

26 July 2024

Unite Community show solidarity with victimised Benton Park View reps

Unite Community members welcomed Rachel Farmer, one of our sacked Benton Park View reps, to a meeting to talk about the campaign to have our three activists reinstated.

Rachel, in a heartfelt and moving speech at today's meeting, highlighted the work she and the other reps at Benton Park View carry out in support of, and on behalf of, PCS members.

"I am passionate about fairness, integrity, upholding workers' rights and fair treatment in the workplace," she said. "I have lost count of how many members I have represented and supported over the years, probably getting towards 1,000.

"I am totally voluntary and often have found myself working very late at night or through the weekend to ensure I am ready to represent a member the next week. I do this because I care, I care about PCS members."

Rachel also detailed the huge impact this victimisation has had on the 3 sacked reps, and what PCS is doing collectively to fight for justice in this case:

"This has had a significant impact on all 3 of the unfairly sacked reps - both mentally and financially. It's also severely impacted our families, friends and members who we've previously represented.

"We are really pleased that our union has launched a campaign to win back our jobs which we have so cruelly been deprived of, simply for standing up for our members' rights."

Solidarity in action

The meeting was attended both by members of the local Unite Community branch, as well as PCS activists and staff from across the union. Mark Byers, from the local DWP Tyneside and Northumbria branch and DWP group organiser, sent solidarity to the Benton Park View Reps, saying: “Rachel made a heartfelt contribution today. It’s vitally important that trade union reps can carry out their lawful duties without fear of retaliation or victimisation.

“My branch shares a site with HMRC where these reps are based. We offer our total solidarity with sacked Benton reps and their branch, and will support them at every turn to get this chilling decision overturned. I also send solidarity from the PCS DWP Group.”

In a brilliant show of solidarity, the Unite Community branch has pledged to donate £100 to the PCS hardship fund.

[What can you do to support the campaign?](#)

Join the all-members meeting on Tuesday, 13 August. To sign up and get access to the Zoom link, [fill in the online form](#).

Ask your MP to sign our EDM. You can use [this PCS e-action](#) to email your MP, asking them to support your sacked reps by writing to the minister responsible for HMRC, James Murray MP, and by signing the new [early day motion \(EDM\)](#) in parliament.