



# YOUR UNION YOUR FUTURE

A Manifesto By Howard Beckett

**BECKETT**  
-FOR UNITE-

A photograph of a man speaking into a microphone, with his right hand raised in a gesture of solidarity. The image is overlaid with a red tint. The man is wearing a dark jacket with a circular badge on the chest. The background shows other people and trees, suggesting an outdoor gathering.

**BECKETT**  
**-FOR UNITE-**

## The Vision














"This election is an incredibly important opportunity for members to decide the future of our union. We are a member-led union. Unite was built by our members. Unite belongs to our members and I want to return influence to our members; to resource branches fully; to modernise our union and devolve authority to nations and regions. Post-Covid, we must re-focus our priorities, with one priority above all: improving the lives of our members by any and every means necessary. To do this I need the support of your branch, by first nominating and then voting for me to be General Secretary. This document is a collection of principles I believe in and a set of ideas that, should I be elected the General Secretary of this union, I would work with the lay structures to implement."

In solidarity,

**Howard Beckett**

# Workers' Rights

It will be my number one priority to use our industrial, and political power to campaign for the following components of our new 'Workers Rights Charter'

 <p>Employment rights from day one</p>	 <p>End to zero-hour contracts</p>	 <p>End to bogus self-employment</p>
 <p>Shorter working week without loss of pay</p>	 <p>An end to the scandal of fire and rehire</p>	 <p>The right to regular and secure hours</p>
 <p>A commitment to contracts being awarded to firms in the UK</p>	 <p>A genuine living wage in all our nations</p>	 <p>No below-inflation pay rises</p>
 <p>Exercise of trade union rights without the threat of discrimination and bullying</p>	 <p>Right to a safe and healthy working environment</p>	 <p>A statutory right to collective bargaining (currently being denied in the Republic of Ireland)</p>
<p>Dismantle the Anti-Trade Union Laws, including the 2016 Trade Union Act </p>		

Our union will support all elected representatives who commit to supporting and campaigning for this workers' rights charter. As an absolute minimum, elected representatives who are supported by Unite must also support our members in dispute.

**TO HEAR MORE ABOUT MY VIEWS ON WORKERS RIGHTS CLICK HERE**



# The Health Service

In all of our nations, health workers have given their all in the fight against the coronavirus. They have been at the forefront of saving lives, nursing our loved ones in their darkest hours, and have done so in some of the most difficult circumstances, with inadequate PPE, staffing shortages and excessive hours and workload. My health sector commitments:

I back demands for a 15 % pay rise for NHS and health care workers

Unite will be recruiting at speed in the health service and will be putting resources into that recruitment drive.

Student nurses and student paramedics will receive free membership.

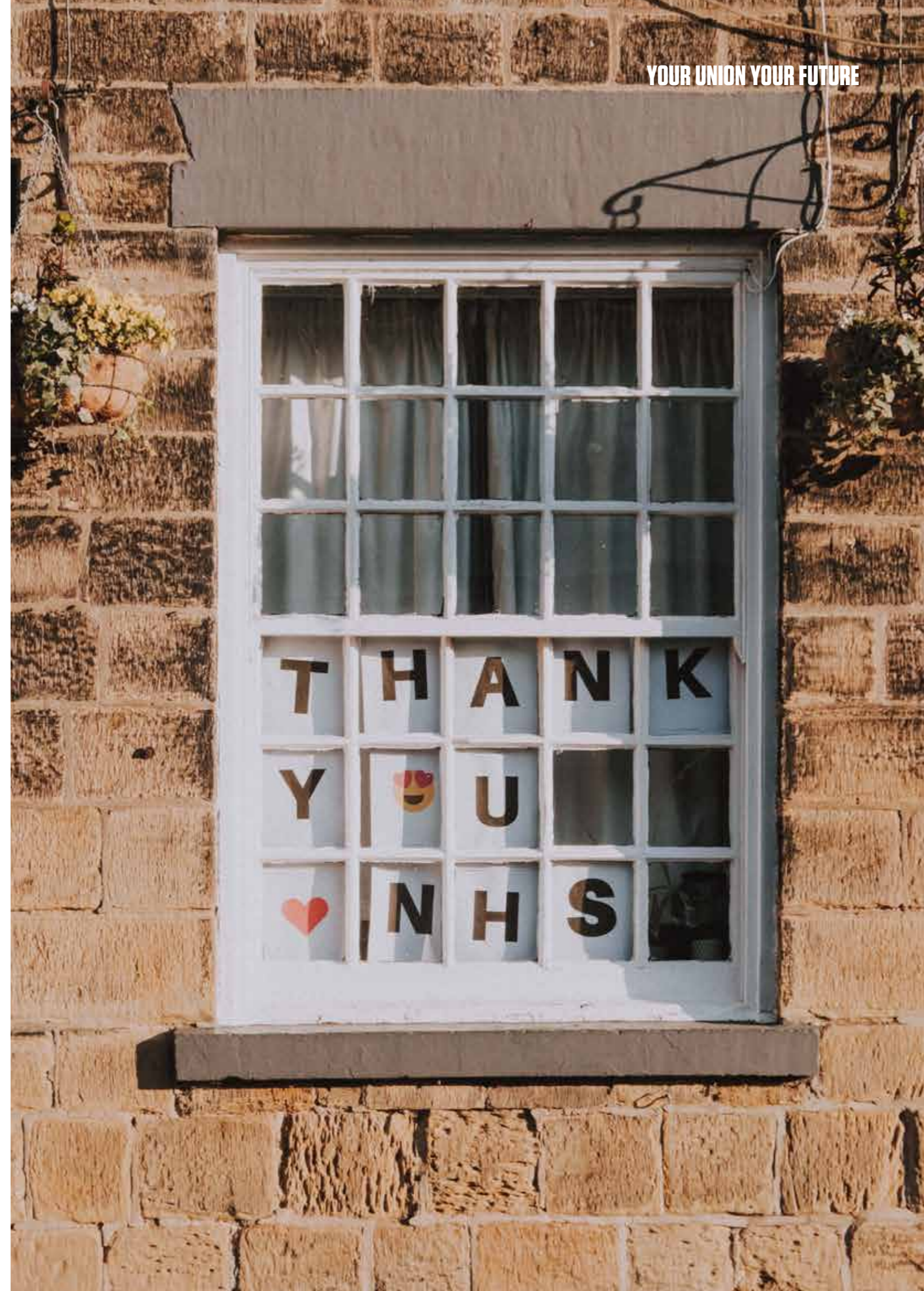
Campaign to resist the further fragmentation and privatisation of the NHS in England which is based on a drive towards a US model of private healthcare. Universal health care, free from profiteers and free at the point of use is a reflection of socialism in practice.

I stand with our Irish members and their campaign for a single tier universal healthcare system centred on need only, and free at the point of use.

We will launch a comprehensive organising strategy in the care sector, one of the most undervalued of public services and lead the way in pushing for a national agreement for care workers. These important, complex, and difficult jobs should not be minimum wage jobs.

In line with the call from Scottish members, we need to push for a national care service which is publicly run and owned.

**[I CLICK TO HEAR MORE ABOUT THE HEALTH SECTOR](#)**



# Industrial Organising

**I will review our industrial organising to ensure maximum delivery and ensure that all our strategies are consistent with the laws applicable in our nations. There will be additional resources given to the regions and nations for organising. Importantly, however, this will not be at the expense of resources that are given to officers, staff and reps to service members.**

We will make sure that organising frameworks are developed so that sectors can easily talk to each other. We must have no more 'silos'.

We must work hard to ensure the relationship between the organisers and the regions is embedded into our organising strategy. The regions must have an organising resource.

Under my leadership, this union will invest in cutting edge technology to allow members to talk to each other and to assist reps in their day-to-day activities and in the recruitment of members.

In addition to our new National Organiser for precarious work I pledge to create specific National Officer positions for young people, and an National Officer for anti-racist campaigning. It has been my responsibility as Assistant General Secretary to consider the repudiation of strike action and I have never once done so. We will always support workers in struggle and there will be no repudiation of strike action.

We are committed to organising in the most precarious of sectors.

We commit to asking the Executive Council to raise strike pay to £75 a day.

Each sector of this union will develop its own specific industrial strategy.

The practice known as 'fire & rehire' must be outlawed. We must campaign hard to make this happen, whilst building density in every workplace subject to such practices.

Our national strike fund will be increased to £50 million.

We will establish regional strike funds & regional solidarity funds to support members in dispute.

**We understand that none of this can be at the expense of servicing members. We must keep our members and we do that by providing the services they need at the time that they most need it.**

**TO HEAR MORE ABOUT THE VISION FOR ORGANISING FOR MEMBERS CLICK HERE**



# Precarious Work

There has been a rapid rise of precarious work where our members do not know from one day to the next what their wages or hours will be. This way of working is horrendous for those on zero hour contracts, on short term contracts and those who have no contract at all. It also makes it very difficult to have access to a trade union. We cannot allow a situation where those on the lowest pay, with the most insecure work, do not have full access to our trade union family. We therefore commit to:

Servicing, representing and organising workers in precarious employment. There can be no hiding places for bad employers.

Creating a National Officer dedicated to overseeing the organising and representation of those working in the most precarious sectors of the economy.

Members in these sectors, and those in bogus self employment, will have a dedicated voice at the Executive Council. There must be no 'second class' membership for workers who need the power of our Union and are our future.

Examining ways to make our membership affordable for people in precarious work, and explore the latest, cutting-edge technology, including the creation of an app which can calculate appropriate union fees, provide advice on your legal rights & connect you with other members in the workplace.

**TO UNDERSTAND MORE ABOUT THE STRATEGY FOR PRECARIOUS WORKERS [CLICK HERE](#)**

# The Future of Work

Work is dramatically changing and the pace of that change will only accelerate as both climate breakdown and automation is realised. As new industries emerge and automation develops, we must campaign for the following:

That any jobs lost in the attempt to decarbonise are replaced with jobs in renewable industries and that there are transition plans for workers to be trained in new, green technologies

If automation increases productivity it must follow that rather than fewer jobs, we have a shorter working week with wages protected.

That there is life-long learning, accessible for all workers in industries subject to climate transitioning & automation.

That there is state intervention in key sectors and a process of nationalisation in key industries like in the production of steel.

I commit to overseeing a modernising of Unite rules, structures, campaigns and strategies to make Unite effective and powerful in areas of precarity, bogus self-employment, and the 'Gig economy'. As the world at work changes Unite must adapt and keep pace.

To reduce the retirements age for manual workers across sectors.

## Freeports

The Tory agenda on Freeports is to create tax havens and deregulation. Without regulation, Freeports and trade union rights are directly contradictory to each other. We will see some investment in Freeport areas, but only at the expense of areas which are not in the Freeport zone. Freeports are intended to play sector off against sector and region against region.

Without guarantees of trade unions having the right to organise freely within these areas we must resist them. That means taking industrial action to have our demands met.

**TO HEAR MORE ABOUT FREEPORTS [CLICK HERE](#)**

# Servicing Members

Members need to receive the services we promise them. That means giving reps in the workplace full support; it means our officers having the resources & capacity to deliver that service to our members; it means modern facilities where members can access legal advice as quickly as possible; it means recognising the fact that hundreds of thousands of our members are not in organised workplaces and simply need immediate access to the best advice possible, in their time of need.

Each region will have a legally and industrially-trained help desk.

We will ensure that members have access to cutting edge apps which tell them about their employment rights, and make sure that officers are not overloaded with casework, so they are able to service individual members.

More of the advisory services will be brought in-house, so that our members are not reliant on outsourced solicitors.

We will make sure that members, technically defined as self-employed, are not disqualified from our structures in terms of representation and democratic rights.

To help with the concerns and interests of individual members who are not fortunate enough to have collective representation in the workplace, resource will be given to regional membership units to assist and support officers in providing help for individual members when they need it.

**TO HEAR MORE ABOUT SERVICING MEMBERS, CLICK HERE**

# Education

**Our worker and member education must, quite simply, be the very best. Our Education Department are doing great work and their talents will be deployed to:**

Assist in an education review to ensure our education outputs match our vision for Unite as set out in my manifesto.

Learn from Covid to provide quality online training, but always supplemental to the need for our education to bring people together in rooms, in our offices, and in our campaigning activity.

Continue to develop top quality Workplace Representative, Health & Safety, Equalities, Pensions and Branch Reps training infused with anti-racist and class-based outputs which inform and inspire our members and reps.

Our Education Department will play a key role in UniteTV. Education must be central in everything we do, in how we think, in our internationalism too, and as General Secretary I am determined that it will be.

Reps and members will be give access to high quality anti-racism education delivered by Show Racism the Red Card.

Our members and reps can bring anti-racist education right into the heart of their communities. Our National Anti-Racist Officer will support Education in ensuring that this is the case.

Reps and members will have access to anti-racism, anti-sexism & ableism education as well as training tackling homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.

Workplace reps will have access to degree qualifications should they wish to study for a degree.

**CLICK HERE TO HEAR MORE ABOUT EDUCATION**

# The Coronavirus Crisis

Our incredible reps have often been the only barrier between workers keeping or losing their jobs, having the PPE they need or not, being furloughed / put on PUP or not. I thank each and every one of them from the bottom of my heart for their outstanding service to this union throughout the crisis. Their service is the truest possible expression of their commitment to fellow working people. We must, as a union, reject the ridiculous idea that working people should pay for this crisis. We must:

Campaign for a wealth tax.

Campaign to have Long Covid recognised as an occupational disease.

Campaign for a workers' inquiry into the mishandling of the crisis across all our nations.

Construct a new set of demands about what work post coronavirus should look like.

We must learn from this pandemic and campaign for enhanced health & safety protocols and inspections regimes for all workplaces.

Invest in comprehensive mental health support for reps and staff building on the soon to be launched mental health helpline.

# Creation of UniteTV

Our members deserve to know what is happening to fellow members in their work and in their communities without it having to be filtered through the lens of the mainstream media, with all the bias that brings with it. We will establish a properly resourced UniteTV channel.

This is a channel which will speak for every single member.

Feature workplace & community issues, disputes & events.

Be backed by studios in every single Unite office.

Include fact checking programmes.

Include talks, news, training & educational content.

Provide opportunities for reps and members to be profiled.

Feature a monthly General Secretaries Question Time.

Be broadcast 7 days a week.

'UniteTV' will have language options and official sign language options for deaf community members and viewers.



**CLICK HERE TO HEAR MORE  
ABOUT THE YOUTUBE CHANNEL**



# How our Union Works

Under my tenure, the role of General Secretary will be about decentralising power to the regions and nations, to get closer to where our members are. I have a track record of doing this in my Legal, Membership, Political & Industrial roles. I saw first-hand as Regional Secretary how effective a region can be when it is de-centralised.

In practice this means:

Regional organisers.

Regional strike funds.

Regional membership units.

Cross-sector regional organising forums.

Regional solidarity funds.

As General Secretary I commit to having a regular presence in all of the regions and nations.

Wales will have their own Executive Committee.

# How our Union Works

Many members have raised with me the need for a review of the membership fees. In consultation with the Executive Committee of the union:

Membership fees will not increase for 24 months to give members security as we come out of the crisis.

We will introduce a family membership package (including free membership to children of members up to 18 years of age).

We will consider a free membership scheme for young people, students, student nurses, student paramedics and apprentices.

We will also look at offering free membership to the grandchildren of long serving retired members.

There will be a new national officer for young people.

**TO HEAR MORE ABOUT HOW THE UNION WILL WORK [CLICK HERE](#)**



# Retired Members

The service that our retired members give to this union is incredible. That they stay on and are involved after their retirement is testament to their commitment to this trade union and to the principle that trade union and working-class solidarity does not stop the day you finish work.

## I commit to:

In consultation with our EC, amend Rule 6 to ensure retired members can be elected to our constitutional committees and be able to vote. To hold a conversation with retired members about their constitutional structures within Unite.

Establish a retired member / new member buddying scheme which allows those who are newest to our trade union family, and who want to understand trade unionism more in depth, are able to meet and establish an ongoing relationship of mentoring and advice with retired members.

Free membership for the grandchildren of retired members.

Ensuring that retired members feel heard, included and that their incredible talents are harnessed.

# Equalities

At the heart of trade unionism is solidarity between working people. The principle of solidarity needs to be met with practical solidarity and that means taking racism, sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, ableism, sectarianism and all forms of xenophobia and bigotry seriously.

We will introduce the position of National Officer for anti-racist campaigning.

There will be targeted future candidates programme, political courses, and apprentice schemes for BAEM members, women, disabled members and LGBT+ members of our union, in addition to schemes already provided.

Staff and representatives of this union will undergo continuous anti-racism, anti-sexism & ableism training as well as training tackling homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia.

Creche facilities will be available for all union meetings where they are needed. It should be the default position of this union that where there are barriers to participation, we remove them.

We will make sure that the sectoral industrial strategies have women's rights at the heart of them. We will organise for equal pay and ensure female dominated sectors have targeted union resources to organise.

**TO HEAR MORE ABOUT RETIRED MEMBERS, CLICK HERE**

# Political

**James Connolly, Scottish socialist, Irish revolutionary, and renowned internationalist taught us of the necessity for the industrial struggle of workers to have a political arm. Those who believe we can win for workers without effecting political change are wrong. Workers need us fighting on all fronts. Unite is a force for political change amongst workers, unemployed workers and in society. In the United Kingdom it is for the Labour Party to prove their worth to the union not the other way around. Regardless of the relationship with the Labour Party, the union will continue with political education. We will also commit to:**

Put pressure on the Labour Party ( in the United Kingdom ) to deliver on what they were set up for, to advance working class people's interests.

Devolved national decision-making on affiliation to the Labour Party to Scottish & Welsh Executives.

Massively invest in industrial / political education for our hard-working reps.

Support exciting, innovative political movement activity.

Support candidates / politicians who support our workers' rights charter.

Every member who is in dispute will have access to political education experiences to understand their struggle in their broader political and industrial context.

In Ireland, North and South, we must continue to fight for left alternatives that put workers, their families and our communities first. We must fight religious and political sectarianism and continue and intensify unified political campaigning on workers rights, improved public services and on Unite's equality agenda. As General Secretary I commit to respecting cultural differences while advocating maximum unity around Unite's progressive agenda to build a just political alternative.

**CLICK HERE TO HEAR MORE ABOUT THE POLITICAL APPROACH**

# International

**Neoliberal greed is global, and international, and the idea that we as workers can tackle it in isolation is wrong. Unite already have members in several nations and we have links with our sister unions across Europe, the United States, Canada and beyond. The cause of labour is global. The call 'Workers of the World Unite' has never been more appropriate, more needed. As General Secretary I will:**

Reach out to other Unions and workers internationals to build alliances in defence of our members and working people.

Encourage structured co-operation to address the impacts of neoliberal greed and to stop the fruits of our members labour passing so disproportionately to the 1%.

Reinvigorate Workers Uniting as a key tool of education and solidarity

Continue our solidarity and support for the people of Palestine, for Justice4Colombia, for Cuban Solidarity and stand with other working communities facing persecution, terrorism and repression.

Develop Unite education courses so our members and representatives understand the global nature of the enemy attacking their work and livelihoods, and the need for a global response from workers.

Establish an international solidarity fund to practically assist trade union organising links in other countries.

Assessment of international supply chains, to make the connection between those workers abroad and our members here in order to inform organising strategy.

**CLICK HERE TO HEAR MORE ABOUT INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS**

# Community Members

The role and purpose of Unite Community and our community membership is more important now than ever. These members have been outstanding activists since this new form of membership was created. We now need to make sure that our industrial and community members work more closely, opening the channels between the two. Community members are a central part of this union and we commit to:

Decentralise campaigns out of London so that community members are resourced for local campaigns.

Unite Community members having a seat at the Executive Committee and Regional Committees

Additional community coordinators

The provision of welfare assistance, which will be regionally & nationally relevant

Unite Community being located in buildings - supported and located where people can access them

Industrial branches linking with local community branches, with community liaison between the two.

**CLICK HERE TO HEAR MORE ABOUT COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

**YOUR UNION YOUR FUTURE**

# Committed to Fighting Racism

To introduce and develop a new education programme with Show Racism the Red Card to focus on BAEM history within the trade union movement, highlighting institutional racism.

A BAEM candidates political development programme to ensure representation at all political levels.

To audit and decolonise Unite assets.

To develop clear and deliverable BAEM industrial strategies for every Unite sector.

To appoint a dedicated anti-racist organiser.

To develop a Unite Black Lives Matters programme, which is engaged by all Unite activists.

To reject racist legislation and institutional racism.

To coordinate with international trade unions to fight racism in global companies, including consumers and the public in the fight against racism.

A dedicated budget to support the BAEM initiatives in each region.

Industrial campaigns nationally and regionally focusing on specific BAEM issues (such as the structures in housing).

A clear and targeted plan to encourage participation of BAEM members to become Unite activists.

**CLICK HERE TO HEAR MORE ABOUT OUR COMMITMENT TO FIGHTING RACISM**