

ELECTION OF GENERAL SECRETARY & TREASURER 2026

GARY SMITH

Personal Details:

Surname / Given Name:	Smith
Forename(s) / Given Name(s):	Gary Ian
Branch:	Park Gate
Section:	Commercial Services
Current Employer:	GMB
Current Occupation:	General Secretary & Treasurer
GMB Rulebook Offices held on 31 December 2025:	General Secretary & Treasurer



Personal Statement:

I am Gary Smith and I am asking for your support to be re-elected as GMB General Secretary and Treasurer.

Under my leadership, GMB members are back at the heart of our union. We are listening to your priorities and taking the lead in campaigning to make work better - defending energy, construction and manufacturing jobs, fighting for better pay and conditions for NHS and Ambulance workers, ensuring defence spending creates jobs in this country. We're also winning a better deal for school support staff, delivering on equal pay justice, and tackling discrimination and exploitation wherever we find it.

I spend a huge amount of time in workplaces listening to you, our members. In Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and England I see how we are taking on campaigns that are restoring our union, growing the membership and with it a new generation of GMB activists.

People are joining us because we listen to the real concerns of members, campaigning hard, and winning. The Women's Campaign Unit that I pledged to deliver has been leading the fight on equal pay across the country. We've secured hundreds of millions of pounds for low-paid women in Sheffield, Birmingham, Leeds, and many more councils. These victories are delivering a huge redistribution of wealth to working class women, the first in generations, and there's more to come.

I took over as your General Secretary in 2021 at a pivotal moment. The union had lost its way. We were wasting money, becoming obsessed with politics, and not listening to members. The result was failure and decline. But, we have turned things around. GMB is once more a growing, powerful, better union.

I pledged to bring the union back to our members. Focus on the issues that matter to the people who pay their hard-earned money to belong to GMB. Challenge bad bosses and fight injustice. As our actions show – we have delivered on this promise.

We have returned our union to success by reconnecting with the best of our proud past. For more than 135 years, GMB members have come together to make work better. The principles we follow today are not so different to those from our earliest days; to organise, campaign, fight, and win. Under my leadership, these commitments are at the heart of what we do and who we are. They have also shaped my life as a GMB member, rep, officer, and leader.

I never forget where I came from. I started work on my 16th birthday as an apprentice in the gas industry and became a GMB member on my first day. It was a rep in my Scottish Gas branch who asked me to join. Saying 'yes' was the best decision I ever made and I was taught a very powerful lesson: it is our members who matter. It's something that has never left me. GMB members come first – always.

Politics is never our top priority but, where it can support our members, we will get involved. GMB led the fight for the Employment Rights Act that will strengthen our

right to organise and collectively bargain. It will also deliver improvements to Statutory Sick Pay for thousands of our members in retail and care.

GMB led the fight to make the nuclear power station at Hinkley Point happen. The Government's commitment to another new plant at Sizewell only took place because of our campaigning. Sizewell will see huge numbers of new apprenticeships created whilst also protecting thousands of our members' jobs in engineering and construction. In defence, our work is seeing jobs secured in yards and plants across the country, apprenticeships created, and towns like Barrow being transformed as a result.

Under my leadership, we only get involved in politics if it can answer this simple question – does it benefit GMB members? That's the difference in our union today.

We've returned our union's finances to good health; they were a mess before I was elected. A union that doesn't have good finances can't campaign and win. I also committed to making membership more affordable. Under my leadership, GMB subscription fees were frozen for 3 years, making membership today 17% cheaper in real terms, effectively putting £11.4m back into members' pockets.

I may be the General Secretary, but I have never forgotten that our union is a collective and we deliver when we fight and campaign as a team. I am asking for your support to continue leading this great team.

We have so much more to do together. We will fight so the School Support Staff Negotiating Body and Fair Pay Agreement for carers, that we campaigned for, deliver for our members. We will redouble our efforts to defend energy and manufacturing jobs. We will deliver pay justice for hundreds of thousands more working class women. We will show that equality isn't a buzzword and that it goes to the core of our values. We will keep membership affordable.

I believe we are better placed to face the huge challenges in what will be a fast-changing economy. Technology is going to impact our members in retail, distribution and companies like Uber. Together, we will campaign to ensure this change delivers for our members, not just for the company bottom line.

We have shown that it is possible to bring people together under our banner in the fight for decent jobs and better rates of pay. And, in a time of division, anger and frustration, I pledge that GMB will be a beacon of unity, solidarity, and hope for working class people.

We are a better, stronger union again. Let's keep going forward together.

Please re-elect me as your General Secretary as we continue the fight to make work better.

Contact Details:

Mobile number: 07710 618 909

Email address: gary.smith@gmb.org.uk