



Shrewsbury 24 Campaign, PO Box 92, Liverpool L19 3WD Tel: 07927-937773

Please support us in overturning a miscarriage of justice

Judicial Review of CCRC

On 3rd April 2012 we submitted an application to the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) on behalf of the pickets to have their convictions referred to the Court of Appeal. Over the next five years we sent the CCRC several further submissions and fresh evidence to support the application. Many of the documents that we sent had been uncovered through our research at the National Archives, Kew and other repositories.

The CCRC issued its decision in October 2017 and stated that it was not prepared to refer the pickets' case to the Court of Appeal. Our legal team, led by Danny Friedman QC, advised us that the CCRC's decision was perverse and could be challenged through a Judicial Review. The pickets and the Campaign Committee decided to make an application to the Administrative Court for a Judicial Review of the CCRC's decision. This involves significant legal costs and Unite the Union has been magnificent in providing the initial funding that allowed us to issue proceedings against the CCRC in January 2018.

The Campaign is asking for meetings with the General Secretaries and Executive Committees of all unions affiliated to the Campaign. This will enable us to explain the pickets' case, the grounds for the Judicial Review and the need to raise funds to pay all the pickets' legal costs.

Time is of the essence. Seven pickets have died and the youngest, Terry Renshaw, is now 70. Ken O'Shea, who had been the oldest surviving picket, passed away on Boxing Day 2017 at the age of 88.

How you can support us

Twenty-one national trade unions have affiliated to our campaign as well as many individual branches, trades councils and CLPs. The TUC have given us tremendous support. We would ask all Trade Union and Labour Party Branches to affiliate to us. We can also provide speakers for trade union meetings and conferences. The Campaign is in its twelfth year and all members of the Committee work voluntarily for it. All funds raised go towards the legal costs of the pickets' case. Affiliation/donation forms can be downloaded from our website at: www.shrewsbury24campaign.org.uk .

E-mail: 24@shrewsbury24campaign.org.uk Website: www.shrewsbury24campaign.org.uk

[History of the Shrewsbury 24](#)

The Shrewsbury 24 Campaign was established in 2006. Our aim is to overturn the convictions and sentences of building workers who were victimised and criminalised when they took part in picketing during the 1972 national strike. Several of them were sent to prison. We have spent almost twelve years researching the background to the trials and have found fresh evidence to support the case.

The first-ever national building workers strike took place in the summer of 1972. Construction workers faced hostile and powerful employers, lump labour and isolated workplaces that changed constantly whenever a contract finished. Health and safety measures on building sites were non-existent building workers faced dangerous working conditions on a daily basis. UCATT, the T&GWU, FTAT and the NUG&MW, were the main unions who had members in the industry. The building workers irrespective of which union or trade they were in organised effective picketing of sites throughout the country. At the end of the twelve-week dispute, in September 1972, they succeeded in winning the highest ever pay rise in the history of the industry.

Five months after the strike ended 24 pickets were picked up and charged with over 200 offences, including unlawful assembly, intimidation and affray. Six of the pickets were also charged with *conspiracy* to intimidate. None of the pickets had been cautioned or arrested during the strike. Approximately 80 police had accompanied the pickets on the Shrewsbury building sites at all times on 6th September 1972. There were no police complaints laid against the pickets at the time.

At the first Shrewsbury trial, beginning in October 1973, three of the pickets were found guilty of conspiracy to intimidate, unlawful assembly and affray. They were sent to prison: **Des Warren** for three years, **Ricky Tomlinson** for two years and **John McKinsie Jones** for nine months.

Jailing these building workers remains one of the most notorious anti-trade union acts of the state in recent times. All the might of the police and criminal justice system were used against the pickets to deter trade unionists from organising effectively. The convicted Shrewsbury pickets were blacklisted from the industry and most were never able to work in their trade again.

[The failure of the Government to disclose documents](#)

The Government consistently refuses to release documents relating to the Shrewsbury trials, hiding behind section 23 of the Freedom of Information Act (the ‘national security’ exemption). Our researcher Eileen Turnbull has discovered that there are crucial documents that are ‘missing’ from the National Archives at Kew. We believe that these papers show the extent of political interference into the case in the 1970s.

On 23rd October 2015 the Tory Government announced their intention to continue to withhold the documents from public scrutiny for a further 6 years. The next review will be in 2021. Jeremy Corbyn and John McDonnell have been longstanding supporters of the Campaign. In the 2015 and 2017 manifestos the Labour Party pledged that if they were elected they would, “Release all papers concerning the Shrewsbury 24 Trials”.

For further details please do not hesitate to contact the Secretary, Eileen Turnbull, at the address/telephone number overleaf or by email.

E-mail: 24@shrewsbury24campaign.org.uk Website: www.shrewsbury24campaign.org.uk