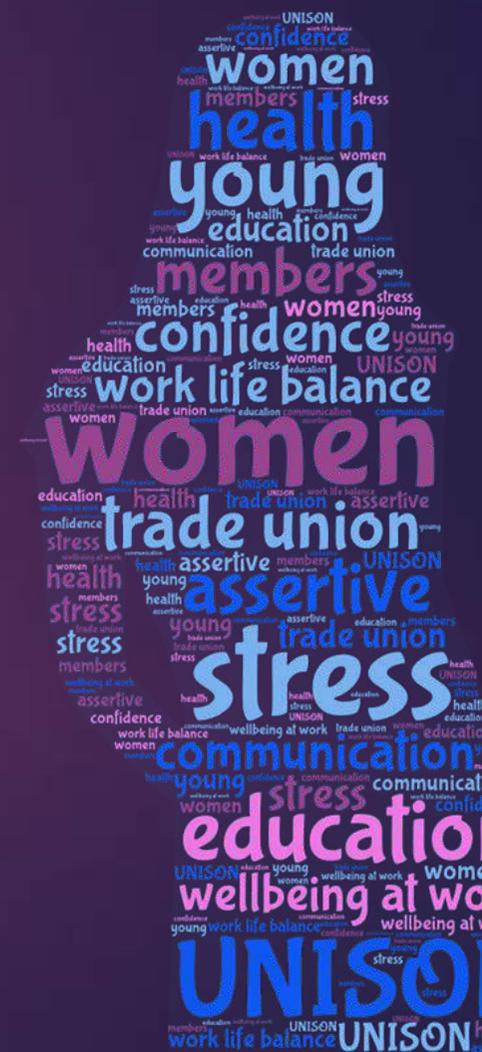


Women and Trade Unions



What is a Trade Union?

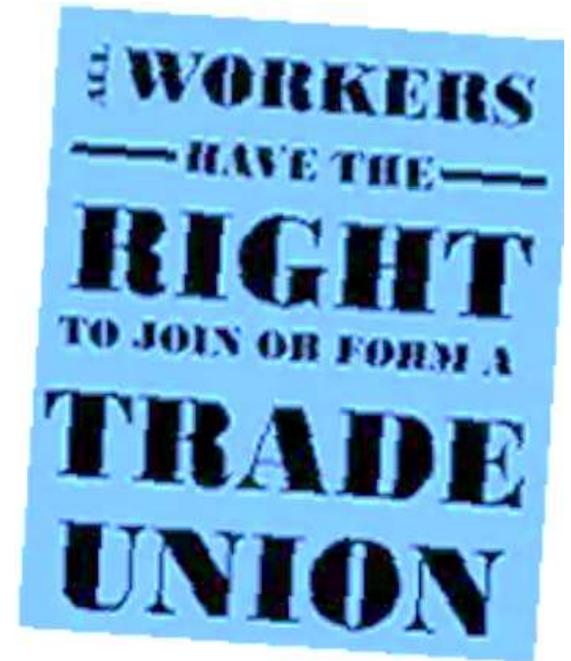
- ▶ 'Group of employees who join together to maintain and improve their conditions of employment'.
- ▶ In many workplaces, the union is legally recognised by the employer. In these workplaces, the union reps have the right to formally negotiate with managers about pay and other terms and conditions.
- ▶ A union becomes recognised either when enough members have joined and the employer has agreed to recognise the union, or when the union has won a vote of workers



Can I join a union?

- ▶ **Yes!!**
- ▶ You have a legal right to join a union.
- ▶ It's illegal for an employer to disadvantage you because you are a union member
- ▶ Most sensible employers welcome having a union in their company.

When a group of workers act and speak together, your employer has to listen. That's how unions make things better at work



What are the benefits of joining a Union?

- ▶ **Collective Bargaining**
- ▶ On average, union members get **higher pay** than non-members. They are also likely to get better sickness and pension benefits, more paid holiday and more control over things like shifts and working hours.
- ▶ Unions make sure working people are **treated with respect**
- ▶ Workplaces where there are unions are **safer**.
- ▶ If you run into problems at work, **your union has got your back**. The union's legal team can make sure you are treated fairly – without you having to worry about paying.

How have Trade Unions improved our workplaces and society?

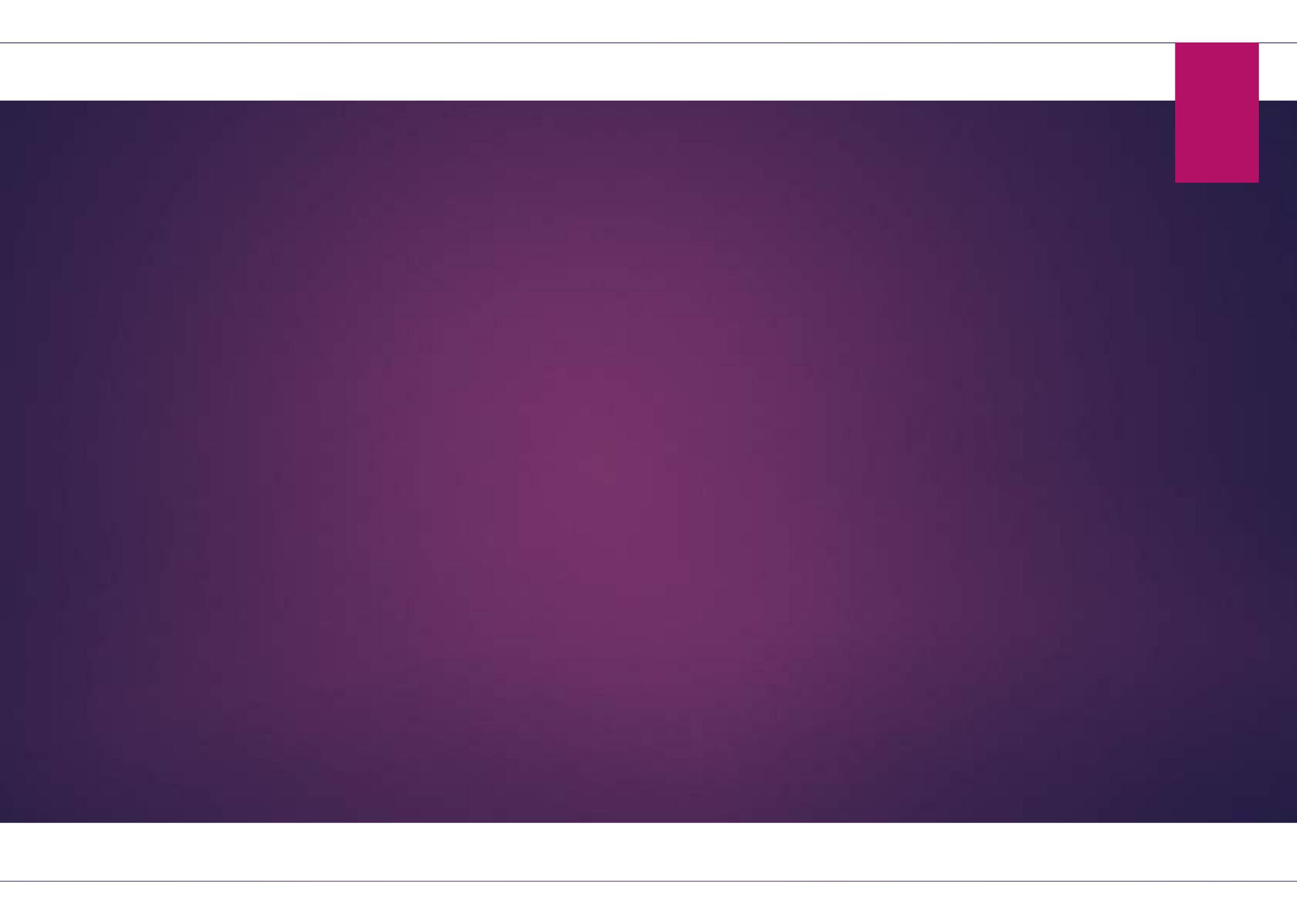
Unions have brought significant changes to society, including:

- ▶ a national minimum wage;
- ▶ the abolition of child labour;
- ▶ improved worker safety;
- ▶ improving living standards by reducing the number of hours in the working week and encouraging a healthy work/life balance;
- ▶ improved parental leave;
- ▶ equality legislation;
- ▶ better protection of migrant workers and a reduction in exploitation;
- ▶ minimum holiday and sickness entitlements.

Dagenham Womens Strike for Equal pay



- ▶ On 7 June 1968, 187 women at Dagenham Ford Factory took a stand against unequal Pay
- ▶ A pay regrade saw sewing machinists classed as “unskilled labour”, However men doing a similar job elsewhere in the factory were classed as skilled labour.
- ▶ The strike brought the factory to its knees – you can’t sell cars without seat covers!



What are the current issues that women face in the Workplace?

- ▶ Equal Pay
- ▶ Gender Pay Gap
- ▶ Race Discrimination
- ▶ Pregnancy and Maternity Discrimination
- ▶ Menopause
- ▶ Sexual Harassment
- ▶ Pension Inequality
- ▶ Low Pay
- ▶ Covid-19 Pandemic
- ▶ Under representation at the table
- ▶ Health & safety
- ▶ Domestic Violence
- ▶ Flexible Working
- ▶ Caring responsibilities

Gender Pay Gap

What is it?

The percentage difference between average hourly earnings for men and women

Causes?

- ▶ Societal/cultural expectations
- ▶ Stereotyping
- ▶ Prejudice & bias
- ▶ Women tend to be the prime carer,
- ▶ Flexible/Part Time working penalty

What this means?

- ▶ The UK GPG is 17.3%
- ▶ The SW GPG is 17.6%
- ▶ Women work 2 months a year for free!
- ▶ The gender pay gap is widest for women in their 50's (28%)



Pregnancy & Maternity Rights

It is against the law for an employer to discriminate or treat a woman unfavourably because of their pregnancy, or because they have given birth recently, are breastfeeding or on maternity leave.

However, the Equalities and Human Rights Commission found that :

- ▶ 54,000 women a year are forced out of their job because of pregnancy discrimination,
- ▶ one in five mothers experienced harassment and negative comments because of their pregnancy
- ▶ 10% of mothers were discouraged from taking time off for their antenatal care

The main areas of unfair treatment during pregnancy:

- ▶ denial of a pay increase,
- ▶ refusal of promotion,
- ▶ having to take lower-paid work,
- ▶ being excluded from training,
- ▶ refusal of time off for ante-natal care

www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/managing-pregnancy-and-maternity-workplace/pregnancy

<https://maternityaction.org.uk/>

Sexual Harassment

- ▶ Half of women have been sexually harassed at work.
- ▶ Women and girls aged 16-24, the proportion rose to 63%.
- ▶ Two thirds of LGBT+ people have experienced sexual harassment
- ▶ 4 out of 5 people don't feel able to report it to their employer.
- ▶ Of the minority who did report very few saw a positive outcome.
- ▶ Nearly three quarters reported that there was no change and 16% reported that they were treated worse as a result.
- ▶ Many cited the fear of losing their job or being victimised as a reason for not pursuing a complaint.

#UsToo

This has got to change!

What Can Trade Unions Do?

Nationally

- ▶ Run Nationwide campaigns and work with other organisations to raise awareness
- ▶ Create Bargaining Guidance for Branches
- ▶ Influence Government and Policy Makers
- ▶ Organise free learning and education
- ▶ Undertake Legal Challenges

Within the Workplace

- ▶ Negotiate better policies and terms and conditions
- ▶ Organise local campaigns within the workplace
- ▶ Represent members that need support and advice
- ▶ Organise local learning opportunities around these subjects

Women in Unison

- ▶ Largest Union in UK – 1.3 million members working in the Public Sector
- ▶ 75% members are women (80% in the Southwest)
- ▶ Support thousands of other women members who experience challenges in the workplace such as the Gender Pay Gap, denial of maternity rights and sexual harassment.
- ▶ Women's Self Organised Groups – campaigning for equality in the workplace, improvements to women's rights in the workplace and wider community



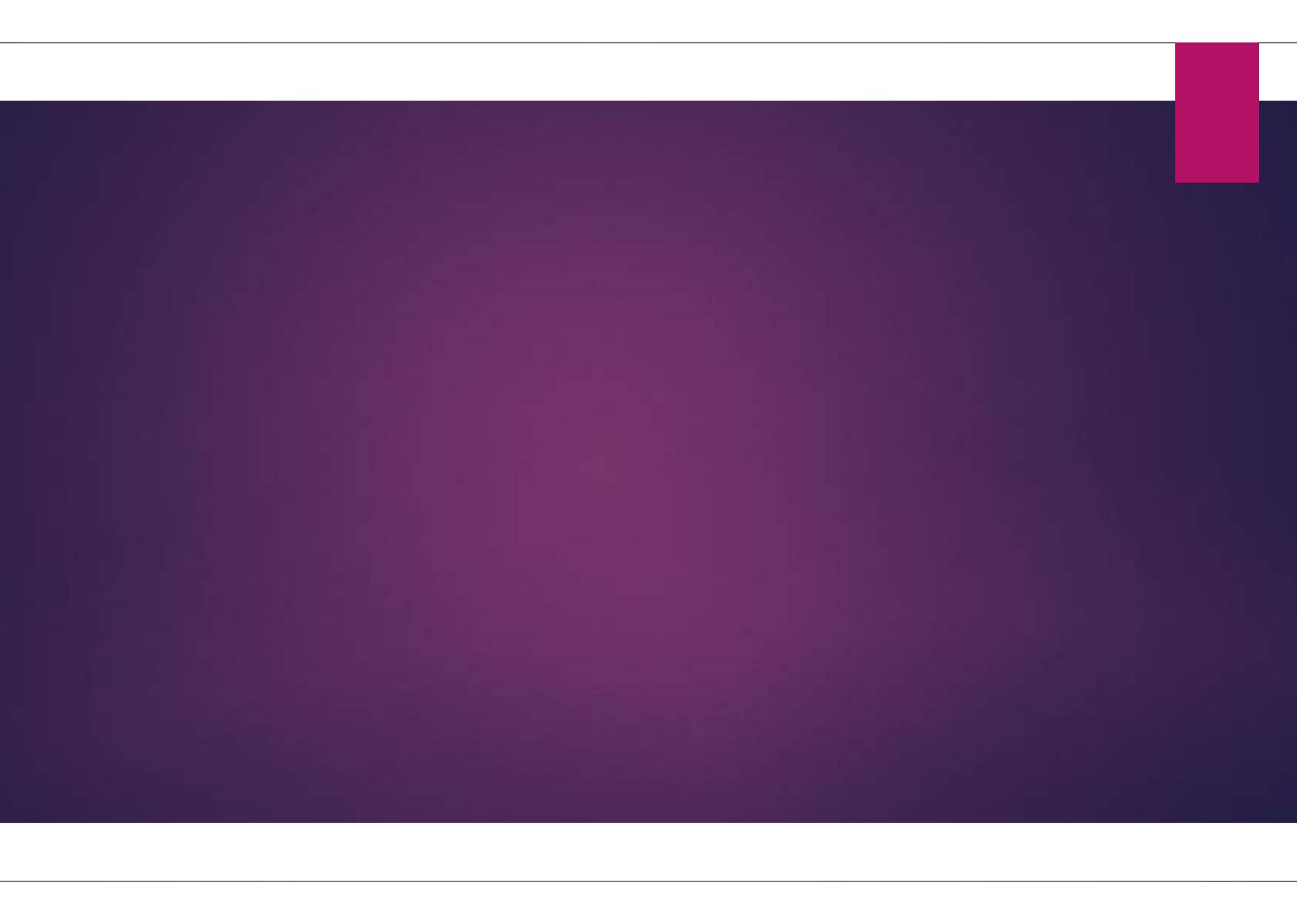
What are Self Organised Groups?

- ▶ Bring together members from certain under represented groups
- ▶ Women, Black members, LGBT and Disabled members
- ▶ Self-organisation helps the union identify and challenge discrimination and build equality
- ▶ A way for members to get involved in the union, developing skills, expertise and confidence
- ▶ SOG's operate at all levels of the union from branch to National

UnWinD (Unison Women in Dorset)

- ▶ identified a need for women to meet to discuss important workplace issues in a safe environment
- ▶ Set up in April 2015
- ▶ Mixture of campaigning/discussions/ activities and wellbeing





Member Benefits

- ▶ Collective bargaining in your workplace
- ▶ Advice, support and help when you need it at work
- ▶ Legal services for you at work and your family at home
- ▶ Financial assistance and debt advice in times of need
- ▶ Compensation for accidents and injuries at work
- ▶ Member discounts, including discounts on home, car, pet and travel insurance and holidays
- ▶ Education, training and support
- ▶ A place to meet like minded people!

Together we're stronger, so join your union today!

Find Your Union



Any
Questions?

**'A woman's place is
in her Trade Union'**