



Cleaners and Allied Independent Workers Union
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For immediate release

Street protests to continue after five Cleaners purged from major London co-working sites — WeWork requests removal of multiple trade unionists

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Street protests are set to continue this week against the removal of five cleaners from co-working giant Wework's London offices.

The five, all members of the Cleaners and Allied Independent Workers Union, were all dismissed by their employer, CCM Facilities Management, in recent months. Each dismissal followed an intervention by a member of WeWork's staff to request the removal of the cleaner from the company's premises. Several of the dismissed workers were offered alternative roles by CCM, but were subsequently dismissed without being given a proper chance to consider the new positions.

Despite repeated approaches by the union and ongoing protests at various Wework London locations, both CCM and Wework are refusing to reconsider the cases.

CAIWU and supporters will be protesting at Wework, 1 Mark Square, EC2A 4EG between 12 noon and 4pm on Wednesday September 25th.

The dismissals and protests come as news of WeWork's ongoing evaluation woes and criticism of employment and financial decisions continue to sweep global media.

The reasons offered by WeWork for the removal requests vary from a serious allegation of racism to a minor complaint about the cleaner having spoken out of turn to a WeWork manager—but in none of the five cases have witnesses or compelling evidence been produced to support the allegation.

An organiser at CAIWU explains: "In effect, five low-paid and vulnerable cleaners have been dismissed on the basis of unsupported accusations, the majority of which would not under any circumstances appear to constitute acts of gross misconduct deserving of dismissal."

Global Witness is a human rights and environmental campaigning organisation that uses office space in one of WeWork's London sites. Speaking in a personal capacity as a Global Witness staff member, Adam McGibbon comments, "WeWork tries to give off an image as a fun and caring company – this flies in the face of that. The more people that hear about this, the more that tenants inside WeWork will be outraged. We will be standing alongside the cleaners until they are reinstated and campaigning for union recognition across WeWork."

The issues raised by the dismissals are:

- Under normal circumstances, a company cannot dismiss an employee without having conducted a proper disciplinary process first. However, outsourcing clients routinely insist on the inclusion of contractual terms with their suppliers reserving their right to determine who is and is not allowed on their premises.
- Under such circumstances, the employer is obliged to make reasonable attempts to find alternative work for the employee—CCM claims it has done so in some of these cases, but workers were subsequently dismissed before being given a reasonable opportunity to consider the offer or to consult with their trade union first.

CAIWU's campaign web site is at: <http://caiwu.org.uk/wework/>

Protest against the dismissals: Wednesday 25th September, 12 noon, outside WeWork, 1 Mark Square, London EC2A 4EG

About CAIWU: The Cleaners & Allied Independent Workers Union is a registered trade union representing over a thousand workers mainly in London's cleaning industry. We believe that every human being is entitled to dignity and respect in the workplace, and it is our mission to help our members fight for this basic right, along with others like fair pay, terms and work conditions.

About WeWork: WeWork represents the pinnacle of the developing co-working trend dominating the start-up and sole trader space. It presents itself as being at the vanguard of a new kind of approach to work through the emphasis it places on community and togetherness.

About CCM: CCM are a contract cleaning company that aims to "harness the power of nature...implementing an environmentally friendly and people friendly cleaning solution" for changing workspaces.