

16 December 2022

On strike in the RPA

Leah explains why she and her colleagues are taking strike action.

I started working for the RPA in 2006 and I remember then the staff were happy in their jobs. They had good pensions, working conditions and pay. But I started when the pensions were changed and didn't get the same deal. People told me about progression pay in stages but that didn't seem to happen for me. Since then it's been a 1% pay increase every year for the last 10/11 years and we are only just above the minimum wage.

I love my job in the customer service centre and striking is a last resort, but enough is enough and it's time for the government to stop with the excuses of austerity etc. People feel really let down. We just want to be paid fairly with a wage that keeps up with inflation. Everything is going up and we are paying the price.

I was on the picket line in Workington on day one of the strike on Tuesday 13th and plan on going every Tuesday. It was freezing cold but we got some support from colleagues in different departments who weren't on strike and just people passing by. Our group president, Beth, works at the same site in a different department, so she wasn't on strike but she was still there with us at 7 a.m. to help us get organised. We had a very good turn-out, around 15 people came and a similar number again on the Wednesday. That was fantastic for just one department in the RPA. On Wednesday they met up with striking train staff from the RMT at the train station.

I really hope the government starts listening to us. We deserve so much better.