

The rise of misogyny and violence against women and girls – a new epidemic

International Women’s Day, 8 March 2025 at the Quaker Meeting House, Liverpool
SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

JOANNE MOORCROFT

Joanne has been UNISON North West regional convenor

since 2021. She joined UNISON in 2010 and has been branch secretary of Cheshire Police since 2017. Her

professional background is in communications. Joanne is a lifelong feminist and internationalist and

has tried to ensure that women’s participation is embedded into all the work of UNISON North West.



CHRISTINA McANEA

Christina was elected general secretary of UNISON in 2021 – the first woman to hold the post. She

was born in Glasgow and has worked in the trade union movement for most of her adult life. She has led national disputes

and negotiations for workers in the NHS, local government, police, schools, universities and colleges and the community and

voluntary sector. Christina has bold ambitions including a national social care service and a National UNISON College.

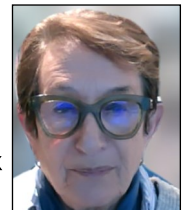
PROFESSOR MARY DAVIS

Mary is a Labour historian. She has, from a Marxist

perspective, written, broadcast and lectured widely on women’s history, labour history, imperialism and racism. She was awarded the

TUC Women’s Gold Badge in 2010 for services to trade unionism. She currently serves on the Morning Star

Management Committee and the Sylvia Memorial Committee and is secretary of the Marx Memorial Library.



JOSIE IRWIN

Josie is Head of UNISON’s Equality Unit. Prior to this, she was UNISON’s national women’s officer, a role she took up in 2018

after moving from her job as the lead negotiator for the Royal College of Nursing. She was National Staff Side Secretary for the NHS Staff Council for 14 years. She

has also worked in the NHS, as HR Director for a London teaching hospital and in local government. Josie was a councillor for the London Borough of Haringey from

1990 to 2003. She has a degree in PPE from Oxford University and a Masters Degree in Public Administration from the University of Warwick.

CATHERINE HORNER



Catherine is regional managing partner of Thompsons Solicitors’ Manchester and Liverpool offices. She joined Thompsons in 2002 and has over 20 years’ experience in personal injury. She previously led a team dealing with

occupational stress and harassment.

Jo is a highly experienced senior employment solicitor based in Thompsons’ Manchester office. She writes regularly for the firm’s Employment Law Review and for union journals and is

a frequent speaker at the Institute for Employment Rights. She also responds to government consultations and delivers employment training for trade unions.

Jo previously worked for unions including ASLEF, GPMU and BIFU.

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MICHELLE GRAHAM



Michelle is a course leader at The Manchester College on Trade Union Education and has been working with trade unions for more than 15 years. She works extensively with

domestic violence groups and has been involved in successful campaigns, some of which have changed UK legislation.

Michelle said: "My own experiences

have very much been on the receiving end of domestic violence and abuse. Whether or not people realise, we all know somebody who is directly affected, which is why I

continue to work to highlight this as the significant issue that it is. I know first-hand how difficult this issue is, but importantly, I also know what it means to go from victim to victor."

EMILY SPURRELL

Emily has been police and crime commissioner (PCC) for Merseyside since 2021 and was re-elected in May 2024 with 61.7% of the public vote. Her priorities have been

preventing crime, tackling Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG), improving police scrutiny and transparency, and supporting victims of crime. Emily was elected as chair of

the Association of PCCs (APCC) in September 2024. She is also on the Board of Directors for the Independent Custody Visiting Association (ICVA). Prior to being elected, Emily was

deputy police and crime commissioner, and she served as a Liverpool City councillor leading on community safety. Emily lives in Crosby, Sefton, with her husband, son and dog.



DEEBA SYED

Deeba is the incoming head of policy, research and advocacy for the Fawcett Society.

She is an experienced

women's rights and violence against women and girls campaigner, as well as a qualified discrimination lawyer.

She was previously senior legal officer

at Rights of Women, where she advised the Welsh government and NHS England.

In the wake of the MeToo movement, she set up an award-winning service for

women experiencing sexual harassment and abuse in the workplace.

She was educated at Leeds University and BPP Law School.

KIM JOHNSON MP

Kim was born and raised in the Liverpool Riverside constituency and elected as the city's first Black MP in 2019. With a background in trade

union activism, she served as a shop steward and as vice-chair of UNISON's National and Regional Black Members' Committees. As an MP, she has sat on select committees

scrutinising government policies on Home Affairs, Women & Equalities and Education. Kim currently chairs the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Miscarriages of

Justice. She also sits on APPGs including Race and Community, Child of the North, Somaliland, Show Racism the Red Card, and Palestine & the Middle East.



JANET FARRAR

Janet comes from a family of proud trade unionists, who encouraged her to join USDAW as a shopworker aged 16. Janet teaches trade

union education at The Manchester College; prior to that, she taught English and languages at Bury College, where she was UCU branch chair. She

campaigns on stress, bullying and mental health and chairs the North West TUC. She is a member of UCU's National Executive Committee representing further

education and a former president of UCU. Janet has been obsessed with ballroom and Latin dancing since receiving her first rosette at the age of three.