
BFAWU Young Members Network October 2024

Young member engagement

It was agreed that we should run a survey for young members, what do they want from their union, how do they want to meet, do they want to meet or have a network meeting and to see if they want to be in the WhatsApp group.

There were frustrations around the lack of support from branches, not passing the information on, encouraging young members to be active and take on rep roles or even telling them about initiatives like the network meeting or development weekends.

The GFTU Young members development weekend is a great event for young members to learn more about the movement, meet other young members and dip their toe into activism before deciding whether a rep's role is for them.

It was suggested that BFAWU attendees at the weekend could be contacted about joining the young members WhatsApp group and join the building network of young members.

Ideas were floated around about young members leading a session at Annual Conference – even if it was just to introduce speakers and not chair motion debates, running a regional council or branch meeting, changing things up a little bit, but empowering young members to get more involved in the workings of the union

Network Meetings

A discussion was had whether we could restructure the meetings, hold a formal briefing session on an issue relevant to young members and an informal network meeting together, so people can join for some or all of the meeting and leave with useful information.

This may help alleviate some of the concerns young members have about not having enough experience, or fear of failing.

Young Workers Month

November is Young Workers Month, we could do something this year to celebrate, however we have also got 12 months to plan for November 2025, it would be great to celebrate the young members and activists that we have, each day sharing a blog, video, photo or quote of a young member, why they are in the BFAWU etc. could really help engage more young members, encourage them to be active and engage more not only in their branch but the wider union too.

Annual Conference

Having some sort of young members event at conference for young members in attendance to meet and greet each other would be a good idea, a fringe may be useful too but there is time to think about this and plan something for June.

Motions to conference on young member issues needs to be a focus so that young members can see they are important too, a google doc will be created for the WhatsApp group so that ideas can be put together which can then be put to branches to propose.

AOB

A Young member welcome pack was discussed, but it was agreed that papers explaining the union would not be read by young members, instead a dedicated YouTube channel should be created and videos where young members are talking to reps, officers and others about the union, showing what a regional council meeting looks like, and conference would be more engaging!

In the future it would be good to get to a point where we have regional young members networks feeding into a national steering committee that can ensure young members are heard and acted upon.

Social media accounts need to be set up for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and latterly once we have built up followers TikTok, there are some accounts already out there, but we don't have access to them which is a problem, so may be better to start again!