



Branch

The new year started with a one-day strike for our members at STV. Whether it's through joining members on picket lines or shaping BBC Charter Renewal, the NUJ will continue to stand behind journalists and fight for the future of our industry.

I was pleased to join STV members on the picket line in Glasgow to stand against the company's dangerous plans to make compulsory redundancies and detrimental cuts to the news channel that would deprive viewers of full regional coverage. Despite the cold weather and ice on the ground, there was an air of determination amongst the 50 or so staff members in attendance. I had the opportunity to speak to Scottish Labour leader Anas Sawar, who joined us on the picket line. His support in calling out the 'wrongheaded decision' taken by STV was warmly welcomed.

The NUJ also received words of solidarity and support from our cross-party parliamentary group and other trade unions. Across the unions and political spectrum, there is widespread condemnation of the damaging impact STV's plans would have on local news across Scotland. Ofcom has provisionally approved a watered-down version of the original plans, which squeezes STV North coverage into scant slots on the centralised channel. This is a concerning disregard for the value of a proper local news service. A properly funded and resourced news service is a critical tool to fight rampant misinformation and disinformation running rife in our society.

A key focus for the union this year is BBC Charter Renewal as the government launched its public consultation at the end of 2025. The NUJ is **surveying members** to obtain your views on the green paper. At the BBC, our members have consistently called for sustainable

funding and protection from political interference. The NUJ remains firm in its position that the BBC board and its chair should be chosen by an arms-length body. These calls have been echoed by MPs with the NUJ's parliamentary group urging that the BBC remains universally accessible in a recent debate at Westminster.



Aid for Gaza

Journalists in Gaza need your help to do their job in desperate circumstances.

The IFJ is supplying vital equipment and aid. Please donate to its safety fund.

Branches can email jackiec@nuj.org to transfer from their management allowances.

DONATE NOW

We will engage with the government throughout the process to secure the funding and reforms that guarantee the BBC's journalism globally, and its future at the centre of UK culture and media ecosystem.

The articles in this edition showcase the vibrancy and variety of the union's



work – whether it's recognition at Elsevier (see page 2), inflation-busting pay rises at PA (see page 3) or improving accessibility through the George Viner Memorial Fund (see page 4).

HeartUnions Week offers another opportunity to bolster the union's work, mobilise members and recruit new colleagues (see page 6). It's a chance to take pride in our successes and remind ourselves of what we achieve when we work collectively. The union is launching a Student and Early Careers Network during HeartUnions Week, which will be an exciting opportunity to support the next generation of journalists to become active members of the union.

We're also organising several events in the coming months, including Employment Rights Act training for reps; a fresh programme of branch workshops; and monthly induction workshops for new members. Additionally, on 25 February the Welsh Executive Council is hosting a State of the Media conference in Cardiff with journalists, policymakers and parliamentarians to shape the future of Welsh public interest journalism.

Laura Davison

NUJ victory at Elsevier

Huda Elmi, NUJ magazines organiser, on members' recognition win at The Lancet and Cell Press.

NUJ members have scored a powerful and inspiring victory by achieving recognition at Elsevier, which demonstrates exactly what collective action, persistence and solidarity can achieve.

This success didn't happen overnight. Inspired by momentum created during the successful industrial action over pay at Springer Nature in 2024, NUJ members at Elsevier began building from the ground up.

Following an energetic recruitment campaign, members formed two new chapels (Cell Press and The Lancet), each representing talented, committed staff who believed that the best way to improve their pay and working conditions was by fighting as a collective force for change. With growing confidence and solidarity, they pressed ahead with a statutory bid for recognition. Through determination and unity, both chapels have achieved recognition for their respective bargaining units from the Central Arbitration Committee (CAC), proving that organised workers can and will prevail.

RELX, Elsevier's parent company, shocked many in December 2024 by derecognising the NUJ at LexisNexis and LexisNexis Risk Solutions. This could have dampened spirits for Elsevier chapels. Instead members channelled their frustration into renewed determination. Rather than stepping back, they stepped forward; organising harder and showcasing that when one door closes, another can be pushed open with enough collective strength. Throughout this process LexisNexis members offered exceptional support and

encouragement to their Elsevier colleagues and are now recruiting staff across their brands to exercise the fundamental right workers have to achieve statutory recognition for the purposes of collective bargaining.

This incredible recognition victory matters far beyond Elsevier. It shows that when members work together and take collective steps, however small at first, real change is possible. It demonstrates that setbacks, such as derecognition at LexisNexis and LexisNexis Risk Solutions, do not damper our ability as the NUJ to build, organise, and win.

For members across the NUJ, this victory is a reminder that recognition is within reach wherever workers are prepared to stand together and organise. It shows that chapels can grow quickly, that momentum can build fast, and that any employer's attempts to diminish workers' power can be overcome with persistence and unity.



Making Work P*AY*

PA chapel reps Emily Pennink and Jonathan Brady on recognition, job losses and inflation-busting pay rises.

Leading the Press Association chapel has been a rollercoaster ride, from our first inflation-busting pay talks to a period of intense job insecurity.

In 2020, a small group of us began to question the accepted wisdom of some that low pay was the trade-off for working at the prestigious, exciting and fast-paced national news agency.

With the support of Laura Davison and the NUJ team, we formed a new PA chapel and launched a campaign for recognition under the banner "Real Say, Better P*AY*".

The campaign gathered momentum and by the spring of 2024, more than half the editorial team had joined us. This forced the management to recognise the union for the purposes of collective bargaining, without the need for a ballot.

Relieved and elated, there was no time to celebrate as we bounced almost immediately into our first pay talks.

We set out determined to reset our relationship with management and work collaboratively.

After extensive talks we were thrilled to reach an above-inflation pay settlement, with extra days

off for long-serving staff, and – for the first time at PA – set minimum salaries for early careers colleagues at £27,000, and £30,000 for London weighting, from October 2024 rising by an additional £3,000 from October 2025. Previously there were no set minimums with variations between different editorial departments.

In early 2025, we had a team of trained reps eager to engage with management on a range of issues, from gender equality to health and safety.

But in April, we were stunned when management announced a planned restructure putting more than 70 staff at potential risk of redundancy.

We were temporarily taken off our day jobs – as Old Bailey correspondent and senior news photographer – to liaise with management and support our colleagues.

At a highly charged chapel meeting, a motion of no confidence in the new editor-in-chief, Jack Lefley, was

passed by the rank-and-file members, followed by an indicative vote in favour of industrial action.

After delivering the news to management, it was hard not to reflect on how far and fast things had escalated.

The stand-off ended in a declaration by management that there would be no compulsory redundancies. We had saved jobs. Management

also committed to no further rounds of redundancies in the editorial department for the next few years.

We barely had time to catch our breath before we were plunged into our second annual pay talks which concluded with another above-inflation deal.

Feeling bruised

and angry after the extended consultation process, few of our colleagues felt like celebrating.

Nevertheless, we see it as a triumph of union solidarity and credit is due to the team of reps who worked tirelessly behind the scenes.

As we look ahead to 2026, we remain positive about the future and immensely proud of what we have achieved.



George Viner scholarship

Hana Williams, George Viner Scholar, on pursuing a career in journalism.

If you'd told teenage me - a mixed British-Pakistani girl who rarely saw anyone who looked like her on TV - that one day I'd be studying journalism, presenting live bulletins, interviewing councillors, and lugging a camera through Billingsgate Market at 6am, I'd have laughed. Loudly. But here I am, four months into my MA Broadcast Journalism course at City University.

I became interested in journalism while studying history, where I became obsessed with storytelling and how it shapes who gets remembered and who gets overlooked. The more I learned about colonial legacies and selective storytelling, the more I realised I didn't want to just study narratives - I wanted to tell them fairly, accurately, and with empathy. Journalism felt like the natural next step.

I wouldn't be here without the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) and the George Viner Memorial Fund. The NUJ's work resonates with me because it aims to help everyone realise their potential, free from barriers and discrimination. That commitment is visible in everything they do, from legal support to campaigns, equality councils and their funding programmes. The

George Viner Memorial Fund's mission, 'to diversify newsrooms and support underrepresented voices', helps Black and Asian students who demonstrate a commitment to journalism, have a place on an approved course, and need financial assistance.

After just missing out on the ITV traineeship, I knew this course would sharpen my skills and boost my confidence. Walking into university on my first day, I was taken aback by how little diversity I saw in the room. Growing up in London, I'd assumed that the statistic about only 10% of journalists coming from ethnic minority backgrounds was exaggerated.

Since starting the course, I've interviewed different people from all walks of life - partly to refine my interviewing skills and partly to challenge my own assumptions. I've talked with Ethiopian, Hyat Mohammed, about her experience as a refugee for a radio feature and discussed inclusive access at Hampstead Heath ponds with trans campaigner Bobbi Pickard.

I've also found myself in some wonderfully chaotic locations, like Billingsgate Fish Market, where I learned to film while protecting the tripod from fish water, and picked up

the skill of chatting with fishmongers who had been awake since midnight. I've conducted street interviews with Croydon residents about their thoughts on Live Facial Recognition and persuaded a police officer to talk about surveillance in the area.

I've learned how to shoot, script, edit, handle temperamental technology, and present live bulletins - without tripping over a single cable! I've also realised how vital trade unions are in this industry. Knowing that there are schemes actively supporting students like me has made entering this field feel attainable and more exciting than I ever imagined.



Reporting on terror

Awil Mohamoud, NUJ campaigns and communications officer, on the ethics of reporting on terror.

On 19 November the Ethics Council held a webinar focusing on responsible and sensitive reporting of terror attacks and murder.

Covering terror attacks is a role that is unquestionably in the public interest. However, it is also important for journalists to consider how they go about their newsgathering to ensure that victims are not harmed further.

Six in ten survivors of terror attacks say they have experienced media intrusion, according to data from Survivors Against Terror. Speaking at the webinar, the organisation's co-founder, Brendan Cox, said that this intrusion generally falls into four categories - the first being "pressure and pester". This involves receiving "dozens of phone calls [from journalists] in the hours following an attack, often from withheld numbers, at a time when people are waiting for calls from loved ones or from the morgue or from the police." He added that while journalists are perhaps doing nothing wrong individually, "the cumulative impact is absolutely huge."

The second category, misrepresentation, involves some journalists assuming false identities

or not identifying themselves as journalists. Cox said another issue is invasion of privacy, with victims, for example, having their photos taken from private social media profiles and published on newspaper front pages. The final category, and "most egregious", relates to incidents where families hear about the death of a loved one for the first time from a journalist who has knocked on their door.

Survivors Against Terror consulted the NUJ when drafting its Guidance on Media Reporting of Terror Attacks. It goes further and into more detail on the topic than the NUJ's Code of Conduct, which states that journalists should not intrude into anybody's private life, grief or distress "unless justified by overriding consideration of the public interest." The Survivors Against Terror guidance, among other things, says victims should be approached with sympathy and sensitivity, they should not be put under pressure to speak to reporters, and photos should not be taken of people clearly in a state of distress.

David Collins, The Sunday Times northern editor, has reported on a number of terror incidents in his 20 years as a journalist, including the 2017 Manchester Arena bombing,

the 2024 Southport stabbings, and the recent Heaton Park synagogue attack.

Collins advised that, where possible, journalists should go through third parties when approaching victims and their families. Doorstepping should always be the "last resort" and the journalist has to ask themselves if doing this is in the public interest.

However, the initial media reporting - in the first 48 hours - is still "critical", and, in Collins' experience, this was "only possible by speaking to eyewitnesses and people directly involved." The typical rule that most reporters follow in these cases is, "you are allowed to ask once" and "'no' means no."

Joan Deane co-founder of Advic, an Irish charity that campaigns for the rights of homicide victims and their loved ones, shared her personal experience as a bereaved mother. She said that following the murder of her son, there were journalists knocking at the door looking for information and photographs, which she found "terrifying" and "absolutely horrendous at a time when you're very weakened and traumatised."

She added that Advic has heard of cases where people have been chased down the street or had photographers and reporters parking on their doorstep. "I totally acknowledge that the media has a role to play [in keeping the public informed], and we would be very supportive of that, but we do ask that it is done in a sympathetic way."

Upcoming events

TUC HeartUnions Week

HeartUnions Week from **9-15 February** is a chance to celebrate members' achievements and encourage colleagues to join the union and get involved. During the week, we're encouraging chapels and branches to organise an event – whether it's a meeting, a social or a workplace stall.

We're also calling on chapels and branches at upcoming meetings to reflect on one thing you have achieved or are most proud of in the last year and how you would like to share that. Options for sharing could be in the form of a short article, a social media post or video clip. Collating these will give us a powerful collage of union activity and successes across the year.

Visit the **TUC website** to download materials and contact campaigns@nuj.org.uk to let us know your actions for HeartUnions week and your one success once agreed by your chapel or branch.

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) will also hold and encourage various activities from **27 April to 2 May** as part of Union Week 2026, which aims to engage unorganised workers. More details to follow.

New member inductions and branch events

The union is launching a new series of branch workshops this year, offering a variety of training and group discussions with sessions.

The trade union training programme will include monthly reps inductions that are ideal if you want to get more involved in your chapel of branch. We have released dates for courses through to July. **Find out more.**

We also now have a monthly welcome workshop for new NUJ members led by NUJ trainer Caroline Holmes. The next session will be on **Tuesday 17 February, 1-2pm**. To book, email tuttraining@nuj.org.uk.

State of Media in Wales

NUJ Wales is hosting a national conference on **25 February** from 9:45am-5pm at the School of Journalism, Media and Culture. The event will bring together journalists, policymakers and community voices to shape the future of public interest

Student and Early Careers Network launch

During HeartUnions Week we will launch a new Student and Early Careers Network to share experiences and advice with upcoming journalists. There are two welcome sessions on **Wednesday 11 February, 7-8pm** and **Thursday 12 February, 12-1pm**.

journalism in Wales. This event is open to members and non-members with priority given to members based in Wales. **Book your ticket.**

NAC reps summit

The Newspapers and Agencies Council is hosting a national summit for reps on **14 March** to discuss pay claims, AI, the Employment Rights Act, and more. Registration details to be shared soon.

Spring Freelance Forum

The Dublin Freelance Branch will host the spring edition of the Freelance Forum on **21 March** at the Criminal Courts of Justice. More details to be announced – visit the **Dublin Freelance website.**

Employment Rights Act training

We are also offering training to reps on the Employment Rights Act. Provisions simplifying industrial action come into force on **18 February**, with more changes introduced in April and October.

The training will be a 90-minute webinar session taking place at 11am on 11 February. Trade

union representatives will gain valuable insight into the Act and learn practical tips, including on: industrial action; trade union recognition and activity in the workplace; fire and rehire; family friendly rights and protection from harassment. Reps can **register online.**

Get Active

The NUJ's website has a wealth of information, advice, guidance and useful materials

AI

Artificial Intelligence is a fast-moving technology which will affect all of us at work. Go to the **Journalism before Algorithms** website page for more information.

Campaigns

The **NUJ's Pay Campaign** calls for fair pay and flexible working and provides practical support to chapels when dealing with employers and on the rights of freelancers.

Save Quality Journalism

Education: write to your MP to oppose harmful cuts proposed by the UK government to journalism courses.

Recruiting students: there's lots of info, FAQs and materials for branches and chapels to encourage local journalism, publishing and photography students to join the union **on the NUJ website**.

Useful stuff

Freelance members can access help and useful information in the union's **freelance resources**, including **Protect your sources** and your rights as a journalist.

Legal assistance: one of the many benefits of NUJ membership is its legal advice.

Health and safety: advice, guidance and news.

The **safety toolkit** is a mobile-friendly resource to help media workers protect themselves and their journalism from harm.

Photographers: the toolkit

has tips and a number for legal assistance when covering protests, and guidelines on taking photographs in public places.

Storysmart: is a set of online training modules to help journalists prepare to work in hostile environments and keep their data safe.

TUC Organising at Work: guide on building and maintaining strong workplace unions.

NUJ recruitment materials.

Mental health: find help for **post-traumatic stress disorder**.

The NUJ's guidance **Menopause is a workplace issue** provides advice to reps and members on how to influence workplace policies

and support women during the menopause.

Reporting on refugees: inaccurate terminology and commentary can cause confusion and breed prejudice.

The **NUJ code of conduct** has set out the main principles of UK and Irish journalism since 1936.

Donate

The **IFJ's safety fund** helps journalists across the globe, including in Ukraine, Afghanistan and those covering the Israel-Gaza war.

The NUJ's **George Viner Memorial Award** provides bursaries for Black and minority ethnic students.

NUJ extra helps members and their dependents who have fallen on hard times.

NUJ extra

NUJ training

The union provides a free programme of **training for reps**. **NUJ Scotland Training** and **NUJ Training Wales** provide a huge range of professional skills courses.

Social media: Keep up with the latest breaking news, offers, campaigns, solidarity events and more on **X**, **Instagram**, **Bluesky** and **Facebook**.



REASONS TO JOIN



Ending the Gender Pay Gap

A Press Gazette analysis showed that 91 per cent of UK media companies paid men more than women and 85 per cent of men got better bonuses and it's a similar picture in Ireland. One magazine group's gap was almost 37 per cent. Opaque, unfair pay structures and unlawful sex discrimination are contributing factors. The NUJ negotiates on transparent pay structures, progressive work-life balance policies, better maternity and paternity deals and fair recruitment procedures.



Respect at Work

The NUJ challenges work cultures which lead to bullying and harassment. It will represent you if you experience this behaviour. It uses its collective voice industry-wide to argue that media workers are treated with respect. We promote workplaces where workers and managers are constructive with their criticism during the creative process, and the union publishes codes of conduct and dignity at work policies.



The National Union of Journalists

Is the voice of journalism in the UK and Ireland for all media, communications and PR workers. It represents staff and freelances working in newspapers, news agencies, broadcasting, magazines, online, book publishing, social media, copy writing and as photographers and illustrators.

The NUJ supports members throughout their professional careers, provides a collective voice for industrial issues and freelance rights and defends press freedom.

Be Part of a Collective Voice

As a member of the NUJ you are part of a united force championing the rights of media workers and defending attacks on press freedom. Successful workplaces are those where the management and workers share the same aims and talk to each other. Being a member of the NUJ means giving yourself and colleagues a real voice at work.

Are you keeping good company?

Join the NUJ today at
nuj.org.uk/join

You can contact the NUJ at:
info@nuj.org.uk
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