

Royal Mail workers speak out against union-company agreement in run-up to ballot: “Most of us feel the CWU proposed deal is a sellout”

Our correspondents

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Postal workers are continuing to write to the *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS) voicing opposition to the sell-out deal between the Communication Workers Union (CWU) and Royal Mail (RM).

CWU headquarters are stepping up their marketing exercise to promote the agreement, but their claims to have pushed the company back are being challenged by the rank and file on every front, expressed in workers’ demands for the removal of General Secretary Dave Ward, his deputy Andy Furey and CWU officials on the postal executive.

Postal workers are making it clear they have not taken 18 days of strike action to accept a major de facto pay cut, later start and finish times and shift “flexibility” that will destroy work-life balance and invasive performance management and surveillance.

A central part of the deal is a punitive new attendance regime and reductions in sick pay which the CWU has endorsed as part of its commitment to reduce the “cost base”. In this latest round of write-ins, postal workers explain their experience of management harassment, the disabling impact of increased workloads, and attacks on safety across the board.

Glasgow, Scotland: Terrible, unsustainable working practices being introduced on a weekly basis. Most of the hardworking posties are burnt out and talking about leaving. Most of us feel the CWU proposed deal is a sell out and Ward and Co should resign or be sacked.

Another postal worker from **Glasgow** adds: It’s an utter disgrace that no union members have had strike pay... that says it all... you can’t trust these people... greed seems to rule the day.

Loanhead, Scotland: 23 years in the job and never been so demoralised. Letters fail every day for over 6 months, parcels are a priority, tracked and special delivery being prioritised over ordinary parcels. Part timers last about 2 months on average until they are broken. Vehicles are falling apart, staff lying on vehicle checks because no spare vans. Indoor

equipment falling apart etc, etc. An aging workforce that cannot cope. [Royal Mail CEO Simon] Thompson and Ward out!

Limavady, Northern Ireland: Managers are just bullies. Workloads so big, so walks can’t be completed. Worked for Royal Mail for 40 years, never seen morale in an office as low.

Hull, East Yorkshire: HULL CDO, bullying, sexual harassment and racism (to name a few issues) is rife throughout the whole of this office. These issues are not only been ignored by management they are also being instigated by management and staff members. The disgraceful attitude from management towards many CWU members has led to suspensions and dismissals in the most underhanded ways imaginable. The use of intimidation and pressure applied to staff is a daily occurrence that has been repeated for years.

Doncaster, South Yorkshire: Worked at RM nearly 24 years. Have mental health problems. Put under so much pressure from latest revision [changes in working conditions]. Had a breakdown and went home. Got charged with wilful delay. Got charged 2 months later (was still off sick) with violent conduct towards a manager. Never got escorted off the premises when management say the violence was supposed to have occurred. Fought the charges, took 14 months 2 weeks and 5 days. It had been kept in-house at the Doncaster office by management and they never investigated it. My appeal against a vexatious allegation by the manager was UPHELD! That’s because it got properly investigated outside our office. Recommendations said I should have gone back to a comfortable environment and whether further action should be taken against the manager who put in the vexatious allegation. Got kept in-house AGAIN! Said I had to come back and work under the same manager or I could transfer to another office. Now suffering with Depression, Anxiety, Pulsatile tinnitus, IBS, suicidal thoughts plus a number of other ailments. Couldn’t work under that manager again and didn’t want to transfer. I had to resign. Finances are now dire. Just get

universal credit [welfare benefit]. Having to get fed by other people. Borrowing money to pay my increased rent. Borrowing money to pay a solicitor to take on my case. My union solicitors are ABSOLUTELY useless. Got all the paperwork and emails supporting what I have just written. Formerly of the Doncaster delivery office, Middle Bank. PS. My ex-colleagues are still getting bullied by management.

Keighley, West Yorkshire: Hi I've been a postie for 20 years and this is the lowest I've ever been and the workload is ridiculous now, I'm absolutely shot at (knackered), lots of deliveries don't go out because of the workload and the time given, morale is at its lowest and all the management benefit with bonuses with our hard work. Shambolic is Royal Mail.

Birkenhead, Merseyside: Horrific! We are under pure pressure with unrealistic workloads and pressure from the management. The union are in it for themselves, we are left to suffer hence the mass exit of employees leaving Royal Mail.

Burnley, Lancashire: I've left the business on ill-health grounds (osteoarthritis). I probably would have carried on working for Parcelforce but once it became obvious we were getting a below inflation (pay rise). Time to go! Grafting your arse off in the cold and wet for 2%.....go on [unemployment] benefits 10% rise. I think they call it a no brainer. The CWU deal is absolute garbage and if I got a ballot sheet it would be a massive NO.

Stockport, Lancashire: Winter finishing times will have people walking the streets in the dark, risking trips and falls. Along with an increased risk of being assaulted and robbed in the current climate. The policies presented only work if all we deliver is parcels. Then there is the increased physical damage, 6-hour walking deliveries will incur on an aging work force, with sick pay basically removed. Aging because no young workers will join a company or stay with the terms that are being offered. Employees will last 6 months tops then leave, which will drive quality even further than it has already fallen.

Birmingham, West Midlands: Bring down the greedy rich criminals!

Another postal worker from **Birmingham** writes: More workload, no extra time for delivery, constantly being tracked, jobs a joke now. Worst I've known it in 25 years, hate working for Royal Mail now.

Leamington Spa, Warwickshire: DIABOLICAL! Tonnes of mail being bought back every day because it cannot be delivered in duty hours due to absorption or carve up being prioritised first. Managers need to get out there and do some delivery and feel what it's like, they are woefully useless some of them. They say crap postmen and women become managers it's so true coz offices are full of them. CLUELESS don't know the areas they're in, just working off data and Google maps it's a S—T show.

Manningtree, Essex: I was essentially forced out of work in December 2022 after recovering from a long-term illness called Reactive Arthritis. Royal Mail's shoddy Occupational Health

service prescribed me 3 weeks ill off work despite the disease spanning at least 3 months. I returned still partially physically broken and by far mentally broken due to the strong dosage of Prednisone. My manager constantly bullied me, scrutinised me and humiliated me in front of my co-workers. I lived a life of fear and constant anxiety at work, feeling trapped between doing things by the book and not getting enough done. I had a serious mental breakdown in December which led to me being moved offices, before I handed in my notice entirely. Their management of my illness and health was absolutely abhorrent. The manager in question was a nasty piece of work who enjoyed his power trip over me.

St Leonards, East Sussex: The sorting office is a disgrace. Office fails mail, packet and parcel deliveries every day. The revision needs looking at properly. Walks are so unfair. Wouldn't advise anyone to work for RM sorry to say.

Cheltenham, Gloucestershire: Having been a Postman for nearly 38 years. I have never seen our job getting ripped up, I don't rush my job for anyone, I will never change. I am really disappointed by our union selling us down the river. We work hard for our living and kept the country connected during the Covid period, no thanks whatsoever by the so-called management. I will be definitely voting no on this "perfect" deal. Don't blame us Posties for your mis-management ideas. You have failed the company like the CEO has and should be ashamed of all your lies & bullying going on in the workplace.

Another postal worker writes: **Cheltenham** office never known it so bad. Managers threaten to add more and more on you as you dare get back to office 15 minutes before time you can sign out... monitored day to day on PDA and if you claim overtime go through it with fine tooth comb. "Why stop there for 2 min why there and so on."

Romford, Essex: In my 41 years I've never known so much of a shambles this job has become. The people at the top all need hanging for ruining this great company. And yesterday me and my work colleague was blatantly lied to by a replacement Guvnor saying he had texts from our proper manager saying we had to take everything out on 2 walks knowing we cut off a whole walk the day before, and when we told our manager this morning, they denied they ever sent a text to the replacement manager. So spent an hour throwing up again before I started today's mail. It's a mess from top to bottom so. I'm definitely voting No.

Postal workers, sign up and support the Postal Workers Rank-and-File Committee and find out more about its work here. The Committee's email address is rmpw.rfc@gmail.com



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