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Strength in solidarity

Anne-Caroline Le Bescond from Ofgem in Glasgow writes about her first experience of the PCS Young Members' Seminar as a community organiser and Living Rent member.

My first introduction to trade unionism was a year ago when I joined PCS after starting out at Ofgem. While I was keen to get stuck in, I was still incredibly inexperienced, and I didn't feel confident enough to get more involved. I had so much to learn about trade union laws in this country.

The Young Members' Seminar felt like the perfect introduction to a more engaged side of the union. With such a large union and so many different professions being represented, it's hard to get a good grasp of the challenges the union faces and understand your place in it - especially since I live in Scotland, where we can feel so far away from Westminster and more easily ignored.

Since joining, and especially with our pay dispute, I've met so many representatives and staff organisers and I feel much more confident in my own ability to understand the stakes of our continued fight for fair wages, and excited to learn about what we try to improve within our own ranks. Being an organiser in my community union Living Rent, as well, this was a fascinating look at a different side of organising and learning from people who had a similar level of experience in trade unionism was such a breath of fresh air.

Young members are the future of the workforce. Getting involved in trade unionism when you are starting out professionally can guarantee you a better future, where you feel more confident to speak up for yourself and others. We have the power to withhold our labour and disrupt the precious status quo when we organise together to fight back against insulting pay offers and unfair cuts. Westminster will learn that power and strength lies in solidarity and numbers.