

CWU
**WOMEN'S
OFFICER
TOOLKIT**

USEFUL CONTACTS

UNIONLINE Free Helpline for CWU members

Tel: 0300 333 0303

CWU Bullying & Harassment Helpline

Tel: FREEPHONE 0800 090 2303

Equality, Education & Development Department

CWU HQ, 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London, SW19 1RX

Tel: 0208 971 7340

Email: equality&education@cwu.org



FOREWORD

Congratulations on being elected to the position of women's officer. You are now one of the thousands of CWU representatives, representing members and their interests all over the UK.

The role of women's officer is very important within the CWU. We take women's representation very seriously. Women's positions are enshrined within the Union's Rule Book at branch, regional and national level to ensure the CWU has a healthy, proportional and diverse balance on decision-making bodies. You can check out the CWU rule book here www.cwu.org/about-the-cwu/union-matters/rulebook for further details.

We work hard to support our women officers and are committed to making sure you have all the support, training and information you need to make your role a success!

This guide has been produced to help you get started with the basics and provides practical information to help you make the most of your role.

We hope you find it useful.

CWU EQUALITY RULES

“To actively oppose all forms of discrimination based on race, creed, religion, age, political affiliation, disability, marital status, sex or sexual or gender orientation in industry, the Union and society in general. To this end the CWU shall actively oppose any organisation, political or otherwise, whose aims are racist or fascist;

“To promote and encourage proportionality and fair representation of all members, in industry, the Union and society in general.”

WOMEN'S OFFICER ROLE

The Women's Officer is the key branch representative for women CWU members.

As women's officer, you will play a leading role in:

- Making sure women have a voice and are represented within the branch.
- Making sure that women's issues are promoted in the workplace.
- Making sure national and regional campaigning work reaches out and engages with women members.
- Acting as a point of contact between women members and the branch.
- Providing advice on women's issues to the branch and the membership.

As Women's Officer you need to be friendly and approachable, organised and work hard to ensure that women members have a strong voice within the CWU.

This role is varied, exciting, flexible and can make a real difference to women workers and their experiences in the workplace.

As women's officer you can choose how to focus your role and what to make your priority depending on what sort of activities local members want to see and what the most pressing issues are in your local workplaces.

A good starting point is to work with your branch secretary and map your local membership to find out where your women members are – then reach out to women members to build relationships, by introducing yourself and letting members know what your role is and how to contact you.

With the help and support of your branch you could then develop a plan to meet your women members to find out what the biggest local issues are for women.

With branch support you could also set up a women's network or a local branch women's committee to help drive women's campaigns, empower women and provide a safe space for women in the local area to talk about the issues that affect them most.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE WOMEN'S OFFICER ROLE:

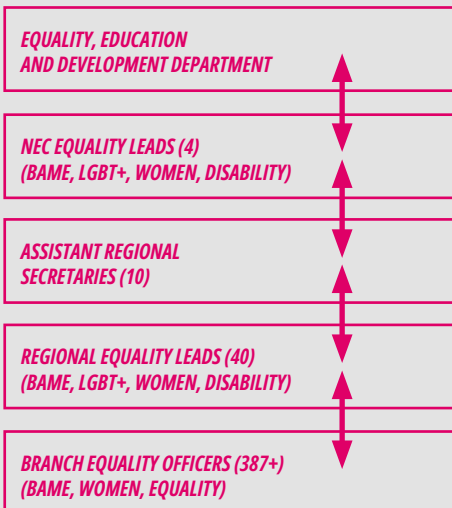
1. To promote and actively campaign on CWU Equality, Education and Development policies.
2. To build alliances with women's organisations in the wider community that share the same values and interests as the union.
3. To bring women together to empower each other and gain the knowledge to take a more active part in branch affairs and the union in general.
4. To encourage women members to become activists and actively participate in CWU training and education.
5. To be a point of contact for women members and to work with other reps and the branch.
6. To deal with women's issues and to pursue them through the equality lead engagement structure and mainstream union structures.
7. To prepare a branch women's report to be placed before the branch committee meeting.
8. To prepare an annual women's report on behalf of the branch to be placed before the branch AGM.



EQUALITY LEAD ENGAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Equality Lead Engagement Structure has been purposely designed to mainstream our equality work across all structures of the union and support women officers achieve their aims and objectives.

Table 1: CWU Equality Engagement Structure



As shown in Table 1 the CWU head of equality, education and development works with the elected National Executive Council (NEC) women's Leads.

The NEC women's leads work with regional assistant secretaries and the regional women's equality leads.

In turn, Women's Regional leads work with branch women officers. Branch women officers then engage with the branch and women lay members.

The structure also enables branch women officers to feedback on important women's issues or to seek support when needed.

It's important to know who your regional and national women's lead are and share contact details. You can do this by contacting your branch secretary or the Equality, Education and Development department who will be able to provide you with this information.

ENGAGEMENT AND MEETING ARRANGEMENTS

As branch women's officer you are invited and encouraged to attend:

1. Regional Equality Sub-Committee meetings, 4 times a year.
2. Branch meetings and (if in situ) sub branch equality committee meetings as appropriate.
3. Branch Annual General Meeting.
4. Ad hoc workplace union meetings (agreed and arranged by local rep and branch).
5. Regional and national equality events, including CWU biennial equality day at general conference and in intervening years the CWU national 2 day equality event.

FACILITIES AND RELEASE

Currently there are no statutory rights for union equality reps. However according to ACAS employers should:

“Consider the role of Union Equality Reps and needs for time off, facilities and training. Union Equality Reps can for example: promote diversity management, help ensure legal compliance, conduct audits, raise awareness and engage employers on equality issues...”

(ACAS guide to Trade Union Representation in the Workplace)

The Equalities and Human Rights Commission also encourages positive joint workings with equality reps and encourages employers to:

“Consult with Union Equality Reps as a first step towards understanding the diverse needs of workers.”

(EHRC Employment Statutory Code of Practice)

Therefore as the branch women's officer you are advised to seek support from your branch to assist with securing release time and facilities to enable you to do your duties.

Release requests could be for:

- Keeping in touch with women members.
- Attending Union meetings.
- Training and Education
- Promoting union campaigns by organising and delivering specialist meetings and events.
- Assisting/advising the branch on women's matters.

Facilities could include:

- Access to Safe spaces to listen to women members concerns and issues.
- Access to a desk
- Access to computer and internet facilities.
- A specific email address for the women's officer position.
- A mobile phone or access to a telephone to facilitate a direct line to the women's officer.
- Access to workplace union notice boards to share equality information and updates.
- Please use this template form to apply for facilities and release with your branch.

<https://www.cwu.org/reps/postal-resources/>
<https://www.cwu.org/reps/tfs-resources/>

Please note you will need the reps resources password to be able to access the form. Please contact the Equality and Education Department to obtain access to the site.

EDUCATION, TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

The CWU provide a broad range of residential and online education and training courses for CWU activists, including women's leadership and equality workshops. For more information on the different courses available to you and when they are due to take place please contact the Equality, Education and Development department at equality&education@cwu.org to obtain a copy of the CWU's latest education prospectus.

Applications for courses must be made through your branch. Please contact your branch secretary to make a request.

GETTING STARTED

Reaching out and supporting women branch makes a huge difference. Think about how you will engage and involve women members in your role.

Below are some suggestions:

- 1. Introduce yourself** – You should ensure that you get in touch with all women members introducing yourself as the branch women's officer. Make sure that women members know how to contact you by providing your contact details. You should ask your branch secretary to assist you with this process.
- 2. Be visual** – Being visual and members knowing who you are is important. Talk to your branch secretary about producing posters of your profile and contact details for workplace union notice boards or develop a branch plan that allows you to meet women members in the workplace. Workplace 'women' surgeries or attending ad hoc workplace union meetings is a great way to meet local reps and women members of the branch and find out more about their experiences and ideas. You'll be building strong relationships in the process too.
- 3. Stay connected and engaged** – It's important that women members are kept informed about women's issues and are engaged with the work you do. Think about how you are going to stay connected with your members. You could send out regular letters or emails to share information and provide updates on CWU equality news, campaigns and events, or you could use it as a way to find out what women

member's experiences are in the workplace or what sort of information or events or training they would be interested in attending, as well as what days and times that are the most convenient for them to participate. Speak to your branch or seek support from your regional women's lead to discuss ideas on how you plan to communicate and consult with women members of the branch.

4. Empower women members – Encourage women to participate in learning programmes. A wide variety of lifelong learning courses are available for CWU members, covering everything from improving your English, maths or computer skills, through to developing new skills or hobbies. You can work with your branch and branch union learning rep to promote and encourage training for women in your area.

5. Make meetings interesting – With the help and support of your branch, consider setting up a women's committee or organise discussion meetings and speaker events for local women members to encourage them to get involved in campaigns and contribute to the union's policy making process. Ideas for conference motions can be passed on to your branch or regional sub equality committee for consideration.

6. Build a women's support network – Provide women with chances to contact and support each other. Informal chat groups and online social media pages are effective if managed properly. Speak to your branch and Regional Women's Lead on how you can set this up safely for your members.

7. Inspire members to join the CWU and become a CWU activist – Encourage women to join the CWU and stand for positions of leadership. There are many different roles and positions within the CWU. Women do not just have to be women's officers; women need to be visible and actively engaged in all areas of the union. Getting more women to join the CWU and stand for union positions, is essential. Check out the CWU's structures and different CWU roles here: <https://unlock.cwu.org/resource/committee-roles-and-structures>

CAMPAIGNS AND EVENTS

It's important that you build relationships with your women members and campaign on issues most important to them.

The CWU play an active role in campaigning for gender equality. Some of our national policy campaigns for women include:

- Ending period poverty
- Better workplace rights for women. eg. flexibility rights, women's health i.e. menopause policy and pregnancy protections.
- Ending violence against women and girls and eradicating sexual harassment.

Contact your women's regional lead to find out which campaign you can get involved in and how to develop a strategy and plan for local action.

BUILDING A WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

In some branches, women members are keen to be involved in local women's issues and activities. The best way to bring women together on a regular basis is through a local women's committee.

A local women's committee is made up of all the women members of the branch and other female employees from your area. The women's committee is basically another name for a women's group.

To set up a women's committee, you will need to organise a formal meeting with your branch secretary and with the employer.

Some women officers have been successful in reaching local agreements. Here is a copy of the agreement reached in South Midlands Mail Centre.

WOMENS COMMITTEE AGREEMENT – SOUTH MIDLANDS MAIL CENTRE

We have agreed that there would be real value in setting up a Women's Committee at South Midlands Mail Centre.

The aim of the Committee will be to promote women's issues within the workplace and give a voice to an under-represented part of the workforce.

We will share more details about the actual purpose and structure of the committee at WTLL sessions over the coming weeks, but the plan is that it will meet 4 times a year and one of these meetings would be a meeting to join up the women's committees from other Royal Mail units in the South Midlands area. As well as attending the meetings, we would like to invite the members to adopt the mantle of 'advisor' on their shift, championing women's issues and being a point of contact should one be necessary.

We would like to invite two female frontline OPG's from each shift and up to the same number of female managers to sit on the Committee which will be jointly chaired and co-ordinated by Kate Hudson (CWU Women's Officer) and Anna Sargent (MCM). As a first step to filling these positions, we will be seeking expressions of interest over the coming weeks via a WTLL session on your shift, so watch this space if this is something you think you might like to get involved in. Recognising the difficulties of attending sessions like this when you are on nights, full shift release will be given to the night

shift members to attend and to be able to fully participate.

One of the joint aims of the CWU Women's Officer and the MCM as part of this agreement is to bring women through and to promote and encourage women to participate. Our aspiration is that we help to enable all women at South Midlands Mail Centre to achieve their full potential, wherever that may take them. Joint development will play an important role as will providing a support network for women to progress. To help achieve this it has been agreed that a CWU women's advisor will be situated on each shift. As a link to the CWU Women's Officer they will not be a CWU shift representative but will be able to act in an advisory capacity and a liaison between the CWU Women's Officer and the Mail Centre.

We look forward to appointing members and convening the first meeting. There is much to be done and achieved together!

KATE HUDSON
CWU WOMEN'S OFFICER

ANNA SARGENT
SMMC PLANT MGR, ROYAL MAIL



WOMEN'S CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

6 – International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation

MARCH

All Month – Women's History Month
8 – International Womens Day

MAY

15 – International Day of Families

JULY

2 – Women's Chainmakers' Festival

OCTOBER

All Month – National Domestic Violence Awareness Month

All Month – Breast Cancer Awareness Month

NOVEMBER

25 – International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women



FREQUENT QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q How does the union make policies?

A The CWU is a democratic organisation that creates policy through motion based annual conferences.

Branches and Regional Committees are entitled to submit up to 3 motions to General Conference. 1 of the 3 Regional Committee motions are reserved for Equality.

Q There are so many acronyms used in the union how do I know what they mean?

A We understand that it can sometimes be difficult to get used to some of the language and terms that are used in the CWU. Access the CWU's jargon buster using the link below to help you understand the meanings of the most commonly used CWU terms and acronyms.

<https://unlock.cwu.org/cwu-jargon-buster/>

Q As a Women's Officer can I participate in IR training?

A Yes, the CWU have national policy that recognises that members should have the right to be represented by a woman if requested. Contact your branch secretary to apply for an IR course.

Q Where can I find my branch rule book?

A You can obtain a copy of your branch rulebook by contacting your branch secretary or branch chairperson. Each branch will have bespoke rules on how the branch is governed, however the minimum standards are set out in the branch model constitution which can be accessed using the link below:

<https://unlock.cwu.org/resource/rules-and-model-constitutions/>

Q As a women's officer, can i have access to my branch membership list?

A You are not automatically granted membership access. Only Branch Secretaries have automatic access to branch membership information. However, you can ask your branch secretary to distribute communications on your behalf or assist you in mapping your women members so you know where they are.

Q Does the branch have to give me release and financial help?

A The CWU rulebook states the following regarding financial help for equality officers:

Rule 6.8.2(e) states:

"Branches must allocate sufficient funds to ensure Branch representation and participation at Equality conferences and events".

Rule 11.6.1 states:

"Each Branch shall be responsible for its own funds for meeting the following expenses;

a) All Conference expenses including subsistence, travel and loss of pay;

b) Regional and Industrial based Committee expenses including travel and

Subsistence;

c) Travel and subsistence for all education courses;

d) Travel and subsistence for national briefings;

e) Visits to HQ requested by the Branch"

This means that you must work with your branch to obtain funds. The amount of funding you will receive depends on the decision made by the branch finance committee, so it is important that you make your case and provide enough detail to explain what the funding request is for and what the benefits are.

Q I'm not getting many women members attending meetings or engaging with me. What can I do?

A Do not give up! Engaging with members and getting them active is one of the most challenging aspects of the role and it can be frustrating. However, it is also hugely rewarding when you get members involved. Speak to other Womens Leads about how they have been successful and share best practise and ideas.



AFFILIATIONS

The CWU is affiliated to a number of organisations that enhance our mission and aims. Below you will find a list of women's organisations the CWU affiliates to. Please note the CWU does not take responsibility for content on affiliate websites.

- Abortion Rights - <https://abortionrights.org.uk>
- Eaves Housing for women - <https://www.eavesforwomen.org.uk>
- Mary MacArthur Holiday Trust - www.mmht.org.uk

A full list of organisations the CWU affiliates to can be found here:
<https://www.cwu.org/about-the-cwu/union-matters/affiliations>

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Tel: 0208 971 7340

Equality, Education & Development Department

CWU HQ, 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London, SW19 1RX

Tel: 0208 971 7340

Email – equality&education@cwu.org

CWU Women's Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1652957151558369>

CWU Unlock

<https://unlock.cwu.org/involvement/download-the-cwu-app/>

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

Women's Aid – England

Women's Aid offer a free telephone advice line on a wide range of legal issues including domestic violence, child contact, sexual violence and the criminal justice process and immigration and asylum as well as other legal issues arising from relationship breakdown.

Tel: 0808 2000 247

Web: www.womensaid.org.uk

Email: helpline@womensaid.org.uk

Women's Aid – Scotland

Tel: 0800 027 1234 (24-hour)

Web: www.scottishwomensaid.org.uk

Women's Aid – Wales

Tel: 0808 80 10 800 (24 hour)

web: www.welshwomensaid.org

Women's Aid – Northern Ireland

Tel: 1800 341 900 (24 hour)

Web: <https://www.womensaid.ie>

Women's Aid Federation (Northern Ireland)

Tel: 0808 802 1414 (24-hour)

Text 'support' to 07797 805 839

Web: www.womensaidni.org

email: 24hrsupport@dvhelpline.org

Southall Black Sisters

Provides a range of services to Asian and Afro Caribbean women and children. Can give telephone advice to women outside of the London Borough of Ealing.

Tel: 0208 571 0800

(Mon, Wed, Fri 9.30am-4.30pm)

Web: www.southallblacksisters.org.uk

Shelter

The UK's largest housing charity, gives information on housing rights, homelessness and state benefits.

Tel: 0808 800 4444

Monday to Friday, 8am - 8pm Weekends and bank holidays, 9am - 5pm.

Web: <https://england.shelter.org.uk>

OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS CONTINUED

Rights of Women

Rights of Women is committed to informing, educating and empowering women on the law and their legal rights. They run a free telephone legal advice line for women including a sexual violence legal advice line.

Family law helpline: 020 7251 6577

Criminal Law helpline: 020 7251 8887

Immigration Law helpline: 020 7490 7689

EU Settlement helpline: 020 7118 0267

Sexual Harassment at Work Helpline: 020 7490 0152

Web: <https://rightsofwomen.org.uk>

National Centre for Domestic Violence (NCDV)

The NCDV can help you obtain an injunction to prevent further abuse from your partner. The services are free of charge, and the centre will refer you to an experienced solicitor who, if you are eligible, will arrange Community Legal Service funding, or will accept payments in stages if you have to pay your own fees.

Members can contact NCDV on:

Freephone 0800 970 2070

Text 60777

Email: office@ncdv.org.uk.

NCDVs sister organisation is a nationwide law firm, for a free consultation on family legal matters contact them on 020 3727 2054

Web: <https://www.ncdv.org.uk>

Rape Crisis Federation - (England and Wales)

Provide specialist information and support to all those affected by rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment and all other forms of sexual violence and abuse in England and Wales.

Tel: 0808 802 9999

(12 noon-2.30pm/7pm-9.30pm 7 days a week)

Web: www.rapecrisis.org.uk

Family Rights Group

Provide advice and advocacy service for parents, grandparents, relatives, friends and kinship carers who are involved with children's services in England or need their help. Family Rights Group support families to understand the law and child welfare processes when social workers or courts are making decisions about their children

Tel: 0808 801 0366.

Web: <https://frg.org.uk>

Money Advice Plus

Is a specialist debt advice for women who have been effected by domestic violence.

Tel: 08081968845 Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm.

Web: <https://www.moneyadviceplus.org.uk/fsl>

The Mary Macarthur Holiday Trust

The Mary Macarthur Holiday Trust helps to qualify applicants for financial assistance towards holidays for women in need of a holiday by reason of age, poverty, infirmity, disablement or social or economic circumstances. Under the terms of The Trust, grants are only available to women over the age of 18, who have not had a holiday in recent years. Preference is given to women who are or have been normally in employment. Women in work are considered as well as those who are not, as the Trust recognises that a holiday may not be financially possible even for those in work.

More information and an application form can be found on the Mary Macarthur Holiday Trust website:

Tel: 02920 359 091

Email: cheryl.andrews@mmht.org.uk

Web: www.mmht.org.uk

Address: Mary Macarthur Holiday Trust, Unite House, 1 Cathedral Road, Cardiff, CF11 9SD

WOMEN IN THE CWU

Women play an important role in a variety of CWU positions. Here is a quick look at some of the women activists experiences and why they got involved in the CWU.

Angela Whitter



“I first got involved in the CWU when another rep asked if I wanted to be a women’s officer. More women were joining Royal Mail and the CWU so I thought it important to make sure women’s

voices were heard and listened to in the workplace. Working in a male dominated environment I know first-hand that a woman’s voice can sometimes get lost. Since becoming a women’s officer of the branch I have grown and developed into other roles of the union. I am now the branch secretary for Croydon and Sutton Amal, the Southeast division and London chair and I currently hold the position of NEC women’s lead for the postal constituency. I think becoming a women’s officer first and understanding what women’s experiences in the workplace are has given me a great foundation to campaign for women’s equality and influence day to day workings. I’m not going to lie, the road’s been bumpy but if you believe in what you are doing it’s well worth it.”

Joanne Shaftoe



“I’m from the Tyne & Wear Clerical Branch in the North East Region. I’m employed by BT/EE and I initially both joined the CWU and became active simply because I was asked! I was invited to branch committee

meetings and was definitely hooked by the idea of improving the workplace, improving society and sticking up for our rights. Throughout my time with CWU I’ve held a number of positions at branch, region and national level including Youth Officer, Treasurer and Union Learning Representative. I’m currently the Chair of my branch and my region and I’m a member of the Standing Orders Committee – an elected body responsible for arranging the timetable and order of each session of CWU Conferences. Getting active within the CWU is the best thing I’ve ever done. It’s given me opportunities, confidence and job satisfaction that I never thought I would gain. I would encourage anyone looking to get involved to ‘give it a go’ to do just that, and to reach out to other women like myself for support.”

Claire Malyon



“I was originally asked if I was interested in becoming a Women’s Officer about 7 years ago by my local CWU rep. He introduced me to our branch Women’s Officer at the time. We met up over coffee

and she talked to me regarding the role and what it involved. I was very interested in getting involved and soon took up the role. I did a few courses and attended various events, marches and meetings with my branch. I have also attended the CWU National Conference for the last few years. Last year I put myself forward for the South East Region Women’s Officer and was successfully elected. Becoming a CWU rep has given me a lot more confidence. It has given me the opportunity to travel to visit various different parts of the country and I have met many other CWU reps and members and made lots of new friends.”

Mel Gorrie



“I’ve been a member of the CWU since I initially joined BT/02 shops (now Consumer). At the time I was recruited by the employer through an agency (Manpower) and was approached by

another CWU rep to become a CWU representative for agency staff. I held this role until I gained a permanent contract. In 2012 after taking a break away from union duties I stood in the local branch elections and became my branch union learning rep. My branch secretary at the time was a huge support and inspiration to me. He encouraged me to stand in other union positions at branch, regional and at national level, including participating in various CWU women’s groups. I don’t believe I would have had the courage to do this if it hadn’t been for the support. I love to help people and love being able to make a difference such as changing everyday lives of our members such as during our period poverty campaign. I love the fact the CWU is so flexible. The election process allows you to step down and take a break from activism until such time when you have the time to become more active again.”

Ruth Harris



“At age 16, in 1981 I joined Royal Mail and the UCW. My office of 300 staff had only four females, for the first three weeks I was scared beyond belief and grew up very fast. The majority of staff and managers were great but some male staff never spoke and objected to women taking male employment! I made a lifelong friend on my first day, Tammy it was a scary place and us girls stuck together. I worked in many Postal and Admin roles, always a union supporter and striker. I became active in 1996 during the Employee Agenda dispute. CWU positions included local/area admin rep, Equality Officer, Deputy Branch Sec, Women’s Regional Chair Branch Secretary and Branch Chair. I was one of only a few female Branch Secretary’s in the country. I am currently elected as the Southeast region secretary, I’m sharing experiences, guiding activists, organising and have involvement with other trade unions. It’s been a rollercoaster! As a female I feel you always must prove your worth, but it’s so rewarding helping our members through difficult times. Women have great organisational and listening skills to bring to the trade union movement. Take the opportunities you can in this great trade union the” CWU family”! I would not change a thing.”

Jean Sharrocks



“I became involved in the CWU after I became pregnant and suffered poor treatment from my employer (Openreach). I was asked to become the Equality Officer for the branch and then the Women’s Officer. I did lots of CWU courses which helped me in these roles and I soon realised I could do other roles in the branch and throughout the union. As I became more confident I stood for the Women’s Advisory Committee and then the National Women’s Officer. The union has allowed me to do things I never thought possible and I have grown with knowledge and confidence. Remember there is always another person in the CWU who can help, support and guide in any role you want to do. Never give up if there’s a position you want.”

Quincy Raymond



“Like anyone who joins a union, there are often different reasons as to why. Initially, I joined the union as I was interested in the charity work for CWUHA (Communication Workers Union Humanitarian Aid). Two women in my branch mentioned CWUHA to me after I told them I was interested in helping charities. They suggested I get involved and I did. This led me to becoming a union rep in my branch (Tyne and Wear Clerical). It has been an amazing experience and truly rewarding to make a positive change to people lives. Working in a call centre, I know the challenges workers face. It’s not a traditional sector where unions organise. In my journey with the union, I have worked my way through the ranks from my local branch to a national role within CWU and now the TUC. I have been blessed to have a very supportive union, that provided me with the guidance and help that I needed to progress and play an active part. My hope is that others too can get the same support to progress themselves.”

Janice Richardson



“I wasn’t looking to get involved with the CWU but when two members persuaded me to take on the role of the Collections Rep, I can honestly say it was the one of the best decisions I made and I have never looked back. I then took on the role of the Branch BAME officer because I wanted to, not to tick a box because of my ethnicity. The role of Branch communications officer quickly followed. After transferring from collections to Distribution I then became the Early shift Rep, I have also held the position of the Eastern region BAME Lead and I have become my Branch’s first Branch Secretary from an ethnic background, something that I’m extremely proud of. I think it’s very important that women play an active role in the CWU as we all have different experiences, particularly Black women who can face double discrimination in terms of sexism and racism. Women’s voices are important and we need more women to speak up. That is what I did this is what I will continue to do. Being a rep is not easy you can’t please everyone all the time, sometimes you feel like giving up but if you do then all those doubters who said you wouldn’t make it were right, walls are there to be knocked down not to stop you from achieving your goal. So instead of thinking about becoming a rep just go and do it, trust me you won’t regret it.”



 150 The Broadway | Wimbledon | London | SW19 1RX | **T: 020 8971 7200** | **F: 020 8971 7300**
www.cwu.org | **E:** info@cwu.org | **T:** @CWUnews | **F:** The Communications Union
General Secretary Dave Ward | **F:** Dave Ward CWU | **T:** @DaveWardGS

06936 Published by the Communication Workers Union 2023