Ashley Cooper (l) red watch, Erdington, West Midlands, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Lyndon Flavell (r)



Michael Cook (l), blue watch, Erdington, West Midlands, receives his 25 year badge from branch rep Lyndon Flavell (r)



Mark Wild (r), Training School, Birley, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Pat Renshaw (l), with members of Birley & Lowedges Blue, ORT & Officers Section



Tony Agnew (l), Penketh receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Paul Aney (r) with red watch colleagues



Alex Snook (l), blue watch, Hightown, Hampshire, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Vytas Jakimavicius with (l to r) Kate Early, Chris Norgate, Adam Shaw, Josh Healey, Joe Farley, Owen Jones and Gareth Hitchcoe



James Bramwell (r), red watch, Cheadle, Greater Manchester receiving his badge from brigade organiser Matt Fryer with watch colleagues looking on



Ian Parker (l), white watch, Thorne receives his 25-year badge from Thorne branch secretary Mark Harrison (r)



Charles Dilworth, Northolt Fire station, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Jason Cole



John Strong (r), red watch, Kirkcaldy fire station, receives his 25-year badge from branch rep Ewan Wallace

40-year badges



David Jones (l), Meltham on-call and Morley red watch, with **Graham Holroyd** (r) Meltham on-call and Huddersfield red watch, West Yorkshire, receiving their 40-year badges from branch reps Tom Swierzynski and Sarah Dykes



Adrian Dewsbury, Cheshire, HQ training department, receives his 25-year badge from HQ rep Rob Jensen



Ian Werner (r) receives his 25-year badge from Justin Jones at Deeside Fire Station, North Wales



Aubrey Cooper (r), officers branch, Lancashire, receives his 25-year badge from branch secretary Ian Nelson, with Rod Steele, branch chair, looking on



Grant Mynheer (l), Margate, Kent receives his 25-year badge from his brother, Cy Mynheer, who also serves at Margate (r)

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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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



HELP FIX THE MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCY



Take the survey

Fire service workers across the UK are struggling with their mental health. Together, we can make sure no one is suffering in silence.

Take part in the survey. What you say will help us build better mental health support in the fire service.

Find out more: www.fbu.org.uk/mental-health

