

No. 048/26

13th February 2026

To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

REVISED CWU MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORMS

Branches will be aware that parts of the legislation contained within the Employment Rights Act will be introduced from 18th February 2026 onwards. Among these are the following changes that have been made to the political fund and associated matters (except for members in Northern Ireland).

- New members joining a union will be automatically 'opted in' to political fund contributions.
- The requirement to vote on retaining a trade union political fund every 10 years will be removed.
- The levy to fund the Certification Officer, imposed by the Tory government has ended, with the government confirming that the final levy has been collected, so trade unions will no longer be liable for any further levy payments.

Given the above, there has been a need to amend all our membership application forms, in time for the change in legislation on the 18th of February. The online joining page is also being updated, as well as the CWU website and associated literature.

A link to the revised membership forms has been created and can be accessed at [CWU: Application Forms](#).

From 18 February 2026, **the new membership application forms are the only ones to be used**. If the old membership application forms are completed after this date, it is likely to result in a delay to the form being processed.

Branches must therefore ensure the following is completed:

- Old membership application forms are destroyed and removed from circulation.

- Branches must ensure any online links to membership application forms are updated to include the new application forms.
- Branches must update any information about membership and ensure that in the future all literature is compliant with the new political fund rule.
- The content of Branch websites must be reviewed to ensure compliance.

The CWU undertakes a range of political work on issues that affect our members. We have successfully campaigned on issues from pay, pensions and workplace rights, to broader issues like the NHS and housing. It is therefore beneficial that members will now be automatically opted in to the political fund, while they still retain the right to opt out upon joining or at any point in their membership with the CWU.

It is important to note that any member who chooses not to contribute to the political fund of the union shall not be excluded from any benefits of the union or placed in any respect either directly or indirectly under any disability or disadvantage as compared with other members of the union (except in relation to the control or management of the political fund). The **attached** opt-out information notice contains the details for doing so.

Members in Northern Ireland will not be automatically opted-in but can opt-in to the national political fund at any time (the CWU does not retain a regional political fund in Northern Ireland).

The CWU has been at the forefront of the trade union movement in leading the fight for a New Deal for Workers and reversing the Tory anti-union legislation. The Employment Rights Act is a welcome and important step towards rebalancing the world of work. The first set of benefits will soon start to be realised, with other important steps being implemented over the coming months. These will be given further publicity at the appropriate time.

I would like to thank all Branches for their cooperation in implementing the measures listed above. If you have any questions, please contact the General Secretary's Department at dlynch@cwu.org.

Yours sincerely

Dave Ward.

Dave Ward
General Secretary



Opt-out information
notice.pdf

Opt-out information notice

Notice to Members in accordance with the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992

The Communication Workers Union has a political fund. This fund is used for activities connected with political objects as defined by section 72 of the above Act. All spending on these activities comes from this separate political fund.

Every member has the right not to contribute to the union's political fund. To exercise this right, you must give the union an opt-out notice.

You can give an opt-out notice in any of these ways:

- Deliver it in person, by post, or through a person you have asked to deliver it on your behalf
- Send it by email to membership@cwu.org
- Complete an electronic form provided by the union and submit it online following the union's instructions.

A form of opt-out notice can also be obtained:

- From the union, by e-mailing membership@cwu.org or
- From the Certification Officer by emailing info@certoffice.org

If you later change your mind, you can give a withdrawal notice to cancel your opt-out. This will put you back into contributing to the political fund.

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