

# Calderdale Trades Council

## Annual Report 2022-2023



### Introduction

Calderdale Trades Council exists to bring together union branches and members at a local level to campaign on issues affecting working people in their workplaces and their communities. This has been another busy year for the Trades Council, which unfortunately was marked by the sad passing of our esteemed secretary, **Kevin Stannard**. Kevin was an important and much-loved comrade who continued his visits to picket lines, his activism and his political work until shortly prior to his passing. Kevin had a keen and sensitive political eye and his insights added much to any discussion. In honour of Kevin, the Trades Council made a contribution of £100 to a food-bank of Kevin's family's choosing. The recently completed film ***Bread not Bayonets***, about the Great Strike of 1842, also commemorates Kevin.

We would like to place on record our thanks to all comrades who have contributed to the

work of Calderdale TUC. Special thanks to our officers and the branches which they represent. Laura Wyles has stepped ably and enthusiastically into the role of secretary, and Dan Whittall continues to effectively chair meetings and represent the Trades Council at public events. Nigel Smith has worked tirelessly as vice-chair, including recording minutes of our meetings and speaking inspirationally at public events. Behind the scenes, Pete Keal continues to devote significant time and work to the Trades Council far beyond the remit one would expect of a treasurer. His steady guiding hand and extensive knowledge have been invaluable on many occasions. Finally, the officers would like to thank Mark Metcalf for his on-going efforts to make labour movement history an important part of the work we do.

### Campaigns and activities

This year has seen significant campaigning and activism, in line with the upsurge in **trade union struggles for better pay and conditions**. Members of Calderdale Trades Council have played leading roles in the foundation and work of Calderdale Enough is Enough, a collective that has enabled improved links between trades unionists and activists.

**Picket line solidarity** has been a vital part of our work. Trades Council members and delegates have supported striking members of CWU, GMB, NEU, UCU, RCN, BMA, Unison, RMT, NUJ and PCS. The year has seen intense political struggle and a large increase in both strike days and the number

of workers taking action. Although we would have liked to see more active picket lines across Calderdale, we have nevertheless stood proudly with members of all unions organising strike action and rallies in Calderdale and beyond in Baildon, Bradford, Huddersfield and Leeds.

During the year, we welcomed new affiliations from GMB Yorkshire Ambulance Service and UCU University of Leeds Branches. Both of these have come as a direct result of our solidarity organising.

In December 2022 we supported two **strike rallies** with comrades in Enough is Enough. On 1 February 2023 we supported a large

and noisy **NEU strike rally** outside Calderdale Industrial Museum in Halifax. Nigel Smith spoke excellently on behalf of the Trades Council and the event saw a number of other delegates make important contributions. The rally also gained significant coverage in the local press. Further large NEU rallies, jointly organised with Calderdale Enough is Enough took place in March and July. At the latter, our newly purchased portable PA was given its first outing.

Throughout the summer, Calderdale Trades Council alongside Calderdale Enough is Enough and other local groups, organised regular leafletting at train stations across Calderdale in support of the **RMT's campaign to oppose the government's planned closure of ticket offices**. This included a solidarity rally at Halifax train station at which trade unionists from a number of branches spoke. We salute the excellent work of all railway unions in beating back the worst excesses of the government's assault on railway workers.

Calderdale Trades Council continues to support the **Better Buses Campaign**. In response to the current consultation, we will be urging the West Yorkshire Mayor to bring bus services under public control through bus franchising as quickly as possible.

Throughout the year, Calderdale Trades Council has been able to have a significant input into the Calderdale **Climate Action Plan**, thanks in large part to the hard work of comrade Finn Jensen. The trades council is a signatory to the plan, and will continue to press the council to go further and faster in addressing climate change, whilst also ensuring fairness and justice for working class communities. The Trades Council has also supported a series of public meetings on the Climate Emergency organised by Blackshaw Environmental Action Team and others. Trades Council chair Dan Whittall spoke about a just transition to a new economy for workers at the October 2023 meeting.

Comrades from the Trades Council have attended several demonstrations organised

by **Stand Up To Racism** and other local anti-racism collectives aimed at confronting racist groups attempting to intimidate refugees and asylum seekers in Seacroft, Leeds and Wakefield. In April we supported a rally on behalf of Yorkshire Against the Illegal Immigration Bill, and in June we supported a **Safe Passage Now! #RefugeesWelcome** vigil organised by Calderdale Stand Up To Racism and Calderdale Valley of Sanctuary to honour the lives lost in the disaster off the Greek coast. On May Day we hosted a **Love Music Hate Racism** reggae night at the Trades Club in Hebden Bridge at which David Vincent kindly gave up his time to DJ for us, and chair Dan Whittall spoke.

As well as supporting striking doctors, nurses and other NHS workers, the Trades Council has continued to back the campaign to **Keep Our NHS Public**. In January 2023, we supported a demonstration at Leeds General Infirmary calling for the building of the new children's hospital. In March the Trades Council supported an SOS NHS demonstration in Leeds. On July 1st, we joined a loud and boisterous crowd in a march and rally around Leeds to save the NHS as part of the NHS SOS campaign. The PCS Samba Band, fronted by Calderdale trade unionists, led the march and inspired the crowds.

In recent months we have supported demonstrations, rallies and vigils across our region in response to the violence in **Israel and Palestine**, calling for an immediate ceasefire and an end to the occupation of the Palestinian territories. Events in Halifax, Hebden Bridge, Todmorden, Huddersfield, Leeds and Manchester have been supported. Trades council comrades have also been active across the movement to demand a ceasefire, both through their unions and their involvement in community groups.

Calderdale Trades Council supported both Leeds TU Council's **May Day** march and rally and the **People's Assembly Against Austerity's protests outside the Tory Party conference** in Manchester at the beginning of October.

In April, we supported a screening of the film ***Oh Jeremy Corbyn: the big lie***. Organised by Kevin Stannard, the event attracted a capacity audience at Hebden Bridge Trades Club and raised significant monies for local trades union strike funds.

**Labour movement history** continues to be an important part of the Trades Council's work. In June, we worked with the Friends of Lister Lane Cemetery to organise a well-attended commemoration of the Halifax Chartist **Benjamin Rushton** 170 years on from his death. Mark Metcalf played a vital role in organising this event and also made an important film about it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fp4mth4LfwY>.

In August we supported a script in hand performance of Michael Crowley's play about the Great Strike of 1842 ***Waiting for Wesley*** at Calderdale Industrial Museum.

In October, the new film ***Bread not Bayonets***, about Chartism in Halifax and the Great Strike of 1842, was released. Although it was disappointing that flood warnings led the launch event to be cancelled, this outstanding and important film is available to view at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0UxMadnIEA>

Throughout the year, Calderdale Trades Council's monthly meetings have hosted a number of important discussions that help delegates to clarify their political positions on the issues of the day and offer vital political education. In November 2022, we hosted a

debate on the proposed **West Cumbria coalmine**, with Chris Kitchen (General Secretary, NUM) and Clara Paillard (Tipping Point UK) presenting contrasting arguments on the mine. The discussion was characterised by both the political clarity of the speakers and its respectful tone and tenor. In February 2023, Sarah Kelly (GMB) spoke about the **ambulance strikes** in the UK and a lively discussion saw delegates make links with struggles across the health service and beyond. Our May meeting witnessed a debate on the question ***What Does Winning Look Like?*** with contributions from delegates across a variety of unions. In July, Laura Beesley spoke on the work of **Calderdale Valley of Sanctuary**, and in November, we hosted a discussion about **Whistleblowing** with Eileen Chubb of Compassion in Care and The Whistler.

Trades Council meetings have also received regular reports from a number of local trade union branches. Most frequent in reporting have been the NEU, PCS, Unite Community, Equity, NUJ and Unison branches. We hope more branches will provide regular reports in future. Other groups from which we have received reports include Enough is Enough, Stand Up To Racism, Calderdale Green New Deal, SOS NHS and the West Yorkshire Association of TU Councils.

At the regional TUC conference in March, Nigel Smith and Pete Keal attended from Calderdale as part of the West Yorkshire Association of TU Councils' delegation.

## ***Solidarity and affiliations***

We are registered with the TUC as a Trades Union Council.

During the year, we made donations to Calderdale Enough Is Enough, Leeds Keep Our NHS Public, UCU University of Leeds Hardship Fund, Community Hub for Cornholme and Portsmouth and Compassion In Care.

We have affiliated to Calderdale Valley of Sanctuary, Campaign Against Climate

Change Trade Union Group, CND, Cuba Solidarity Campaign, Friends of Durham Miners' Gala, Health Campaigns Together, International Brigade Memorial Trust, People's Assembly, Stand Up to Racism, Stop the War Coalition, Strike Map UK, Venezuela Solidarity Campaign and Yorkshire and the Humber Pensioners' Convention.

## Looking ahead

Last year, our annual report noted a desire to develop and maintain an active and coherent group of officers working to advance Calderdale Trades Council's activities. This has been achieved, and we thank the branches who are supporting their delegates in holding officer roles.

One of our key commitments is to use the lessons of the past to inform the struggles of the present. To this end, we will continue our work to animate the history of the labour and trade union movement as a living weapon in the struggle for a better tomorrow. We plan to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of E.P. Thompson next year, amongst other activities that will no doubt include our annual May Day and Worker's Memorial Day activities, as well as the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Trades Club in Hebden Bridge.

Moving forwards, our focus must now turn to advancing trade union organisation across Calderdale - too few workers are members of

trade unions, and too few members of trade unions are actively so. The lesson of the last year is that organised and emboldened unions actively defending and advancing their members' interests can engage their membership and grow their activist base, empowering members to win bigger victories.

We will continue to offer political education to reps and delegates. The greater the union density in a workplace, the stronger the chances of members winning. Calderdale Trades Council must also support the work of trade union branches across our region in boosting their membership numbers, organising their members, and taking action to defend and advance their members' pay and conditions. We can only do this in partnership and solidarity with workplace reps and delegates from our affiliated branches. So, we urge: if you are not actively involved in your trades council please become so!

*Calderdale Trades Council Officers - Dan, Laura, Nigel and Pete*

## Officers 2022-2023

Chair: Daniel Whittall, Calderdale NEU

Vice-Chair: Nigel Smith, Unite Community Halifax and Calder Valley

Secretary: Kevin Stannard, Unite Not4Profit NE403/15 (until July 2023)

Laura Wyles, Unison Bradford, Calderdale and Huddersfield Health (from September 2023)

Assistant Secretary: Laura Wyles, Unison Bradford, Calderdale and Huddersfield Health (April to September 2023)

Treasurer: Pete Keal, Equity North and West Yorkshire

E-mail: [info@calderdaletuc.org.uk](mailto:info@calderdaletuc.org.uk)

Web: <http://calderdaletuc.org.uk>

Twitter: @calderdaletuc

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



Kevin Stannard 1958 - 2023

### ***Affiliated branches 2022-2023***

BFAWU Suma  
 CWU Bradford & District Amalgamated  
 CWU Manchester Combined  
 CWU North West No. 1  
 CWU West Yorkshire  
 Equity North and West Yorkshire  
 FBU Calderdale Division  
 GMB Organising (formerly Brighthouse General)  
 GMB Yorkshire Ambulance Branch  
 NASUWT Calderdale  
 NEU Calderdale  
 NUJ Leeds & West Yorks  
 PCS ARMS Yorks and Humber  
 RMT Leeds City  
 UCU University of Huddersfield

UCU University of Leeds  
 UNISON Bradford Calderdale and Huddersfield Health  
 UNISON Calderdale  
 UNISON South West Yorkshire  
 Partnership Health  
 Unite Community Halifax & Calder Valley  
 Unite Leeds Geographic NE/GEO/12  
 Unite Marshalls NE/404/8  
 Unite Nestlé NE100/10  
 Unite Not4Profit NE403/15  
 Unite W Yorks Retired Members  
 USDAW South and West Yorks Coop F007  
 USDAW West Yorks Private Trade F031

Calderdale Trades Council

**Accounts for year 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2023**

£

RECEIPTS

Affiliation fees	730.00
Donations	722.22
Soc. for Study of Labour History	1,500.00
TUC grants	300.00
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<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>£3,252.22</b>

PAYMENTS

Great Strike Plaque activities	1,470.00
Campaign support	656.68
Affiliation fees	409.00
Purchase of Portable PA etc.	523.99
Publicity and advertising	151.99
Zoom subscription	179.88
Travel and subsistence	152.54
Room hire	185.50
Postage, print and stationery	0.78
Bank charges	51.10
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<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>£3,781.46</b>

**EXCESS OF PAYMENTS OVER RECEIPTS    (£529.24)**  
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**Statement of balances at 30 September 2023**

£

Balance brought forward 01.10.22	£3,524.92
Deduct deficit for year	(£529.24)
	=====
<b>Net funds 30.9.23</b>	<b>£2,995.68</b>
	=====
 Bank and cash balances 30.9.23	
Current account	£2,995.68
Petty cash	£0.00
	=====
<b>Bank and cash</b>	<b>£2,995.68</b>
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*Laura Wyles, secretary*

*Pete Keal, treasurer*



## ***Auditors' Report***

We have examined the Accounts, Cashbooks, Bank Statements, Invoices, Receipts and other financial documents of Calderdale Trades Council. In our opinion the Accounts and Statement of Balances give a true and fair view of Calderdale Trades Council's finances as at

30 September 2023 and of the excess of Payments over Receipts for the year then ended.

*Anne Magee and Jackie Wood*  
*Auditors*

## ***Treasurer's Report***

Calderdale Trades Council's accounts show an excess of spending compared with receipts of £529.24 this year. Factors contributing to this deficit include committing over £200 of the Trades Council's own funds towards the purchase of a portable PA system. With the support of a £300 TUC grant, the Trades Council has bought a valuable resource for use at public meetings, pickets, strike rallies etc.

At the 2022 AGM the Trades Council decided to change our affiliation fees from a flat fee system to a pence per affiliated member system. The officers have worked hard to draw up proposals which will hopefully help us to balance our income with our spending. At the same time we recognise that larger branches will be asked to pay substantially greater affiliation fees under the new system. We have consulted extensively over

the proposed changes with affiliated branches and we hope that none of our larger affiliated branches will decide to disaffiliate from the Trades Council as a result of this change.

It is of some concern that the Trades Council's balances in our Annual Accounts have fallen below £3,000 for the first time since the Trades Council was revived in 2012. Nevertheless, the Trades Council is fortunate in having some balances we can fall back on to fund our campaigning and solidarity activities. However, the need to bring our income into better balance with our spending is more urgent and the Trades Council is asked to take a more cautious approach in deciding on the level of future donations.

*Pete Keal, treasurer*