

No. 279/26

16th October 2026

To: All Branches

Dear Colleagues,

ENDING BOGUS SELF-EMPLOYMENT

This week, the Government published its consultation, [Make Work Pay: Employment Status Reform and Protections for the Self-Employed](#), setting out proposals to end bogus self-employment.

This represents a significant win for the CWU and a major step forward in a campaign we have fought for years. Bogus self-employment allows companies to cut labour costs by treating workers as self-employed despite having little genuine independence over how, when and where they work. Workers are denied basic employment rights and protections, while employers who directly employ their staff are undercut by competitors.

This is particularly damaging in the parcel delivery sector, where companies have relied on bogus self-employment and gig economy models to drive down costs and shift risk onto workers. Royal Mail, which directly employs its workforce, is forced to compete against companies that can avoid obligations such as Employer National Insurance Contributions, sick pay and holiday pay.

Royal Mail pays around £600 million a year in Employer National Insurance Contributions, while the majority of its competitors pay nothing. This creates an unfair playing field that rewards bad employers, threatens the jobs, pay and conditions of CWU members, and deprives the Government of significant tax revenue to fund public services.

The CWU has spent years exposing these exploitative practices and demanding legislation to close the loopholes that allow them to flourish. Our campaigning has put bogus self-employment on the political agenda and build the pressure for action. This consultation is an opportunity to turn that campaigning into meaningful change.

The consultation closes on 8 January 2027, with legislation expected to be brought forward in the next King's Speech. The CWU will continue to press the Government to deliver the fundamental changes our members need.

Any enquiries on the above LTB should be addressed to the General Secretary's office
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Yours sincerely,

Dave Ward.

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