



A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR:

Welcome to our first UNISON West Sussex International Newsletter! As UNISON West Sussex's International Officer I'm proud to share with you our first newsletter giving you an overview of current affairs from around the world and practical ways in which you can help.

We will highlight news, actions and events from the International groups and organisations which the UNISON West Sussex branch affiliates to.

We are always open to feedback so if there's anything you would like to hear more about, please let us know. Additionally, if you would like to get more involved in UNISON West Sussex international actions please let us know!

Anna Palmer

JOIN LOCAL UNISON MEMBERS ON SOUTH DOWNS PEACE WALK

Join us on a Sunday walk across the South Downs on Sunday, 30th August. UNISON West Sussex and other UNISON members will join the annual Tom Paine walk from Brighton to Lewes, culminating in Lewes with a talk about Tom Paine.

Tom Paine's writings about the natural 'Rights of Man' helped inspire the American and French revolutions against absolute monarchy. Tom Paine lived in Lewes, and the South Downs walk is organised by Brighton and Hove Stop the War coalition.

Beneficiaries include Medical Aid for Palestinians. UNISON members will meet at the start of the walk. The website for the walk has all the details.

Contact the branch office also at
office.unison@westsussex.gov.uk

www.chuffed.org/project/tompainewalk2026





GOVERNMENT PRIORITIES

Stop the War has provided an update on government priorities now Andy Burnham is Prime Minister. New defence secretary Wes Streeting has promised new arms contracts worth over £11 billion and pledged unstinting support for rearmament. Andy Burnham has also committed to allowing the US to use RAF bases in the UK to bomb Iran.

The new chancellor John Healey originally resigned because Keir Starmer and then Chancellor Rachel Reeves refused to increase arms spending quite as high as Healey and the military top brass were demanding. He is known as an arms spending extremist and is an advocate of rearmament throughout Europe.

Meanwhile, public services are being starved of the funding they need, to meet the drive for war in foreign countries with next to no purpose in defensive terms.

UNISON general secretary Andrea Egan wrote for the Tribune magazine about this and the social agenda we demand the new government to follow. It's a brilliant article and worth your time to read, here: <https://tribunemag.co.uk/2026/07/against-the-warfare-state>

You can subscribe to Stop the War's newsletter to receive regular updates: [Stop the War](#)

CUBA

UNISON regions, branches and individuals have generously donated money to send a UNISON container of food to Cuba. Together we have raised nearly £14,000 since April with a target of £21,000.



Cuba recently experienced its fifth nationwide blackout this year after just one container of oil reached the island since the US imposed an illegal oil blockade in January. Life in Cuba has become almost unbearable.

A link to the donation page can be found here:

<https://unison.org.uk/news/2026/04/sponsor-unison-container-food-aid-cuba>



SUMMER NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2026

UNISON WEST SUSSEX NEWS BRIEFING ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

VENEZUELA



The Venezuela Solidarity Campaign is calling on the British authorities to release Venezuela's gold reserve, £3 billion of which is being illegally withheld by the UK Government, so those resources can help the Venezuelan people rebuild following the devastating earthquakes on 24th June. This occurred just months after the United States bombed the capital city and kidnapped president Nicolas Maduro and National Assembly member Cilia Flores.

Trade union leaders, including UNISON's Andrea Egan are backing the call for the UK to hand back Venezuela's gold: <https://www.venezuelasolidarity.co.uk/2026/07/18/trade-union-leaders-back-call-for-britain-to-give-venezuela-back-its-gold/>

You can donate to Unicef's Earthquake fund here: <https://www.unicef.org.uk/donate/donate-to-our-venezuela-earthquake-appeal/>

GET INVOLVED

We'll be back with more news soon. Meanwhile, if you want to get involved with the UNISON West Sussex branch, in its International work or in workplace issues, get in touch for a chat through the office on 01243 777636 or office.unison@westsussex.gov.uk

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