



[Fran Heathcote](#)

1 July 2024

## **It's time to reflect, reinvigorate and redouble our efforts**

In Fran's column for PCS People she writes about the importance of PCS members uniting and voting in the general election and to put pressure on the incoming government.

We're just over a month on from our annual delegate conference (ADC) in Brighton and it was an honour to attend and address delegates for the first time as general secretary. With this union, and the whole country, entering a new era, this year's conference was an important opportunity to look ahead to the future with unity and hope.

It was this theme of uniting behind a common enemy that came through loud and clear from delegates. We should never forget that it's successive Conservative governments that have driven down wages and slashed living standards. If we're to right these wrongs, we need a united front because, without it, everybody loses.

We've shown over the past year, and even in my first few months as general secretary, that when we pull together, we get the job done. We of course made historic gains in last year's national campaign and, more recently, we secured an important victory for members in the long-running dispute at National Museums Liverpool.

ADC also gave us the chance to assess the result in our national ballot. In my annual report speech, I spoke honestly about the fact that some of the results were disappointing. We need to reflect on where our organisational weaknesses are and look at how we can do things differently.

It's vital that this task of reflection is done in an honest and comradely way because there's too much at stake for us to get this wrong.

It was during ADC that Rishi Sunak surprisingly announced a snap election and I encourage you all to cast your vote. The more people that participate in the country's democratic process the better, and there is never a better opportunity to let this rotten government know just how badly they've let you down than at the ballot box.

As the election campaign has gone on, a Labour victory has become ever more certain, and I can assure you that this union won't let a Labour government rest on its laurels.

You've been through too much to be let down again, so we will put maximum pressure on the incoming government to fix the broken pay model in the civil service and make much-needed improvements to your terms and conditions.

As we enter this new era, and after a decade and a half of Tory-inflicted decline, now is the time for this union to reflect, then reinvigorate and redouble our efforts. I hope you all have a lovely summer and let's look ahead to the future with the same determination and fortitude that has served us so well in the past