

**BRANCH YOUTH
OFFICERS'
FORUM
2016
NEWCASTLE**

REPORT BACK



**JOIN,
ENGAGE,
GET ACTIVE,
BE EMPOWERED!**



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OFFICER'S INTRODUCTION



The role of the Branch Youth Officer is perhaps one of the most important, but least understood in the union's rulebook.

Every branch should have a Branch Youth Officer. It is part of the model branch constitution. But it has been rare for the union to achieve a better than 70% coverage of this important role.

The Branch Youth Officer has responsibility to co-ordinate the interests and activities of young members in a branch. They act as a conduit to provide information from national, regional and branch level down to a branch's young members and vice versa.

Ever since Branch Youth Officers were created, at a national level we have tried to give appropriate and practical support.

The Branch Youth Officers' Toolkit, now in its third edition, was first published in 2007. In response to feedback from the 2015 Forum, the tool kit was revised.

We have also produced new materials to describe the CWU's structure and history, and a video describing the role of the National Youth Committee has been launched.

It is worth remembering why last year the Youth Committee thought that it was time to resurrect the idea of a Branch Youth Officers' Forum.

First of all, there is no dedicated forum in which Branch Youth Officers have the opportunity to come together to share experiences, draw support from each other and receive some bespoke training.

Second, there is something of a hole in the annual youth calendar between the union's annual conference and the National Youth Education Event; thus there is ample opportunity to run such an event.

What follows is a report of the proceedings including the output from workshop exercises and recommendations for further action. All the recommendations lie within the Youth Committee's constitutional terms of reference and will therefore be carried forward as far as is possible.

The Branch Youth Officers who registered to attend and the branches who supported them are warmly thanked for their support.

The next Branch Youth Officers' Forum will take place during 2017 and we hope to build upon the success of this year's event. Any queries on the Branch Youth Officers' Forum or the work of the CWU Youth should be addressed to youth@cwu.org.

My thanks to Jo Thair, Trish Lavelle, Paddy Magill, Steve Jones and Ben Abrams for their part in making the day a success.

Simon Sapper

National Officer



BYO FORUM NEWCASTLE 2016 PARTICIPANTS

DELEGATES

Andrew Paddon	Greater London Combined
Bethany Elstob	Tyne & Wear Clerical
Billy Hunt	Gloucestershire Amal
Chris Egan	Greater Manchester
Daniel Coles	East Midlands
Daniel Mulligan	Newcastle Amal
Jamie George	Central Counties & Thames Valley
Jay Bhundia	South West Middlesex Amal
Jimi Brown	South Midlands Postal
Kayleigh England	North East
Kazi Hussain	Birmingham & District Amal
Laura Snell	Eastern No.4
Marianne Murray	Doncaster & District Amal
Matthew Proud	North East
Michael Goozee	Wessex South Central
Parmvir Padda	South East No.5
Steve Bosworth	Nottingham & District Amal
Umair Khan	South West Middlesex Amal
Vanisha Carvalho	South West No.7

SPEAKERS AND SUPPORT

Ben Abrams	National Youth Committee (Chair)
Trish Lavelle	Head of Education & Training
Paddy Magill	General Conference Standing Orders
Steve Jones	NEC
Simon Sapper	National Officer
Pavel Krajca	Organiser, North East
Jo Thair	PA

TIMETABLE

- 10:45** Tea, coffee and registration
- 11:00** Welcome, introductions and report back from last Forum
- 11:15** Brown Paper Exercise (all)
- 11:40** Plenary Session (all): Mentoring with Trish Lavelle
- 12:10** Group sessions
- i.** New to the role
 - ii.** Experienced Branch Youth Officers
- 13:00** Lunch
- 14:00** Plenary Session (all): The art of writing motions for conference
- 14:30** Group sessions: Write a motion
- 14:45** Motions overview and feedback
- 15:00** Report backs from morning groups
- 15:30** Overview, homework, next steps, next forum

SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW



20 Branch Youth Officers representing 17 branches came together at the Newcastle City Library on Tuesday, 21 June.

The purpose of the session was to work on the outcomes from last year's forum by working with the more experienced branch youth officers, but still sticking to the principles of the forum by embracing those new to the role or who were thinking of taking up the role.

So this year we had to create a timetable that encompassed both sets of experiences and hopefully allowing each to learn from the other.

The part of the timetable featured two work groups. One was aimed at those who considered themselves to be “seasoned” branch youth officers: they talked about their shared experiences of being in the role and share best practice.

The other group concentrated mainly on the role of the branch youth officer and what actions should be taken to progress onto the next stage of their role – i.e. making contact with their branch, establishing contact with other younger members in their branch and discussing strategies and ideas on how to do.

Two plenary sessions took place: Trish Lavelle, Head of Education & Training walked delegates through the new mentoring scheme that has just been launched. And Paddy Magill of the General Conference Standing Orders Committee talked about how to write good motions to conference – and how to avoid the pitfalls of using the wrong language or direction within the wording

The day was extremely productive and as demonstrated by the feedback forms, delegates draw a lot from it. The clear consensus was that a further forum should be arranged for next year.

WORKSHOPS AND PLENARY SESSIONS



BROWN PAPER EXERCISE

All participants were asked to think about their experiences and knowledge of trade unions and specifically the CWU at four specific points in their life:

- Prior to first job
- First day at work
- First contact with the CWU
- First contact with the CWU

Using post-it notes they were then asked to write one statement for each of the following headings and pin the post-it note on the brown paper pinned on the walls (with positive statements being placed higher than negative ones)

AWARENESS OF UNIONS PRIOR TO FIRST JOB

- A bit of knowledge about trade unions whilst being at school
- What I saw/read in the media
- On the TV/in films – picket lines, fighting for workers’ rights
- Aware due to family being part of unions
- Dad, uncle
- Saw a poster about maternity rights at work – made me think about unions
- Aware of CWU as both parents work for Royal Mail
- Miners in the family, so heard of what happened in the 80s
- Rough idea that union represent workers, but not sure how they would proactively achieve workers’ rights
- Heard about unions from my father
- Knew a little about unions, just what I have read or seen on TV. E.g. the Miners’ strike and the Women at Ford, however I had very little information the CWU
- First job in NHS. Knew of UNISON, but didn’t join as I was part-time

what I saw
read in the
media

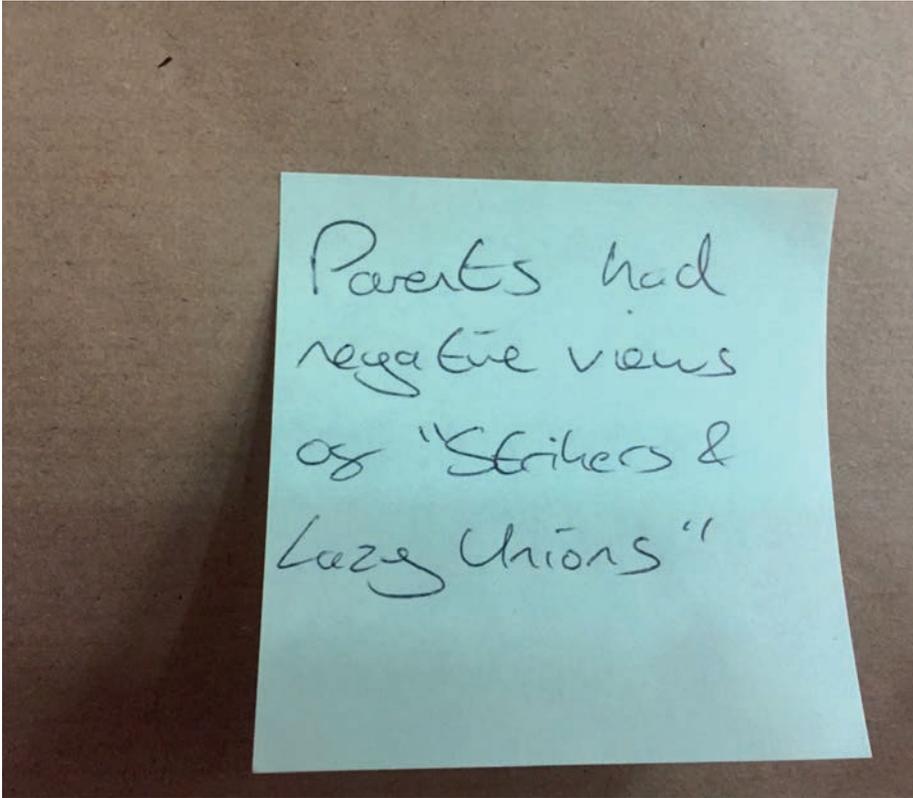


Before:-
I knew a little about
unions just what I have
read or seen on TV. i.e. the
minors strike and the
Woman at Ford, however
I had very little information
on the CWU.

First job in
NHS. Knew
of Alison but
didn't join as
as part time

NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES

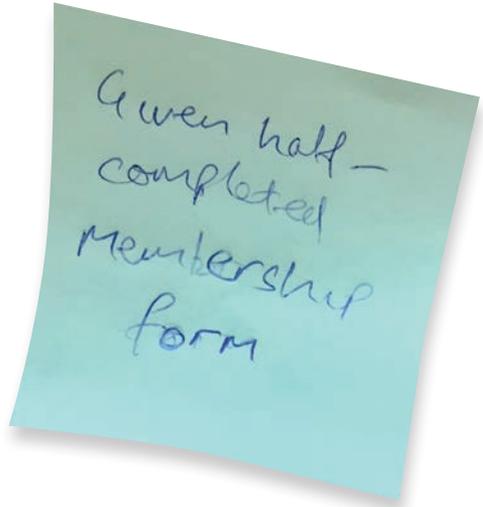
- Never heard of unions
- Never heard of them
- No particular knowledge of CWU before I started working for Royal Mail
- Never heard of trade union CWU. Never even heard of trade unions. This was four years ago!
- I had never heard of CWU
- Lack of knowledge
- Parents had negative views of “strikers and lazy unions”
- I didn’t know much about unions, I was aware of them due to Tolpuddle and printing strikes, but didn’t realise how important they were as my dad didn’t really agree with unions.



Parents had
negative views
of "Strikers &
Lazy Unions"

FIRST DAY AT WORK

- Given half-completed membership form
- Signed up when talked to at “welcome to Royal Mail “day.
- I was approached by a rep to join CWU as a member.
- Was visited on my group induction by the branch secretary who provided us with membership forms
- Asked to join by other members as it’s a good insurance policy
- First at work seen noticeboard and posters – still unsure of what the CWU was.
- Presentation from union officers and enrolment forms.
- Before my first shift I had a welcome to Royal Mail meeting and signed up to the union straight away.
- Upon induction by a representative to become a member.
- Being advised by family to join after receiving info in my BT welcome pack
- Branch secretary came in to introduce the union to 15 new starters.



NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES

- First day – no contact or any information from union.
- No contact on first day, but first week.
- First day of work as a casual, not much was said.
- No union rep made contact with us.
- Not contact or awareness about trade union (CWU)
- No contact from rep.
- Was approached by reps, didn’t know much. Very good although a bit pushy.

Transferred onto
deliveries and had
trouble with my working
hours and spoke with
my rep and got the
problem resolved

⑤ First contact
was a USR
chatting to me
in an exchange

FIRST REAL CONTACT
WITH CWU WAS WHEN
I BECAME Y/O. EVERYONE
WAS/HAS BEEN VERY
WELCOMING AND SUPPORTIVE

The union rep at the time
trained me on a delivery
and explained the benefits
of being in a Union so I
signed up.
Unfortunately a year
later he became a
manager!

First Day
Was approached by
reps, didn't know much
very good although
a bit pushy

FIRST CONTACT WITH THE CWU

(All experiences positive)

- Approached by union rep to sign up. Highlighted benefits
- Got help from a rep when I was told by a manager to go home for not wearing a badge. Joined that time.
- I needed representing at a discipline case and got in touch with my local officer. He helped me get out of a sticky situation and was extremely helpful.
- Training in classroom and union to get us to sign up. Gave us benefits
- Very positive! I was helped by a rep with my holiday leave form.
- Branch Youth Officer approached me.
- When I was struggling with a delivery and my area rep saw me and told me I didn't have to work for free.
- Represented by the CWU in a disciplinary procedure.
- Approach immediately by unit rep who warned that I would be "shafted by managers" if I didn't join.
- I was contact with CWU with a case I had and joined as a member as a casual.
- First real contact with CWU was when I became Youth Officer. Everyone was/has been very welcoming and supportive.
- Transferred onto deliveries and had trouble with my working hours and spoke with my rep and got the problem solved.
- First contact was a USR chatting to me in an exchange.
- I had a breakdown and ended up in hospital and my rep was there for me through the whole thing and helped me where needed.
- Using representation in attendance promp. Rep won stage because my absences were asthma related – impressed.
- Given form on day 1
- As the time I really needed help from CWU
- After 2 months I went looking for union rep to join
- Martyn Sharp, top bloke, fantastic, very helpful. Saved my job and got me a new one through MCC. I will always be grateful.

Transferred onto
deliveries and had
trouble with my working
hours and spoke with
my rep and got the
problem resolved

③ First contact
was a USR
chatting to me
in an exchange

FIRST REAL CONTACT
WITH EWU WAS WHEN
I BECAME Y/O. EVERYONE
WAS/HAS BEEN VERY
WELCOMING AND SUPPORTIVE

I had a breakdown and
ended up in hospital and
my Rep was there for
me through the whole
thing and helped me
where needed.

DECISION TO BECOME ACTIVE

(All experiences positive)

- Pay Strike
- More involved as I had an issue with a manager around sick
- Encouraged by existing youth officer
- Approached to volunteer at Gay Pride – after I was asked to do more
- My rep suggested me to put myself forward for the role
- Becoming proactive – attending a CWU youth education event was a positive first interaction with the union
- TUC Demo Against Cuts
- A few disciplinary cases I was involved in fascinated me about the CWU and I decided to stand up and learn to be a rep as well.
- Private administrators came in to test work rates. I understood the implications and couldn't let the office be exploited by a private sector consulting firm.
- Steve Philips – as soon as I registered an interest, he got the ball rolling. Fantastic experience.
- I was approached by the branch secretary to get involved as a youth rep and gave me all the help I needed and still helps me 2 years on.
- After working in Royal Mail for several years I felt I could help my colleagues. BYO seemed an ideal starting point to become active.
- I became active in the CWU after I was encouraged to by my office rep
- I am newly promoted into the role and enjoyed conference this year – was a good experience. It's definitely opened my eyes and I will do as much as I can to learn and ultimately help people – which is why I joined.
- I want to make a difference
- Rep leaving and no one would stand
- When I realised how badly management were treating people and putting pressure on people. I thought the only way to stop it was to become active.
- Procedures and SSOW not being followed. Friends/comrades being bullied to work against agreements. Stood to be rep to help stop it.
- My health & safety officer pushed to join
- Newsletter reporting back to my branch with this meeting

I was approached
by the branch sec
to get involved as
a youth rep and
Gave me all the help
I needed and still help
me 2 year on.

① More involved after
Seeing a fellow Team
Member being repeatedly
Pushed down & Disaplined
over poor performance.
• He was Best worker
in Rural area.

I BECAME ACTIVE IN
THE CWU AFTER I
WAS ENCOURAGED TO BY
MY OFFICE REP

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Becoming Pro-active

- attending a CWU youth education event was a positive first interaction with the Union.

A few disciplinary cases I was involved in fascinated me about CWU and I decided to stand up and learn to be a REP as well

TUC Demo
AGAINST CUTS

Private adminis
come in to test
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APPROACHED
BY REP

Got help from a
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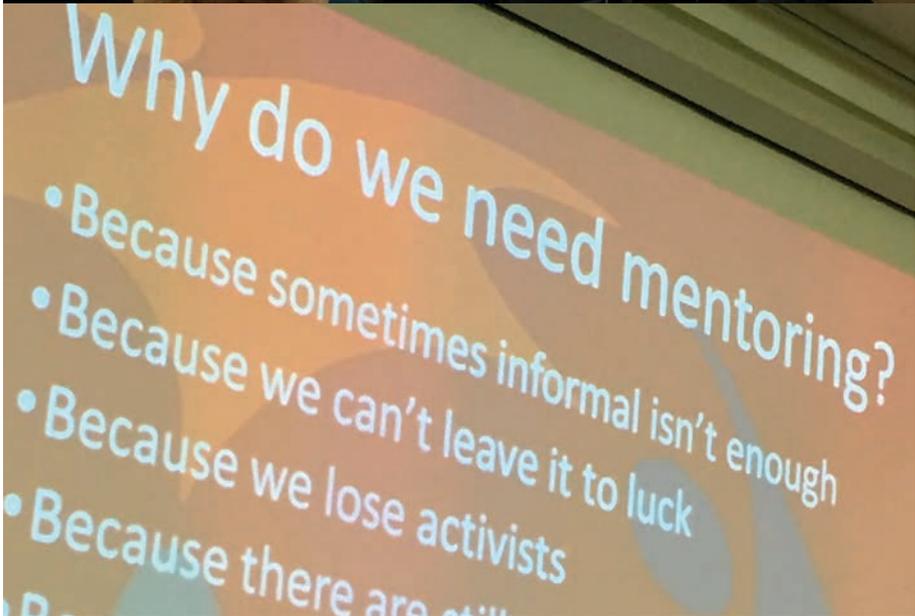
Branch Youth
Officer approached
me

Very positive! I was
helped by a rep
with my holiday
leave form.

FIRST CONTACT
- TRAINING IN
CLASS ROOM +
UNION TO GET US
TO SIGN UP
- GAVE US BENEFITS

ing

PLENARY SESSION: MENTORING WITH TRISH LAVELLE, HEAD OF EDUCATION & TRAINING



Mentoring

Activists supporting activists

Trish Lavelle
Head of Education and Training

Experience
Confidence
Education



Advice
Networks
Guidance



CWU
Exchange

Why do we need mentoring?

- Because sometimes informal isn't enough
- Because we can't leave it to luck
- Because we lose activists
- Because there are still significant barriers
- Because 42.9% of active members are over 50
- Because only 3.4% of reps are under 30

CWU Exchange Mentoring

- 20 mentors
- 20 Mentees
- Selection process and training
- Mentoring Agreements
- Evaluation
- Full report and recommendations to NEC
- Expansion of scheme later in 2016

Who?

Mentees

- Up to three years experience
- BAME, Women, Youth (initially)

Who?

Mentors

- 5 years experience plus
- Wider Labour movement
- Communications skills
- Commitment to developing new activists
- Understanding of the role
- Ability to commit, specified time to mentoring

Shadowing

- To complement and support the mentoring scheme
- Addresses the lack of awareness of trade unions and trade union roles
- Less formal, shorter bursts of support
- Access to a wide range of officers and activists
- We will be launching this very soon.

Other support available.....

- Education and Training formal programme
- Seminars and events
- CWU Left Click for online learning
- Your Union Learning Rep

Thanks for listening.....

- www.cwueducation.org
- CWU Left Click
- @cwueducation
- Facebook Group CWU Education and Training
- tlavelle@cwu.org

WORKSHOPS

DISCUSSION WITH NEW YOUTH OFFICERS

This session was more of a discussion and sharing exercise amongst those participants who were new to the role or were thinking of taking up the role.

The discussion centred around the role of the youth officer and what resources were available to them to progress and assist them. The Youth Committee Chair shared his experiences and ideas of setting up events and methods to make contact with the younger members in their branch.

FLIPCHART NOTES

- **Set up a meeting:**

- What should the meeting be about
- What do we talk about?
- Sending emails can be too impersonal
- Use bigger events to draw people. e.g. Dragon Boat Race
- Don't have formal meeting – talk to people
- Consider a charitable event
- Maybe host a themed/awareness event

- **The role:**

- Be a soundboard
- Communicate with the branch
- Inductions in the workplace – speech to new recruits
- Communicate with other branch youth officers
- Look into creating an app (nationally)
- Consider text messaging groups
- Use social media
- Recruit other younger members in your branch to assist



DISCUSSION WITH MORE EXPERIENCED YOUTH OFFICERS

This discussion centred around their personal experiences during their time so far as a youth officer and sharing best practice, ideas and thoughts on how to continue their role and take further steps in working with their branches, regions and head office to further interact with members in the branch and region.

Flipchart Notes

- The set up at in your “base” unit makes a big difference
- Travel/release big issues
- Having a schedule of meetings is very helpful
- **EXAMPLE OF BEST PRACTICE** : Branch secures and pays for release in short bursts to enable the BYO to get out and meet the members
- Get back to people if you say are going to
- Branch Youth Officer role on its own is limited
- A USB pre-loaded with links/docs would be useful
- Older members/ reps can (a) turn off young members and (b) React badly to offers of help
- **EXAMPLE OF BEST PRACTICE**: Build alliances on branch committee and use shadowing to increase understanding, especially if relationship with Branch Secretary is difficult.
- Maintain strong regional links including regional social media networks is valuable and important (but regional variations)
- Getting Branch Youth Officers to industrial conferences is important
- **EXAMPLE OF BEST PRACTICE**: Branch youth officers should attend the NYEE as a key part of their development
- Social “surrounding events” make all the difference!
- Space away is important, including particularly Alvescot
- Support networks
- Template for branch youth officers work needed
- Branch support for “outreach” work with young members needs to include information on how to access membership lists
- **EXAMPLE OF BEST PRACTICE**: Sharing good experience works

PLENARY SESSION: THE ART OF WRITING MOTIONS WITH PADDY MAGILL, GENERAL STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE



The art of motion writing

(Or how to change the world with a well-written paragraph.)

Paddy Magill, Standing Orders Committee

What is a motion?

- A motion instructs a body to do something.
- Normally a motion must be limited to a single subject.
- A motion must be clear in its intent.

What is a motion?

- A motion instructs a body to do something.
- Normally a motion must be limited to a single subject.
- A motion must be clear in its intent.

How do you then get your motion heard?

Checklist:

- 1) Have we submitted an instruction?
A motion must instruct (in the CWU), the NEC, TFSE, PE or relevant Advisory Committee.
- 2) Can the body carry out the instruction?
I.e. Whilst the NEC is the superior body it cannot tell the Industrial Executives what to do.
- 3) Does the motion require a decision of Conference?
Is the type of footwear issued members more important than next year's pay rise?
- 4) Is the motion already union policy?
If a policy or similar policy is already in place then your motion will be categorised as a "C" motion and will be heard at the end of conference.

Hints

- Always remember some Branches (especially at Annual Conference) will mandate their delegation based on the printed Agenda alone.
- The NEC/TFSE/PE and Advisory Committees follow the same process as regards their policy.

THEREFORE- *Never good to hear 'I know what it reads like, but this is what we actually want.....'*

Also,

since decisions of Conference are binding on the body instructed, when they (NEC etc.) are trying to carry out the instruction they are duty bound (in some cases legally bound), to carry out the written instruction.

"The words are the words"

So, always best to try to keep motions short and to the point.

QUOTES FROM FEEDBACK FORMS

Brown Paper Exercise

“A good way to start the day and get talking”

“Could have had a discussion on boards and what people had written”

“Was a nice icebreaker session”

“Really enjoyed, good exercise”

“Was good to think of my experiences. Would be better if there was time to read out others views/experiences”

“It was a good exercise to start the day”

PLENARY SESSION:

Mentoring Session with Trish Lavelle

“Good to her about the mentoring and shadowing schemes”

“I’m pretty new, so I took loads from this”

“Really interesting”

“Very insightful, Trish came over very well”

“I am a big fan of mentoring/shadowing”

“Was a very good explanation from Trish about how the mentoring and shadowing schemes will work”

“I agree this is a good idea as previous methods have failed”

“More information regarding shadowing issue; something I would be interested in”

“Good idea; interesting to see how successful the programme is”

“Informative session”

GROUP SESSIONS

New to role

“Good to talk to people in a similar position and share ideas”

“Great for ideas – to know that I am not alone”

“Good – more of a discussion than a workshop”

“Got some good ideas of what to try to do to engage with younger members in my branch”

“Was more of a discussion than a workshop, but it was good listening to everyone’s experiences and learning where to get help if needed”

“Informative and helpful knowledge-gaining exercise”

Experienced Branch Youth Officers

“Good to discuss issues with experienced youth officers”

“Good to sit down and all share ideas and experiences”

“It was good to go through positive and negative experiences with others nationally”

“Good talking to fellow reps regarding issues”

“It was refreshing to hear about branches having success communicating with young members and I have gained ideas for the future”

PLENARY SESSION:
**The Art of Writing Motions
with Paddy Magill**

- “Very interesting and useful to learn about the rules of writing motions”
- “Very fast – I didn’t take everything in. Found some of it confusing”
- “Really interesting and important. Might be confusing for new officers.”
- “Very useful”
- “Interesting segment of the forum; again insightful and gained a lot more knowledge on the writing of motions”
- “Good to gain knowledge from Paddy on motions”
- “This needs to happen more often”
- “Very good! Very informative on how to word a motion”
- “I enjoyed this session as it refreshed some of the information I had forgotten since conference”
- “Very useful as we had a motion ruled out of order at Youth Conference and now realise why”
- “Had a go at writing a motion as though it was real”

The Forum as a whole

- “I found the day very useful”
- “I enjoyed the day. Great to network and build my knowledge”
- “Really enjoyed it. Better than last year.”
- “My second event. Really enjoyable; learned a lot”
- “Enjoyed my time here; met some great people and would definitely come again”
- “Great opportunity to catch up and meet new fellow youth activists”
- “I thought it was really good to have Paddy from SOC present. Good talk on writing motions”
- “Good to meet other youth officers to talk to and get their contact details. I learnt quite a bit from the discussions/speakers throughout the day. Should happen again next year”
- “I think we should have of these forums as with youth we have issues getting everyone together”
- “Very enjoyable day; particularly enjoyed motion writing session”
- “Brilliant way to know about my role as a new youth officer, build a network of support with other youth officers and get updated on the ongoing events for younger members”
- “Very helpful and informative event for youth officers. Lots of activities to help you back at your workplace”





CWU Youth

TODAY AND TOMORROW

JOIN, ENGAGE, GET ACTIVE, BE EMPOWERED!

CWU YOUTH | ✉ youth@cwu.org | **f** [cwuyouth](#) | **t** [@cwuyouth](#)

CWU The communications union

CWU 150 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London, SW19 1RX **T:** 020 8971 7200

t [@CWUnews](#) **f** [The Communications Union](#) **#** [TheCWU](#) **E:** info@cwu.org **www.cwu.org**

General Secretary Dave Ward **f** [Dave Ward CWU](#) **t** [@DaveWardGS](#)

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