

# London Renters Union

## All Member Assembly Motion Template

**Name of branch or working group:** Hackney Branch

**Title:** Trade Union Relationships

**Short summary:** A proposal to strengthen ties between the LRU and local-level trade union activity

**Expected budget (if any):** N/a

**Description of proposal:** One of our main aims as a union is to build power to transform the housing system. Historically, some of the tenants' movement's biggest achievements have been enforced by the disruptive power of organised workers. The introduction of rent controls in 1915 was enforced by spontaneous dockworkers' strikes who were inspired by rent strikes organised by working class women in Glasgow and moved to take action in solidarity with them. The tenants' movement has also played an important role in major workplace disputes throughout history, such as the victorious London Dockers Strike in 1891, which was supported by a rent strike across the East End of London. We're stronger when we struggle together, and the recent revival of workplace and housing struggles provides an opportunity for us to renew our relationship. Trade Unions are changing with unions such as IWGB demonstrating the power of grassroots and member-led unions that represent migrant and low paid workers in London; this is the kind of organising we believe we should be connected to and learning from.

We believe the best way to do this is through building strong, local-level, branch-to-branch relationships with trade union members. Although we recognise the value of trade union affiliations and supportive conference motions, this is no replacement for the warmth, trust, and commitment of personal relationships. We believe we need a structure and set of resources within the Union to ensure that these relationships are built and maintained within branches.

We therefore propose:

- That LRU introduce a new optional outreach role: Trade Union Lead. Trade Union Leads would be responsible for:
  - Building relationships with local trades councils and union branches
  - Organising renters' rights trainings or other relevant activities for trade union branches

*\*\*\* Give this form to your branch or working group representatives 1 week before the meeting you would like to see it discussed.*

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- Identifying opportunities for trade union-related outreach activities (for example, mapping where low-paid workers are organised locally, or workplace sectors where outreach activities could address imbalances within the composition of a branch)
- Coordinating picket exchanges between the LRU and trade union disputes (we support their disputes, they support ours)
- Signposting LRU members to appropriate trade unions
- Organising Trade Union members to share their disputes and struggles in regular LRU Branch meetings.
- That the elected Trade Union Leads, and any other interested LRU members, form a union-wide Trade Union Working Group to share learning and coordinate activity where appropriate
- That the Trade Union Working Group conduct an all-member survey to better understand the existing participation of LRU members in the trade union movement. The results of the survey could be used to set priorities for future work and demonstrate to trade unions the benefits of more active collaboration.
- A focus on encouraging new and existing members to draw on and develop their own connections to Trade Unions.

#### **What commitment will this proposal require from different parts of the union? (time,**

- A focus on empowering new and existing members to develop relationships with local Trade Union branches.
- The development of induction guidelines for new Trade Union Leads. This could be created by elected Leads with the support of other interested members and coordinating group members so it reflects the ideas and energy of local Branches.
- Branch elections for Trade Union Leads (could be deferred to the next branch election cycle)
- Optional: one member in each branch to commit time to the new role (Trade Union Lead). This would be in line with the time commitments of any other elected role
- Elected Trade Union Leads and any other interested members to commit time to the union-wide Trade Union Working Group. Again, this commitment would be in line with other union-wide working groups
- The Trade Union Working Group to commit time to conducting a union-wide survey, compiling the results, and producing a report
- Printing costs associated with outreach materials (e.g. banners or flyers for pickets)
- Expenses for meetings, events or activities (e.g. food, refreshments, venue hire) - these expenses could be shared with trade union branches.

**Have any of these requirements been committed by others already? (If so, which ones?)**

No, although many activities and expenses would fall within the existing remit of branch outreach teams. Existing organising with Trade Union members falls under the remit of the Outreach Team. The creation of a Lead within branches would mean that requirements and costs would still be provided by the Branch.

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