

Camden Trades Council Annual Report 2023

In the first half of 2023, come rain or come shine, we continued with our regular street stall on Kentish Town Road. We used the stall as an opportunity to distribute leaflets to members of the public explaining the reasons behind the upsurge in strike action. We also collected signatures for a petition as part of our campaign against the Governments minimum service level legislation. The stall met with a good reception from passers-by, was particularly well received by trade unionists, and we engaged in some useful conversations.

January:



March:



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June:



May Day

On 1st May we joined the annual May Day march and rally – our trades council banner was probably one of the best supported on the march that day.



Trade Union campaign against rail ticket office closures

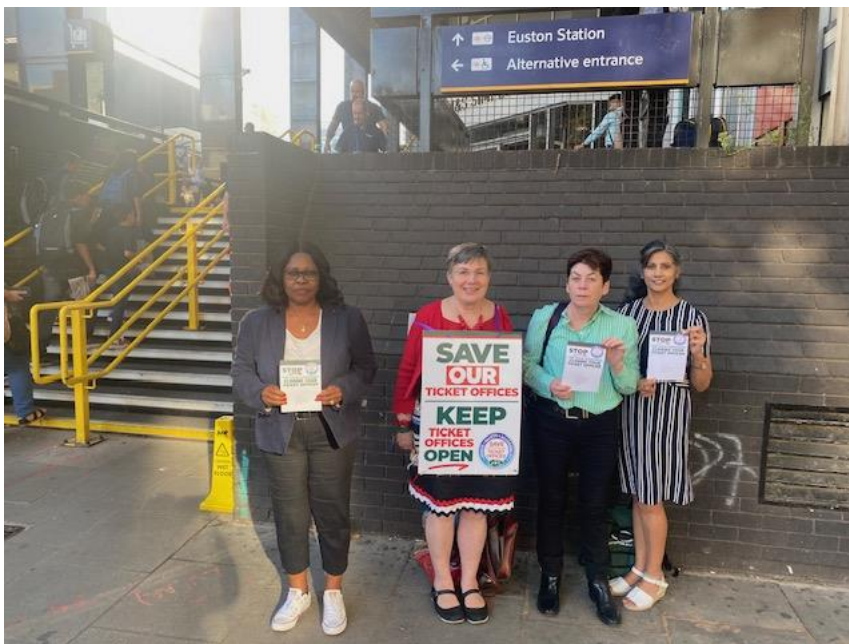
In the summer we focused our campaigning efforts on supporting the trade union campaign against ticket office closures by attending rallies, organising leafleting sessions and encouraging people to respond to the public consultation against the closures. In total we organised 7 leafleting sessions in July and August, which took place outside St Pancras and Euston stations and also in Kentish Town.

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In July we attended the RMT Save our Ticket Offices rally outside of Kings Cross station with the TC banner. At the Euston leafleting events we were joined by local workers, disability rights campaigners and trade union activists.



We also invented the famous “Save our Ticket Offices sandwich board”:



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Trades Council letters to the local paper - Camden New Journal

We used the letters page of the local paper to raise the profile of the trades councils and the issues we were campaigning on; including rail privatisation and its inherent dangers exposed by train accidents in US and Greece, the Government's announcement to close 1000 ticket offices, a letter urging Camden Council to settle the Camden parking warden's strike and in October a letter about housing crisis in Camden and the need for social housing to address this. The latter followed Rishi Sunak's announcement that the Government will be selling off land, previously intended for HS2 use at Euston station - for private housing development instead. We received several emails in response to this from people interested in getting involved in a campaign.

Building the trades council

Trades Council web site

Luke Howard (TSSA) updated the web site.

Trades Council survey

Towards the end of 2023 we conducted a survey of all TC affiliates to find out their preferred meeting date, time, and location – and also if they were interested in having hybrid meetings. In 2024 we will implement the findings of the survey – to continue to meet on Monday evenings, at Crowndale Centre and will also trial hybrid meetings.

Trades Council affiliates

We increased the number of affiliated branches to more than 20. Realising there was still a lot of work to do on this front, we set up a subgroup to work on mapping the borough's workplaces and from this to work on getting the workplace with trade union recognition affiliated to our trades council.

Speakers

In 2023 we started a programme of inviting speakers to our meetings, beginning with Andy Bain from Islington Trades Council who spoke about how about the work of their trades

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council and how we could work more closely and and Luke Daniels (observer to our trades council from Caribbean Solidarity) who spoke about reparations for slavery.

Picket lines

PCS

The trades council joined picket lines outside of British Library:



And British Museum:



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Camden New Journal wrote re the above, “Striking British Museum workers got a boost when a delegation from Camden Trades Council visited the picket line.”

UCU

We joined picket lines outside of UCL and also in November, Westminster College, Grays Inn Road.

Unite - St Mungo's

Camden Trades Council delegates Una Doyle (NEU) and Simon Pearson (TSSA) spoke at a Unite demo of St Mungo's strikers outside of Camden Council offices at 5 St Pancras Way. The demo was in support of the hundreds of workers employed by homelessness charity St Mungo's who were on strike for a pay increase.

Camden UNISON

We joined Camden UNISON NSL parking wardens picket lines and march and rally through Camden in support of their 59 days of all-out strike action for a wage increase. We want to take this opportunity to congratulate them on their success of securing such a fantastic victory, which will see their pay increase from £12.70 an hour to £15 an hour, backdated from April 2023.

Camden UNISON NSL picket line outside the companies Guilford Street base:



In addition to the picket line visits as described above, individual officers of the Trades Council attended picket lines in Camden supporting the following unions: NEU, ASLEF, RMT, TSSA, RCN and BMA.

In September we gave a donation to those unions affiliated to our trades council who were in dispute with their employer.

International

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We discussed train crashes in the US and Greece and how privatisation and cuts to rail services had led to these disasters.

With Israel launching a relentless offensive on the Gaza strip since the Hamas attacks on October 7th some TC delegates have joined local and national demos calling for ceasefire. CTC has donated to Medical Aid for Palestinians and we are affiliated to the national Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

We agreed to affiliate to Stop the War coalition.

Conferences

Diane Pearson (Camden UNISON), Simon Pearson (TSSA) and Sarah Friday (GMB) were our trades council delegates to The World at War: A Trade Union Issue - Stop the War TU Conference in January 2023.

Sarah Friday (GMB) was CTC delegate to the annual Trades Council Conference held at Congress House in June.

Delegates

Sarah Friday (GMB) and David Oladele (Unite) were our GLATC's delegates (Greater London Association of Trades Councils).