

Branch Secretary Report – Annual General Meeting, March 2026

Overview

This year has brought major changes within SWAST, including TUPE transfers and redundancy processes. The branch management team has also seen significant turnover, and we have been without an administrator for over four months. Despite these challenges, the branch has continued to deliver meaningful outcomes for members.

Current Focus

Flexible Working

UNISON has gathered data to support a better flexible working offer. This evidence will shortly be presented to SWAST executives and has the backing of key senior leaders.

EMD Rebanding

UNISON EMD members will be balloted in March on a proposal that would move roles to Band 4.

Frozen Rolling Relief Balances

Following pressure from UNISON members, SWAST has invited the union to present a collective grievance—an important opportunity for recruitment and retention.

Mandatory Training

Paid time for completing online training modules has been confirmed from April 2026.

CTM Workload & Bureaucracy

Ongoing pressure from UNISON and others across several forums is leading to improvements, including new, more flexible Short Notice Leave options.

Delays in Sickness, Grievance & Disciplinary Processes

We continue to challenge delays and work to reverse this trend.

Branch Update

- **Membership**
Membership is growing at twice the rate seen last year.

- **Finances**

The branch is in a strong financial position. The new management group is encouraged to bring forward ideas for how this resource can be used to support upcoming activity— particularly as further organisational change (including rotas) is expected, and as we continue to work effectively in a multi-union environment.

- **Recruitment**

Many staff are still not members of any union. Reaching these colleagues could be crucial to achieving the step-change in industrial relations that many members want to see.

Trade Union Recognition Agreement (TURA)

Negotiations are ongoing. SWAST has asked UNISON to co-ordinate the staff-side. Discussions remain constructive and positive, with GMB and UNITE also participating.

Employment Rights Act (ERA)

This new legislation brings changes to employment and organising rights. It also provides opportunities to challenge employers more effectively and encourage greater union membership.

People

- **Clare Lunk**

Clare is leaving the branch to take up a new post. We thank her warmly for her contribution over several years.

- **Charlotte Worthington**

Charlotte has returned from her career break, and we appreciate her work in progressing member issues.
