

RIDER STRIKE!

REPORTS FROM THE FRONTLINE

On Friday 2 February thousands of food delivery riders, demanding a pay rise, took strike action against all of the apps, in over 90 zones across London, Brighton, Liverpool, Bath and Glasgow.

The strike demanded a pay increase. In 2017, Deliveroo paid a minimum £4 per delivery. Now, they pay a minimum of £3.15 to mopeds and £2.80 to bikes. That is a 40% real terms pay cut. Uber Eats have made similar changes.

This was the biggest strike yet in food delivery in the UK and it shook the management of the apps.

Across many areas, riders organised pickets to shut down dark kitchens and key restaurants. In some areas, strikers had to deal with a lot of riders who were scabbing and trying to take jobs. In other areas, it was easy to convince every rider to join the strike. In areas where riders were able to organise a strong strike it had a big impact - as we could see from customers complaining online and the piling up of orders in restaurants.

In some areas, as well as organising pickets, riders came together for motorcades and mass gatherings. Some riders took these motorcades to different areas to try to spread the strike.

The strike brought together riders from different communities, which has not happened to this extent before. That was also a really big step forward and makes us much stronger.

Deliveroo, Uber Eats, Just Eat, Stuart will all try to pretend that the strike didn't affect them to try to demor-

alise us. But then why did they send out panicked communications to restaurants warning about the strike, and why were they raising the incentives for jobs on the night through the roof?

It's important to share information about what is happening in each local area, so we can all be informed and also learn what is most effective. So we spoke to some riders in different areas to gather reports:

EARL'S COURT

I just moved to the area. I joined a group of drivers by the McDonalds. I approached the Indians first. At first they didn't know what to say, but then they said yes they will strike. They asked me to speak to the Brazilians, as they didn't know if they will strike. I went to them to ask them and after a few minutes they agreed. Then we saw the price go up on deliveroo and we got excited. We started working as a group, and when other riders came we would persuade them to strike. Some of our group were a bit rough with scabs, but most of us were friendly. We said there are thousands of drivers on strike right now in London, you should join us. We added people to the whatsapp group. Then we heard the news about other areas striking, and 150 motorbikes came and blocked the road and we rode around. Everyone is very excited about another strike.

We know the company are very scared because we've seen fake accounts on social media, which are trying to demoralise us. But you can see they are fake accounts. When I get out and speak to actual people they say they want to strike all weekend.

I worked this job for 6 years. It used to be £3.15 to do really short jobs where you could basically walk. Now you have to travel 2-3 miles for £3.15. They say it's the algorithm, they blame the algorithm, but somebody made the algorithm. They say you can reject a job if you don't want it, but if you reject too many jobs there

REPORTS FROM THE FIRST STRIKE

is something hidden in the algorithm where it doesn't give you any more jobs for 30 minutes. Then the app is saying they need to hire more riders as there aren't enough people to do the jobs! All that is why we are striking."

WHITECHAPEL

20 Bengali and Brazilian riders shut down the editions dark kitchen on Assembly Passage in Whitechapel. Other riders also shut down the other editions dark kitchen in the area and the nearby restaurants. Very few riders tried to come and pick up orders, those who did were turned around. Riders said they thought that Deliveroo lost around £30,000 from the strike just at this editions kitchen, based on the usual number of orders that go from this site in one evening. I asked everyone whether they thought one strike would be enough and, if not, whether they would be up for doing more. Many riders said that they want to strike for more days if we don't win after the first day. After a few hours, riders joined up with groups of riders who had been picketing at other locations, and drove around the area as a big group - this was a good way to boost morale."

FOREST HILL

20 riders picketed the editions kitchen in Forest Hill. When more riders arrived at the kitchen and learnt about the strike, most stopped working and joined in. Only a couple tried to pick up, and before long the manager had turned off the app. Nothing went in or out for hours. Most riders agree a pay rise won't be won in a single strike; they're ready for a longer campaign. A few days after the strike, deliveries seem to be paying more than they did. The rates have been calculated upwards a bit."

We are going to do more bulletins like this and we want to share reports from different areas.

Send us a message or voice note on whatsapp with updates from your area +447598260453.

HOW WE WIN THE STRIKE

We have been talking with many riders about how to win the pay increase we deserve. Here are our ideas for what we need to do:

STRIKE AGAIN AND AGAIN UNTIL WE WIN

Strikes always take more than one day to win. After the strike last Friday night, the managers of the apps will be worried. They lost a lot of money. But it will take them some time to work out what to do. Since the strike the managers will be very busy meeting each other and talking. They will be working out whether to be seriously worried or not. There have been strikes like this before in London, but they have only been for one day and then they have fizzled out. The managers will be thinking that this will probably happen again. They have a lot of cash in the bank so they can survive a few strikes. What will really scare them is if these strikes keep on happening and if they grow bigger. We need to be prepared to strike regularly and ongoingly until the managers listen. The slogan of many successful strikes has been "we strike until we win!" We need to convince all of the drivers to do this with us. So, if you agree, speak to as many drivers as possible about the need to keep striking.

GROW THE STRIKES

If we can grow the strikes, it will cost the apps even more money and it will scare them more. The bigger the strike, the shorter the amount of time we will need to continue striking before we win. It can take some time to grow the strike - we need to visit lots of different areas that didn't strike last week and convince them to strike. If we agree to do regular strikes once per week for the next few weeks, that can inspire drivers in many other areas to get involved. Two years ago there were big courier strikes across the north of England. Those strikes were started by drivers in Sheffield who were part of the IWGB union - they went on strike for several days each week and between the strikes they went out to work in different cities to speak to

people. The strike spread to 10 cities through their hard work. We need to spread the strike to every area in London and to other cities too. So, if you agree, make sure your area is on lock, and then try going to work in a nearby area some days this week to speak to people. Or get a group of you from the area where you work normally and go together to speak to people in different areas to join the strike.

KEEP UP MORALE AND COMMUNICATE REGULARLY WITH OTHER DRIVERS

Lots of drivers in your area won't know much about what's going on. We need to make sure they understand things properly, otherwise they will get confused and demoralised quickly and they won't keep on joining the strikes. Set up a local Whatsapp group if there isn't one already and get everyone in your area to join it, as well as the big groups across the city too. Share regular updates about what is happening in different parts of the city, so everyone can see what is working and what isn't. Get together face to face and talk together about what is working well with the strike, and what needs to be done to improve it.

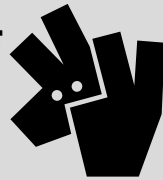
COORDINATE ACROSS OUR AREAS

The guys who called the strike on Friday did a very good job. But they are only a small number of people and there is a lot of work for them to do alone. We all need to help. Each group of drivers in each small area should elect some captains to coordinate with other areas. The captains can come together and agree plans for future strikes, and also can coordinate visits to new areas to get them to strike.

What do you think? If you have ideas for how to win the strike, send them to us on +447598260453.

NEXT DELIVERY STRIKE 14/2/22 VALENTINES 17PM-22PM

A BRIEF HISTORY OF COURIER STRIKES IN THE UK



2016

Deliveroo riders strike for six days in August and hold regular demonstrations outside of Deliveroo head office over a new pay deal which would see riders receive a payment of £3.75 for each delivery. As a result of the strike, Deliveroo agrees to allow workers to opt out of the pay-per-delivery structure. This kicks off a wave of strikes across the country, including Brighton and Leeds.

2018

The first national courier strike sees more than a thousand on strike across London, Glasgow, Bristol, Newcastle, and Cardiff at the same time as other hospitality workers. The demand is for £5 per drop.

2019

Deliveroo riders across Bristol, Bournemouth and Manchester strike over changes to pay and conditions.

2020

In October, food delivery couriers in York, Sheffield and Wolverhampton carry out boycotts, strikes and demonstrations over reduction of delivery rates.

2020-2021

Stuart delivery drivers unionised with the IWGB working across Sheffield, Chesterfield, Darlington, Blackpool, Huddersfield, Leeds and Middlesbrough strike over a cut to pay. This strike goes on for over 6 weeks. Stuart Delivery sacks the CEO after this, but doesn't give a pay rise.

2021

Deliveroo riders in York, Sheffield, Reading and Wolverhampton organised with the IWGB go on strike on 7 April to demand a guaranteed living wage; an end to over-hiring and unpaid waiting times, as well as holiday and sick pay.

2023

In October, JustEat drivers threaten to strike in Blackburn, Darwen, Accrington after a 'boost' payment was stopped. Just before the strike started, drivers were told the boost payment would be returned. Riders for Deliveroo, Just Eat and Uber Eats in Oxford and Telford also go on strike over pay and conditions.

2024

In February, delivery workers across London and other cities strike over delivery rates, demanding £5 for every delivery drop, and extra £2 supplement for every additional mile.