



Annual Report 2025:

A year of building
worker power

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“They are a model for how you involve people in organisations. They don’t see including seasonal workers in the room as a big thing. Having people with lived experience in front of politicians is always much more powerful.”

Parliamentary stakeholder, December 2025

2025: A year of building power

When I look back on 2025, I think of our team pictured at football matches, sharing kebabs, celebrating religious festivals, and opening our first office side by side with workers. I feel enormous pride in what we have built and how we have grown together.

But I also remember images that people have shared with us of squalid housing and dangerous working conditions, and the fear, insecurity and injustices that many workers endure. Faced with this, reflecting on 2025, I'm struck by their immense courage, leadership, and extraordinary commitment to making Scotland fairer for everyone.

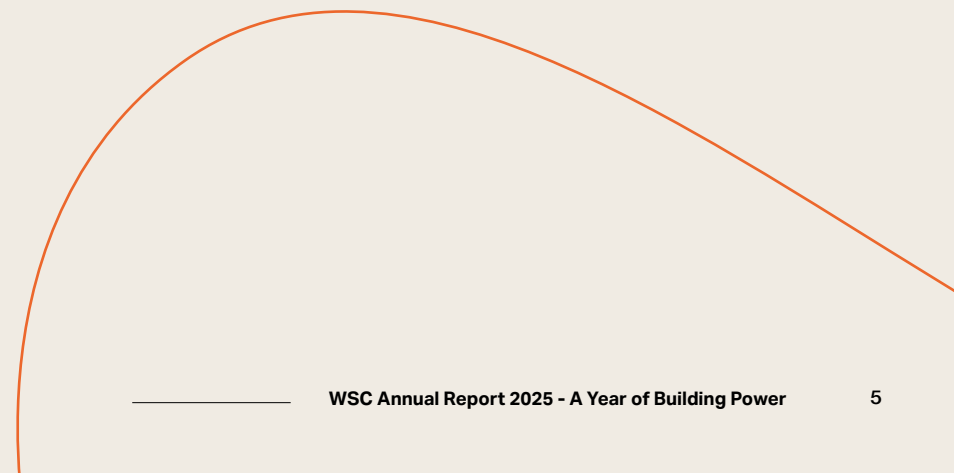
This Annual Report documents how the workers we partner with have spoken out directly to Parliamentary Committees, shaped new government support and pushed for historic improvements to housing standards. They have gathered evidence, shared their creativity, and built collective power together, with our support and by turning lived experience into lasting change.

All of this work is rooted in trust. I am deeply grateful to every worker who has contacted us, everyone who has collaborated with us, and every supporter who believes in a Scotland that truly welcomes every worker. I am also immensely proud of our team, whose commitment and energy shine through in everything we do.

Thank you for reading this report and learning more about our work. I hope you will see, as we do every day, that change is not only necessary but possible when we build it together.

In solidarity,

Caroline Robinson, Executive Director



Executive summary

2025 was a year of growth, deepened impact and worker-led change for Worker Support Centre (WSC).

Guided by our belief that everyone should be safe, valued and respected at work, **we expanded our team, opened a new office in Perth, Scotland, strengthened our outreach and launched a new website.** Most importantly, we broadened our reach to work alongside the people who keep Scotland's social care system running.

Across social care and seasonal agriculture, **we supported hundreds of people** facing exploitation, insecurity and discrimination linked to the UK's tied and temporary visa systems. Through our **unique Five-Step Early Exploitation Prevention Model**, which combines support, information, power, enforcement and policy change, we partnered with workers to fix urgent problems and create long term change.

In 2025, we applied this model to social care - supporting 47 workers on the Health and Care Worker visa. Many of these people faced job uncertainty and hardship when their employers and visa sponsors lost their licences.

The people we met described long hours, unpaid travel time, racism, fear of disciplinary action, and the constant threat of losing their job and immigration status. Together, **they influenced a targeted support package** by sharing their experiences with the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government.

In seasonal agriculture, **we supported 550 people** through our casework. Many workers still face fear, discrimination and retaliation, but they still came together in larger numbers than ever before at our Worker Power gatherings to strategise and organise. Their **top priorities were improving workplaces across Scotland**, including tackling issues related to pay, housing, health and safety and treatment.

And their collective action delivered change.

Their evidence on wage theft led the UK Director of Labour Market Enforcement (DLME) to commit to reviewing payslip practices and strengthening compliance. For the first time, **the Scottish Government committed to introducing housing standards** for seasonal agricultural workers – a historic step towards closing a long-standing gap in protection.

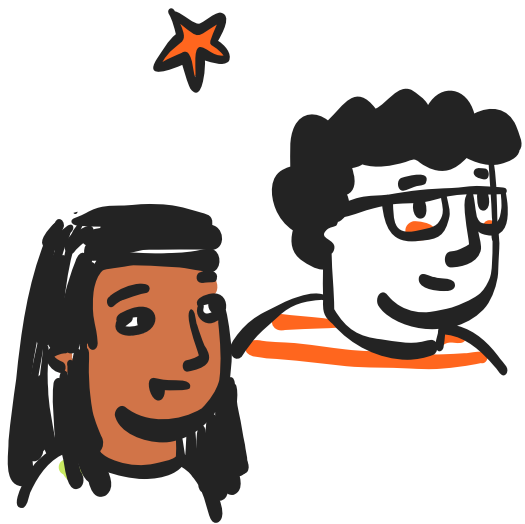
Throughout 2025, **people working in social care and seasonal agriculture defined what Scotland's stated Fair Work ambitions should look like in practice:** having an effective voice without fear, real opportunity and mobility, safe and decent housing, fair pay for all hours worked, and respect free from racism and discrimination. By sharing their stories with government officials and parliamentarians through art, writing and public dialogue, workers are giving Scotland's decision-makers a new understanding of the essential work that they do.

By investing in our staff's expertise, forging new partnerships and community connections, and opening our first office, **we have improved our ability to listen, respond and organise.** But our greatest strength is the trust people working across Scotland place in us, and the solidarity we build together. **Change is possible. In 2025, workers proved it.**

In 2026, we will keep building Worker Power via new Workers' Councils, increase community solidarity, engage with a new Scottish Government, and continue working towards a Scotland that truly welcomes every worker.

“Thanks to your hard work, because if I hadn't met you, I probably wouldn't have become interested in protecting workers' rights.”

Message from seasonal agricultural worker, April 2025



Worker Support Centre

2025 in numbers



550

People supported through our seasonal agricultural casework

13

Languages spoken by WSC staff

9

Worker Power events organised for care workers

20

Reports submitted to enforcement authorities

22

Meet and greet sessions organised for seasonal farm workers



1

New office

5

New team members



12

Meetings held with UK Government officials

47

People supported in social care

640

workers received information about our services



1

Meeting held with Scotland's First Minister to discuss workers' key issues

11

Worker power events organised for farm workers from 9 separate farms.

9

Care and agricultural workers supported to meet 2 Scottish parliamentary committees

16

Meetings attended with Scottish Government officials



Introduction

At WSC, we believe everyone should be safe, valued and respected at work – no matter our job or nationality. We partner with workers towards a world without labour abuse and exploitation, building power together for a Scotland that welcomes every worker.

2025 was a year of growth. We expanded our team bringing new skills, energy, languages and lived experience into our work. Francis joined to launch our Worker Power project in social care, alongside people who have come to Scotland to care for our loved ones. Talgat and Dmytro started work to deepen our engagement with seasonal agricultural workers. Graham began to drive changes in policy and law, side by side with workers. Egle joined us to build strong community connections across Perth and Kinross.

We're proud to say our team now speaks English, French, Hungarian, Italian, Kazakh, Kurdish Kirmanji, Lithuanian, Ndebele, Polish, Russian, Shona, Spanish and Ukrainian – enabling us to communicate with even more workers in their native languages.

We also opened our brand-new office in Perth in June. It soon became a busy and welcoming space, hosting meetings with workers, Members of the Scottish and UK Parliaments – including Scotland's First Minister and our local representative, **John Swinney MSP** – as well as funders, enforcement agencies, partner organisations, trustees and workers.

We launched a new website and branding too and grew our social media channels by sharing regular news and updates about our work.

Our team brings a unique mix of expertise, lived experience and commitment. We listen carefully to the workers we partner with. By building trust, connection and solidarity, we are growing a movement of people who care about the rights, dignity and wellbeing of all workers across Scotland.

About us

WSC is a Scottish charity working in partnership with people who have come to Scotland on tied and temporary visas to support our loved ones in social care, or to pick fruit, berries and vegetables on farms.

We provide advice to secure their rights, end exploitation, build collective power and drive lasting change together.

Our work is centred around our five core values: **solidarity, equality, safety, collaboration and creativity.**



WSC Annual General Meeting, June 2025. Image credit: Harrison Reid

Our unique model to prevent exploitation

At the heart of WSC's work is our unique Five-Step Early Exploitation Prevention Model:

Ensuring support:

We ensure people's basic needs are met by supporting them with problems in the workplace and beyond.

Improving information:

We help workers to understand their rights and to gather evidence that can be used to enforce the law.

Building power:

We strengthen worker solidarity and help build collective power between workers and with wider communities to jointly shape safer, fairer workplaces.

Enforcing the law:

We ensure labour market enforcement authorities meet workers' needs and uphold workers' rights.

Influencing change:

We partner with workers to create policy solutions and to claim spaces for change.

We deliver these activities with a wide range of partners, including workers, lawyers, labour market enforcement authorities, governments, charities, academics, trade unions and committed members of the public.

Working in partnership and solidarity

We all want to feel safe, valued and respected at work – no matter who we are or where we come from. And yet thousands of people who care for our sick and elderly, and who harvest the berries and vegetables that feed our families, are being exploited and abused every year. They come to do jobs that are essential to our economy and society, but are often living on the margins of our communities, and treated in ways that are far from welcoming.

Together, we are going to change this. Now, more than ever, we need to foster connection, community and solidarity.

WSC embarked on an ambitious journey in 2025 to build understanding and solidarity with local community groups, leaders, charities, faith organisations, museums and businesses based where we are, in Perth and Kinross.

We are also part of many Scotland, UK and global networks, such as the **Poverty Alliance**, the Human Rights Consortium Scotland, the **Scottish Food Coalition**, the **Ethical Trade Initiative**, the Seasonal Worker Interest Group, and the **Global Alliance against Traffic in Women**. Together, we are building solidarity and collective strength across issues and borders.

“We want to work and make money, but we also want to feel part of the community.”

Worker testimony, Parliamentary Committees meeting, September 2025



Support Centre

WSC staff meeting First Minister, John Swinney MSP, December 2025. Image credit: Harrison Reid

Building power with workers in Scotland

Social care workers

In 2025, we began working with people who come to Scotland to work in social care on the Health and Care Worker visa. This is a tied visa connecting people's right to stay in the UK to their employer as their visa sponsor.

People working in social care often described their compassion for Scotland's elderly and vulnerable, the close relationships they have built, and how poor working conditions compromise that care. Many of the workers we met said they feel unsafe and exploited.

People on the Health and Care Worker visa risk becoming suddenly unemployed if their visa sponsor loses their licence (known as 'displacement'), with very limited time to find a new employer and visa sponsor before they have their visa curtailed and are forced to leave the UK.

Last year we provided 47 people working in social care with information and support.

We also organised 9 Worker Power events where people could share their struggles with the immigration system, learn about their rights, connect with policymakers and advocate for change.

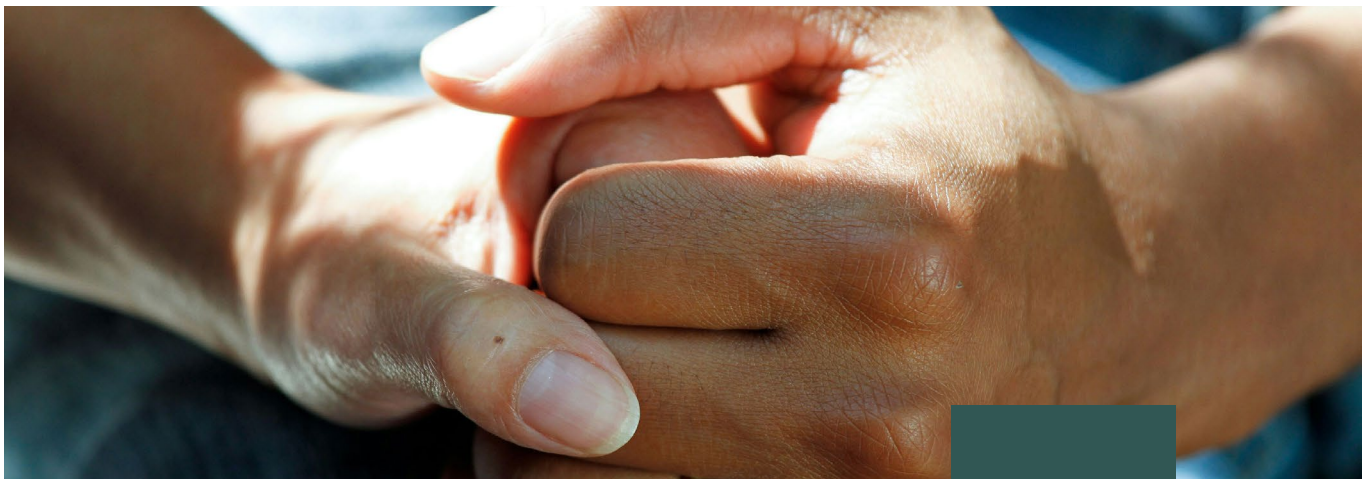


Image credit: Unsplash stock

Direct support and advocacy: The high emotional costs of caring

47 workers contacted our casework service to receive worker-led support, advice and information. Here are some key issues with which WSC supported them during 2025:

38 workers sought support to find new employment following their sponsor's licence being revoked by the Home Office. Workers described a range of problems with finding a new job, including employers' preference for drivers with own cars, long probation periods, gender-related barriers, tight immigration timeframes, low employer awareness of the immigration rules and system, and lack of employability support.

13 workers have now found a new sponsor with WSC help, and we have partnered with workers to share their key barriers with Scottish Government officials to inform support.

9 people sought our help with other issues, including relocation, disciplinary measures or finding alternative employment due to unbearable working conditions. Key concerns included long shifts with unpaid travel time and insufficient breaks, inadequate hours or income. Many of these cases constituted breaches of employment law and/or immigration rules.

In our Worker Power sessions, people often raised direct and indirect racism and discriminatory language in their workplaces. When requesting small adjustments to exhausting shift patterns, one worker reported being told "Remember you're on a visa". People also described their fear of making even a small mistake – like forgetting to take out the rubbish – and being reported to management by colleagues.

Many told us they were physically and mentally exhausted from inadequate breaks between shifts. **Despite these challenges, what shines through is not despair but determination.**

“Sometimes you leave [home] at 6am and return at 11pm. You survive on sandwiches because there's no time for a proper meal.”

Worker testimony, Parliamentary Committees meeting, September 2025

RISK of DESTITUTION



A live illustration of carers' interventions at meeting with Scottish Parliamentary Committees, Autumn 2025. Illustration: Cassandra Harrison art

Worker power influencing policy in Scotland

In September 2025, WSC and people working in social care on the Health and Care Worker visa met the **Scottish Parliamentary Committee for Equalities, Civil Rights and Justice as well as the Social Justice and Social Security Committee**.

In this first meeting of its kind, people shared their lived experience of care work in Scotland, and their recommendations for changes to policy. We prioritised safeguarding and ethics at the event, with clear, collaborative communication about process, outcomes, and respecting workers' schedules.

Following this meeting, Members of Scottish Parliament (MSPs) on the 2 Committees **called on their government to better protect and support migrant care workers. In a letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care** they highlighted workers' concerns, which led to greater prioritisation of these issues, and informed discussion about building a fairer, safer and more sustainable system.

We also accompanied 9 care workers whose sponsors' licence had been revoked to meet 3 MSPs and Members of Parliament (MPs) between July and December 2025. Workers raised their experiences of sudden unemployment with politicians, government officials and the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Neil Gray MSP, and advocated for fair, accessible, and worker-centred support.

Informed by workers' testimonies about the practical barriers preventing them from finding new jobs, in December **the Scottish Government announced a new support scheme for employers to take on adult social care displaced**

workers. Many workers have faced long term unemployment, poverty and deportation while social care employers are left with workforce shortages.

Messages like this show the importance of worker representation:

"I would also like you to know I have switched my visa, I got grants that covered my visa cost and helped with relocation cost."

Message from a worker, February 2026

Now the first government support scheme has ended, workers are organising to influence the next one, including meeting directly with Scottish Government officials. They want help from the Scottish and UK governments to solve persistent problems with finding a new employer and visa sponsor.

Throughout this process, a community of care workers have met at our offices to chat, connect and build a Scotland-wide movement for long-term, systemic change.





WSC Annual General Meeting, June 2025. Image credit: Harrison Reid

Workers setting new standards for fair work in care

The Scottish Government has committed to improving workplaces by becoming a Fair Work nation. Its Fair Work Convention sets out five core dimensions of fair work: effective voice, opportunities, security, fulfilment and respect.

While the ambition was to **achieve this by 2025**, care workers face a very different reality. Many told us the visa sponsorship system, which ties them to one employer that is also their visa sponsor, can prevent them from being treated fairly at work and that even their basic rights are often not met. This undermines Scotland's Fair Work ambitions, and can contribute to exploitation.

At our Worker Power strategy sessions, people thought Fair Work can be achieved by making one central change: separating visa sponsorship from the employer, thereby giving workers freedom to move between roles and employers.

Other worker priorities shared included:

- Trade union models should be for and shaped by people on tied and temporary visas. Workers said they wanted trade unions to respond to both individual and collective needs, and address the issues workers face at work and between jobs.
- To have fair disciplinary and grievance processes and safe, anonymous ways to raise concerns, whether through labour market enforcement authorities or informal routes that highlight workplace conditions.
- For labour market enforcement and care regulators to recognise the pressures created by tied visas, so people can report abuse and access support without fear of losing their job or immigration status.
- To receive clear information about their rights at work.
- To access paid opportunities to learn and progress.
- To be provided secure jobs with guaranteed hours.
- For employers to honour commitments around employment and sponsorship.
- To be provided alternative local work if a care provider loses its licence.
- To have respectful workplaces free from racism and discrimination, where they are supported, properly trained and able to care for others.
- To have fair schedules, time to take breaks and a healthy balance between work and family life.

“You’re told you’re on sponsorship – does it make me inferior? I pay my taxes. It doesn’t make me less.”

Worker testimony, Parliamentary Committees meeting, September 2025



WSC Annual General Meeting, June 2025. Image credit: Harrison Reid

Seasonal agricultural workers

Scotland's farming sector relies heavily on people coming from abroad to pick our fruit, vegetables, berries and flowers on the six-month Seasonal Worker visa. This visa ties workers to a single visa sponsor that facilitates workers' placements on farms.

Whilst workers' visas are sponsored by a single 'Scheme Operator', they are employed by farms. Workers are unable to change employer unless their visa sponsor allows it by providing a 'transfer', which therefore limits their freedom of movement. People on this visa often depend on their employer not only for their job, but also for their housing and transport to buy food or access healthcare.

Seasonal agricultural workers living and working on farms are often very isolated from local communities. Through our outreach, we ensure that even very isolated workers know about the support we offer and how to contact us. In 2025, **we conducted 22 meet-and-greet sessions** across north-east Scotland, **reaching approximately 640 workers.** We also supported **550 workers** with casework both led by and focused on workers' needs. Additionally, **we held 11 Worker Power events with 92 people**, some of whom attended several sessions while working seasonally on 9 separate farms, to chat, plan and strategise together.

These sessions enable Scotland's seasonal farm workers to share common challenges, discuss key employment rights barriers, and identify priorities for collective action. Our sessions also provide a community for people who would otherwise feel very alone. By coming together, farm workers tell us they feel heard, supported and able to improve their own and other people's lives.

Direct support and advocacy

People contact our casework service to receive advice, support and information with problems experienced in the workplace. During 2025 we supported 550 people facing the following issues:

A culture of fear and discrimination

We're seeing an increased culture of fear from previous years, with many workers saying they were scared at work and **60 workers reporting discrimination**.

This included being referred to by a number rather than their name, being shouted and sworn at, harassed by farm management and supervisors for speaking their native language, taking toilet breaks, or being unable to meet physically demanding targets.

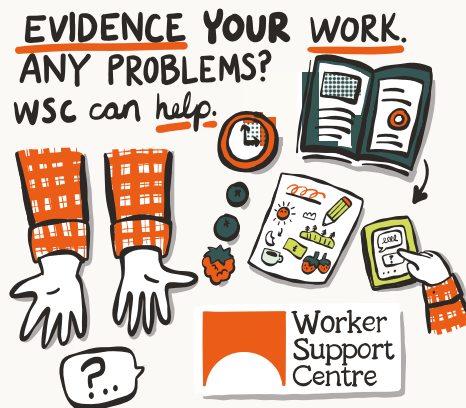
Workers feared reporting problems, making mistakes, needing healthcare, using too much fuel to heat their caravans, and not meeting high picking targets. This fear creeps into workplace relationships, with many people looking over their shoulder before they speak.

Disciplinary issues and dismissals

71 workers raised disciplinary-related issues with us, including 55 who had been dismissed by their employers. The vast majority lost their jobs because their performance wasn't considered good enough, they had requested to move to a different workplace, because of absences due to illness, or due to the perceived lack of caravan cleanliness. Workers were also threatened with dismissals or punished for raising issues, including being denied work for days which effectively removes income, as well as being warned not to contact WSC.

“We don't want anyone to know that we are in touch with WSC.”

Message from a worker, August 2025



An information flyer on pay and work time co-produced with seasonal agricultural workers. Illustration: Cassandra Harrison art



WSC staff at WSC team meeting, June 2025. Image Credit: Harrison Reid

Squalid housing and injuries

Most seasonal farm workers live in housing provided by their employer. For many, this means sharing an old caravan with up to 5 other workers. In 2025, people were charged up to £10.66 per day for a bed, which means a caravan can cost up to £1,945 per month and up to 20% of workers' wages. **79 workers told us that they were living in squalid conditions**, including freezing cold, damp, mouldy and unsafe accommodation.

Solving problems

Many workers felt their only option was to try and change employers – **146 workers came to us in this situation**. Some did not know how to request a transfer to a new workplace. Others were refused or ignored by their visa sponsor, or even penalised for asking to move.

“If you complain, you will not be invited back next year.”

Worker testimony, Parliamentary Committees meeting, September 2025

“We are told nothing. We do not know how to see a doctor, how to get medicine, or who to ask.”

Worker testimony, Parliamentary Committees meeting, September 2025

Health and safety

In 2025, **8 workers suffered injuries and 29 raised hazardous working conditions**. 3 who sustained injuries decided to escalate the case to a personal injury lawyer. 1 received a large compensation for a life-changing injury sustained on a farm in 2024. While this won't change the severe impact on their life, we are pleased with this outcome for them and hope it will lead the way for many others seeking justice.

Unfair pay

118 workers raised issues related to pay, including unpaid time spent moving between fields, or collecting equipment and speaking to supervisors. People also reported complicated payslips that did not match their own records, enforced holiday where work was unavailable and not being paid the mandatory 32 hours per week (as required in the [Home Office Guidance for visa sponsors](#)).

We support workers by:

- Explaining their rights
- Outlining escalation options
- Providing relevant advice and information
- Raising issues with their visa sponsors
- Anonymously or directly reporting issues to labour market enforcement authorities
- Engaging with farms
- Providing referrals to lawyers.

We're proud that **64% of all cases reported to WSC in 2025 were fully or partially resolved.**





WSC Annual General Meeting, June 2025. Image credit: Harrison Reid

Successes and impact

While Scotland's seasonal farm workers faced immense challenges in 2025, they also built accountability, practical solutions and change together, towards a country that welcomes every worker.

These wins result from workers' tireless campaigning and courage to speak out. Now it is time for real change, including through sensitive enforcement that workers can trust.

Our work continues to make sure Scotland supports all its workers by delivering – for the first time ever – safe, warm and decent housing for all.

Here are some key moments when workers led the way in 2025:



WSC staff at team meeting, June 2025. Image credit: Harrison Reid

Impact 1:

Taking action to make work pay

When Kevin (his chosen pseudonym) shared his experience of wage theft, he highlighted a serious problem many other seasonal farm workers face: being paid for the quantity of product picked, not hours worked. He said:

“Hours were being calculated in a way that served the farm, not the workers.”

Kevin, *Scottish Left Review*, Issue 145

With input from Kevin and many others, and support from the University of Glasgow Open Justice Centre’s academics and students, we developed a calendar designed for workers to record work time on farms – Know Your Rights and Evidence Your Work. We launched this new tool in September alongside 21 workers who shared their experiences of not being paid fair wages.

Workers evidence on pay led to important policy advances in 2025. This included a pledge from the UK Director of Labour Market Enforcement to review payslips and strengthen compliance. We also presented pay and payslip evidence to the Low Pay Commission which highlighted it in detail throughout their Annual Report 2025.

“Worker Support Centre have done excellent work to support workers and to ensure there is a better informed picture of worker welfare.”

DLME 2025 Annual Report 2023 to 2025 p.17

Impact 2:

Historic win for decent farm worker housing

After years of living in unsafe, cold caravans with rents costing up to 20% of their minimum wages, seasonal farm workers pushed forwards historic changes to housing standards in Scotland.

WSC constantly receives pictures and videos of desperately poor caravan conditions on Scottish farms – **including housing posing an acute threat to life**. Yet in nearly all cases nothing can be done. Because as **our research** found, seasonal workers living in tied housing on UK farms have no legal protections – no one has responsibility for enforcing decent housing standards.

Worker power was at the heart of change in 2025. In August, 13 farm workers joined a social event with Richard Leonard MSP and Brian Leishman MP where they shared their experiences of poor housing and called for change.

These exchanges matter because they allow workers to hold decision makers to account, and call for us all to do better. Workers asked Richard Leonard MSP what had changed since they last sat round a table together in 2024. They also discussed the path to housing standards and how to collectively make change happen.

In September, farm workers met members of **2 Scottish Parliamentary Committees**, again calling for action on housing. After hearing their accounts, the Committees **wrote** to the Scottish Government calling for standards to be introduced.

Following 18 months of worker-led campaigning, in September 2025, the Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Màiri McAllan MSP confirmed the Scottish Government's full **commitment to closing this gap in housing standards**. In November, she **committed to introducing housing standards** for seasonal agricultural workers for the first time ever.



WSC staff meeting Scotland's First Minister, John Swinney MSP, December 2025. Image credit: Harrison Reid

A great win for Scotland!

This represents a huge step forward in Scotland and has been celebrated worldwide by experts who have applauded the Scottish Government's leadership in a globally recognised area of risk for temporary and tied workers.

In December 2025, WSC met Scotland's First Minister John Swinney MSP to discuss our work and show him video evidence of farm workers' housing conditions. We called for all housing to be affordable, decent, safe and warm.

After the BBC featured squalid seasonal farm worker housing and interviewed a worker about his experiences, also in December, the First Minister was once again asked to respond at First Minister's Questions in the Scottish Parliament.

“For what we’re paying, we could rent a flat in town and live like normal people.”

Worker testimony, Parliamentary Committees meeting, September 2025

Impact 3:

Workers speaking truth to power

In September, WSC and 8 seasonal agricultural workers met 2 Scottish Parliamentary committees – the Equalities, Civil Rights and Justice Committee and the Social Justice and Social Security Committee.

People spoke about their hard work and commitment to ensuring food reaches tables across the UK. They also said their lives were made much harder by unsafe and uninhabitable caravans, unpaid hours, verbal abuse and dangerous workplaces without access to healthcare. MSPs thanked workers for their honesty and promised to raise these issues with the Scottish Government.

In October, the Committees wrote a letter to the Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Máiri McAllan MSP. This was another step forward in creating a fairer system reflecting the country we want to be. We are grateful to the MSPs who took the time to engage, listen and act.

“There is no space between the beds.
You cannot move freely.
It is impossible to feel comfortable.”

Worker testimony, Parliamentary Committees meeting, September 2025



A live illustration of seasonal agricultural workers' interventions at meeting with Scottish Parliamentary Committees, Autumn 2025.

Illustration: Cassandra Harrison art

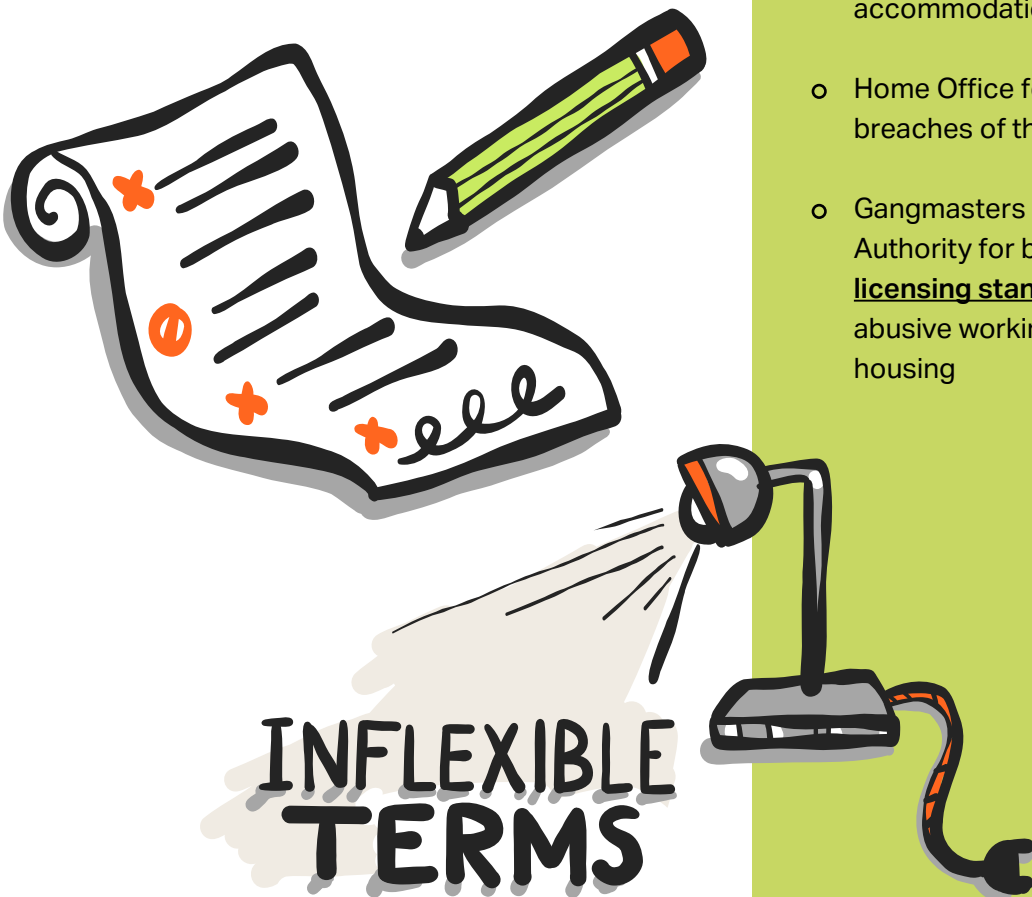
Improving conditions for all: escalation to enforcement agencies

Seasonal farm workers face significant consequences for raising problems in their workplaces. **Workers that escalate issues to enforcement are trailblazers**, seeking change not just for themselves but for all farm workers.

We submitted 20 reports to enforcement authorities in 2025. Almost all were made anonymously on workers' behalf. **While we informed hundreds of people about their right to report, just 3 felt safe enough to report directly.** 1 was based abroad and felt they had nothing to lose.

In 2025 WSC shared reports with most labour enforcement authorities, including:

- Health and Safety Executive for Breaches of the **Health and Safety at Work Act**, dangerous working and living conditions
- Agricultural Wages Enforcement Team for breaches of the **Agricultural Wages Order**
- Local Authority Environmental Health teams for uninhabitable accommodation
- Home Office for Scheme Operator breaches of the **immigration rules**
- Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority for breaches of the **licensing standards**, including abusive working conditions and housing





WSC staff at team meeting, June 2025. Image credit: Harrison Reid

When workers are terrified of repercussions and far from enforcement authorities' reach, authorities relying on complaints will always fail to protect those most at risk.

With its new Employment Rights Act (2025), the UK Government has established a Fair Work Agency (FWA) bringing together the enforcement powers of the GLAA, Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate, and HMRC National Minimum Wage, and the strategic engagement of the Office of the Director of Labour Market Enforcement. This major shift in our labour market enforcement landscape could mean big changes for the workers we support.

WSC is leading the conversation on what this change means for Scotland's hard-to-reach workers: in November, we organised a **first-of-its-kind seminar** focused on labour market enforcement in this changing landscape.

Enforcement officials, trade unions, academics and frontline organisations attended to discuss how the new Fair Work Agency (FWA) can protect all of Scotland's workers.

This conversation is urgent as the UK moves towards a new enforcement framework: in 2026 we have already expanded the discussion during a one day in person conference co-organised with academics from the University of Glasgow. If done well, the new system could align with the realities of our rural economy, the needs of seasonal and care workers and Scotland's wider Fair Work ambitions.

WSC is calling for the FWA to take a proactive stance, visit workplaces, build visibility and connect with workers to better understand the barriers they face.

A roadmap to Fair Work in seasonal agriculture

WSC shared Scotland's Fair Work ambitions with seasonal farm workers, as with people working in social care. People felt the 5 Fair Work dimensions were far from their realities, and identified the following steps to help their workplaces reach Scotland's policy ambitions:

Workers said that **respect must start with safe, dignified living conditions and fair treatment at work**. They want caravans that are properly renovated, insulated and not overcrowded, with adequate space, privacy and basic furnishings in good condition. Accommodation should include essentials such as gas and electricity, reliable Wi-Fi and secure storage for personal belongings.

Workers also want **reliable transport** for grocery shopping and clearer communication with Scheme Operators, including a dedicated contact for questions or concerns.

Workers want to be paid for inductions, all time worked, and want more transparency about their wages.

Workers highlighted the importance of **safety and opportunity**. They need personal protective equipment provided free of charge, and well maintained, safe equipment. Clear instructions and proper health and safety training are essential, particularly when working with machinery, alongside access to drinking water, toilets and handwashing facilities in the fields.

Workers also want their **health needs taken seriously**, with access to healthcare and trained First Aiders. They want **greater opportunity and fairness** in employment, including efficient responses to transfer requests if placements are not working out, accurate records of working hours, and transparent time-tracking systems to prevent wage theft. Being able to choose between farm placements where possible and fair access to future work opportunities is also important.

Finally, workers emphasised the need for **fulfilment and effective voice**. They want workplaces where fairness and equality are upheld, access to interpreters when needed, respectful communication and zero tolerance of abusive behaviour. Work and hours should be allocated transparently and fairly.

Above all, people said they wanted the freedom to speak up, ask questions and challenge problems, without fear of punishment, blacklisting or dismissal, with their concerns genuinely heard and acted upon.





WSC Annual General Meeting, June 2025. Image credit: Harrison Reid

Workers creating change

Throughout 2025 seasonal farm workers have shared and reflected on their experiences through art, writing, and personal testimony. This has shaped how others understand their everyday lives, and enabled collective action for change.

In **Picking Without Freedom: The Struggle of Seasonal Workers**, Kevin from Uzbekistan shared his experience of working on Scottish farms with readers of the *Scottish Left Review*. He also talked about how seasonal workers are speaking up to change policies affecting their lives.

Elina and Mira, who joined Worker Power events throughout 2025, co-wrote an article for the publication **Ethical Consumer**, sharing their experiences across three farms in the UK. They described the wide range of experiences they encountered spanning positive and negative. They highlighted the need for worker-centred support, dignity, and fair treatment, and said that every worker should be valued for their vital role in keeping food on our tables.

During the summer, farm workers created art with José García Oliva using tools and materials from their jobs, and reflecting on life and work in rural Scotland. Their artwork forms part of an exhibition at **Timespan Heritage and Art Institution in Helmsdale, Scotland**.



WSC staff at team meeting, December 2025.
Image credit: Harrison Reid

Concluding outlook to 2026: Broadening our movement

In 2026, we are increasing our Worker Power focus and strengthening autonomy and leadership through our Workers' Councils, so workers can continue leading our change agenda.

We continue to provide much-needed support and information to Scotland's seasonal farming and social care workers. We are stepping up our work for strong labour market enforcement through high-level engagement with the new FWA. As a new government is formed in Scotland, we will seek to shape its policy agenda for fair and welcoming workplaces.

Through effective communications work and community engagement we'll keep building a movement towards a world where we all feel safe, valued, and respected at work.

Connect with us

We are grateful to everyone who has supported WSC's journey so far. Let's stay connected in 2026: please sign up to our [newsletter](#) and follow us:



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