



UNITED AND SUPPORTED

FIREFIGHTERS RECEIVE PUBLIC SUPPORT ON UNITED STRIKE



At 12 o'clock on Wednesday 25th September Firefighters across England & Wales walked out together in protest at Government plans to tear up their pensions and force through a set of proposals which have been described as "unfair, unsustainable and unsafe".

The 4 hr strike, described as a "warning shot to Government" by FBU General Secretary Matt Wrack, received levels of public support which have been described as "fantastic" by Firefighters on picket lines across the country. The strike was reported extensively by the media and many of the issues involved, including the threat to ageing firefighters who fail fitness tests being left with "no job & no pension", were reported upon extensively. BBC news in the South West ran special features on the issues involved and Avon FBU rep Gary Spindler

took on Fire Minister Brandon Lewis over plans to increase the retirement age in a live radio interview.

Talking about the strike, South West FBU Official Tam McFarlane said "Strike action in the Fire Service is always a last resort but the Government left us with no choice. I want to personally congratulate all the FBU Members across the South West, who stood shoulder to shoulder in a powerful, united demonstration of anger and determination."

"We received high levels of public support for our action and it was clear that the public, and even large sections of the media, understood the strength of our argument.

"We hope that the Government now realises that Firefighters will not be walked over and that they will return to serious talks."

Public Support and Media reporting

From Swindon down to St Austell, and all areas in between, the reports from South West Firefighters on picket lines were the same: "public support is fantastic!"

This story was replicated across England and Wales with the Union receiving "widespread" reports of "fantastic" public support. Clearly the majority of the public understand the issues involved and the concern of Firefighters at Government pension plans which have been described as "unfair and unsafe". The FBU has thanked the public for their support and is encouraging them to sign the online petition or write to their MP's using the model letter on the Union's website.

The Government also came unstuck when their claim that Firefighters would receive a pension of "£26,000 a year" was "comprehensively discredited" when independent organisation "Fact Check" published their analysis. It turns out that the Government included £7K of state pension to the sum which can't even be accessed until the age of 65! Time for the Government to stop spinning and start talking?!

Fighting for the Fire & Rescue Service



Protecting Firefighters & Control Staff



Temple



Barnstaple



Bridgwater



Media reporting
Bridgwater



Gloucestershire



Taunton



Truro

Attend the FBU March & Rally on Weds 16 October: Make YOUR voice count in the fight against job cuts, pension cuts and privatisation!

The Fire Brigades Union has organised a national demonstration in London on Wednesday 16 October. This is an opportunity for firefighters, our families and friends to tell the Westminster government to stop cutting our fire and rescue service and to provide decent pensions for all.

We have dozens of other reasons to make our voice heard at Westminster. We need to tell politicians to take our **safety** seriously, so there are no more tragic deaths of our people in the line of duty. We need to tell them about the **national standards** needed to improve our service and the guidance to make our job safer.

We need to tell them we oppose **privatising** our service and to back off from mutuals and other efforts to bring in the private sector. They can only make profits from our labour – and we know from bitter experience in other industries how privatisation means worse conditions for workers, even less investment and a worse service for the public.

For these reasons – but most of all just because we are firefighters and we deserve to be heard

Attend the march and Rally on 16 October:

**Make them see sense:
Make them listen!**



Make sure you attend the Rally against cuts! Contact your local rep for travel information

Firefighters have launched an **online petition** against the government's current attacks on pensions.

Please sign by going to www.southwestfbu.com and clicking the link on the homepage



St Austell



Falmouth



Royal Mail workers support Bridgwater



Plymstock

Strike demonstrates firefighters' anger and determination, says FBU's Matt Wrack

Commenting on today's four-hour strike by firefighters over government attacks on pensions Matt Wrack, Fire Brigades Union General Secretary, said: "This was solidly supported strike action by firefighters across England and Wales. It has demonstrated their anger and their determination.



FBU General Secretary Matt Wrack

"This strike was a last resort after the government refused to negotiate - and a warning shot that firefighters are serious about keeping a

fair, safe and workable pensions scheme.

"Firefighters across the country are reporting a fantastic response from the public, who seem to understand that the government's proposals on pensions are ludicrous.

"We haven't ruled out further industrial action, but let's hope common sense wins out, public safety is put first and the government comes back open to compromise."

Message of Support from FBU Regional Secretary

Taking strike action is always a last resort for all of us in the Fire Service and the first strike would have been a difficult day for FBU members across the Region.

If you talk to those who experienced the last strike, you will get a feel for how unity and solidarity amongst members proved effective. Despite expectation that it would lower our position in the eyes of the public, we received huge support

and we continue to receive it this time. We know we will always face opposition when we decide to stand up for ourselves when others don't feel confident to protect their own conditions.

Our employers force us to continually fight just to maintain our terms and

conditions and that can result in us being forced to take industrial action otherwise we will always be held to ransom. A very good reason to be an active member of a Trade Union.



If we do have to take further action then we must continue to stay united, stand shoulder to shoulder and support each other through these difficult times. Believe in the FBU it is the right thing to do. Please

accept my thanks and those of your fellow FBU members for putting unity and solidarity at the forefront of our fight and ensuring that the FBU remains in a position to represent you now and in the future.

Phil Jordan Regional Secretary.

FOLLOW THE PROFESSIONALS!

The FBU in the South West is committed to keeping our Members posted about news, updates and the work we are doing on their behalf. By using modern communication tools we can keep you up to date quickly, no matter where you work. Follow us on our Facebook, Twitter and YouTube sites and get all the updates as they happen. Full details below:



Follow us on our own Facebook page: Go to ***South West Region of the Fire Brigades Union***. and hit the "like" button. You will receive updates on our work and links to how we are fighting for you locally.



Follow us on Twitter at @southwestfbu



Keep up to date with our videos at '***South West FBU***'

You can also follow us on our website at: www.southwestfbu.com

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FBU SOUTH WEST

The Fire Brigades Union is the premier Trade Union for professional Firefighters and Control Staff across the UK. The South West Region is the largest Region in England and we cover Avon, Cornwall, Dorset, Devon & Somerset, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire FRS's.

We represent over 85% of uniformed staff across the UK. Our members cover every role from Firefighter to Area Manager, including the retained duty system. We are committed to protecting our Members, their interests at work and to ensuring that the public receive an excellent and professional Fire & Rescue Service. Join the professionals, contact us at:

www.southwestfbu.com

