



FIGHTING TOGETHER
WINNING TOGETHER

Annual Conference 2026 - Day 3

The conference began with a video of the excellent work of the Retired Members Committee emphasising the importance of retired members as part of the POA family. The chair encouraged members to spread the word about the association and urgent retired Prison Officers to join. He also spoke of the vital support that can be provided by the POA welfare fund to members and retired members going through hard times.

Steve Whitfield, Chair of the Retired Members Committee advised the next retired members event is on 8th October in the Midlands - venue to be confirmed.

GUEST SPEAKER FRAN HEATHCOTE PCS GENERAL SECRETARY

Fran paid tribute to Steve Gillan and his work for the POA and TUC and to the late Joe Simpson and his work and legacy. Fran also paid tribute to the POA members at Frankland for their bravery.

Fran raised a number of issues common to PCS and the POA including pensions, public sector pay, jobs, tackling the far right, racism etc. She spoke of the need for strong trade unions to represent the working class and strengthen the labour movement.

Fran called on the government to deliver on its commitment on “insourcing” and attacked the government failures on civil service pensions with the appalling performance of CAPITA. The system is a shambles and a scandal similar to the Post Office scandal. CAPITA has been handed a huge payroll contract for civil servants, PCS have no faith that this will be delivered successfully. Fran spoke of a PCS activist who was deported because of low pay and the appalling visa rules.

Fran called for unity to challenge those who seek to divide us and work to deliver hope for our members and their families. She thanked unions and supportive MPs who worked to ensure the Employment Rights Bill became law and urged everyone to ensure the act is not diluted and called for a second Employment Rights Bill with sectoral collective bargaining at its heart. She supported the POA call for the Right to Strike and said PCS will campaign alongside the POA every step of the way.



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STEVE GILLAN SPEECH

Steve Gillan paid tribute to POA delegates for supporting POA campaigns and demonstrating that commitment this week.

He said POA is a strong trade union that punches above our weight. The union has a bright future because of the branch delegates who are active in their branches and are committed trade unionists. The POA is very well organized with an increasing membership in Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Steve thanked branch officials, the NEC, FTOs and support staff who make the union and its conference a success.

Steve paid special tribute to HMP Frankland staff who suffered a terror attack in the separation unit. He challenged the Labour Government to demonstrate that they were on the side of workers and the POA.

MARK FAIRHURST - QUOTES FROM CLOSING SPEECH

“I want this union to provide the very best level of service to all our members”

“If the OSG’s take action, no POA member will ever cross a picket line”

“We need evidence to build the case for a risk allowance...please help us by reporting any cases of threats or intimidation to your NEC reps so we can present these to the pay review body”

“It is clear drones are still a massive threat...it is a matter of time until a drone delivers a weapon into one of our prisons...our employer must address this urgently”

“There has been no commendation by HMPPS for the brave, courageous and heroic staff at Frankland Prison who tackled a major terrorist incident, that is a disgrace”

“Join our campaigns, contact your MPs, take part in our surveys, build pressure for change because all of this helps us to make the case for improving your pay, conditions and working life”

“We are not asking for special treatment, we are demanding fairness and respect, let’s keep fighting together and winning together”



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MOTIONS

- CAPITA pensions administration
- Branch observers to conference
- Branch training
- Union legal advice
- PSO 8525
- Dispute arbitration
- OSG strike proposal
- POA and twitter
- BOT training
- Domestic abuse training
- Annual reports
- Prisoner employment
- Contractual arrangements - private prisons
- Finance manual
- 68 it too late
- Pension scheme
- Misconduct cases
- Inappropriate relationships with prisoners
- Private contracts
- Independent sentencing report
- International work