



nationalshop stewardsnetwork

Workplace Report

PLEASE SHARE WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES AND IN YOUR WORKPLACE

“WE’RE STRUGGLING DOWN HERE!”

Inflation may have dipped slightly last month to 3.6% from 3.8% ... but it’s been rising for the rest of 2025 so it’s hardly a big deal for workers and their families.

Food inflation is still rising at 4.9% and the small drop is mostly due to slightly lower than expected energy bills ... just as we hit a ‘cold snap’ (most of us call it ‘winter’!) and a predicted rise in the same bills next month.

The rise in inflation this year is on the back of a massive surge in inflation felt by workers over the last few years, which powered the brutal cost of living squeeze.

Of course, the shareholders in the privatised energy companies won’t be sitting under blankets to keep warm this winter. Most will be in sunnier climates, spending the money we’ve made them on second, third and fourth foreign holidays ... or simply funding their millionaire lifestyle where they actually live!

Modest climbdowns

The modest climbdowns on the heating allowance and welfare cuts earlier in the year were forced on the government by workers making sure unions aired their concerns. Many unions didn’t complain that loudly, though, and we could have won more from this weak government.

Every time we back down or don’t shout loud enough, Starmer and co will think they’ve got away with their plans to continue all the austerity measures of the previous, hated Tory administration, in their futile bid to ‘balance the books’.

Their system - capitalism - doesn’t rely on balancing the books. It exists to make money for private profiteers. The question workers have asked is why a party originally formed to help the poorer in society - the Labour Party - has turned to unadulterated profit-making for the millionaires and already rich.

The Labour Party, like previous 'establishment' parties, has received their answers and our anger at the polls but they still follow their Thatcherite dogma as we go under.

Some workers have lent their votes to Reform in desperation. They're looking for change, not roundabout painting or flag flying. But, Farage and co are part of the millionaire class themselves and won't help ordinary people pay their rents, put food on the table or get affordable, social housing for their children, trapped at home into their thirties.

Unions must step up again

We need our unions to step up again. Too many are hiding. It's not good enough to vote for radical measures to help members once a year at a conference, then sit back and fail to put them into practice.

The NSSN campaigned for the TUC (Trades Union Congress embracing all the unions) to call a national weekend demonstration against Starmer's austerity offensive. This was carried at September's TUC Congress and is the official policy of our movement. Now, the TUC and the unions must name the date and not drag their heels!

Ordinary workers don't clamour for marching round the streets demanding the government change tack. But when our alternative is to sit back and take more of what's thrown at us without comment or getting poorer, we will act. If Starmer and Reeves won't listen, then we will demonstrate in any way we can.

And that means ALL our unions need to be to the forefront of organising such a demo. Leaving it to others is a recipe for doing nothing.

Coordinate and act NOW!

Industrial unrest is again growing slightly as we're backed into a corner, forced to strike

for better wages and against employer attacks. How much better would that be if it was all coordinated alongside a huge demonstration being called?

The establishment politicians have had their say and consistently failed us. We insist on a living wage, affordable housing, an end to unnecessary warmongering, proper long lasting funding for the NHS and social care, an end to cutbacks in education provision including the appalling attacks on SEND assessments and support, equality for all and no scapegoating.

Our unions must be at the forefront of that campaign.

*** Welcome to the NSSN Workplace Report. We hope to be able to issue it every few weeks so you can use it in your workplace.**

*** We will still be issuing our long running comprehensive weekly bulletin featuring all the trade union news you need to know.**

*** Both of these can be found at shopstewards.net**

*** We would urge you to get involved in your union and join play an active part in a movement for change.**

*** You can also help by getting your union branch to affiliate to the NSSN, or affiliate as a group of trade unionists in your own workplace.**

*** Get more details either at the website or by emailing info@shopstewards.net to find out more about national and local activities.**