



Die-hard supporter turns publicly on Sharon Graham as Unite election begins

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Sharon Graham Unite

[Dave Williams](#) is a Liverpool-based Unite union stalwart and former member of its executive council. When Skwawkbox writer Steve Walker was chair of a Liverpool constituency Labour party (CLP) in the Corbyn era, Williams was the CLP's "TULO" (trade union liaison officer). He has also been an ardent supporter of Unite's general secretary [Sharon Graham](#). And when Skwawkbox started to [expose](#) Graham's failings and misdeeds as Unite general secretary, Williams was highly critical of it doing so. Very highly critical. But now he has, very publicly, changed his tune.

With Graham in the middle of a highly-criticised re-election campaign and reeling from the exposure of her anti-union and anti-solidarity conduct, it's a bitter blow.

â??Betrayedâ?• by Graham

In a [post](#) (screenshot [here](#) on his Facebook profile yesterday, 30 June 2026, Williams listed his disappointments with Graham and her narrow fixations. These, he says, have weakened a "bogged down"• Unite from its former position as a political as well as industrial force and stripped it of the influence it used to have. Worse, there has been little or no tangible industrial benefit for members. It is a damning assessment from a former die-hard supporter:

Sharon Graham, the leader of the UK's second biggest union, Unite, it appears adrift from our promise to deliver.

Not what I / we expected, not what was the plan I supported and was convinced would be built on an "industrial based influence" in every workplace and in every sector of the

economy which would see and establish a substantiable organisation for workers in the UK and internationally to influence their real value.

Instead weâ??ve become bogged down in blame and fault, weâ??ve seen disputes won but sectorally little or no influence in stopping major employers still dictating â??the rate for the jobâ?? the continued undercutting of workers employment security and driving down of the cost of labour.

We wanted, we where [sic] encouraged and promised the establishment of Worker / shop steward combines resourced to deliver where it mattered â??an attack on one was an attack on us allâ?? sectors would influence their agendaâ??s and solidarity movements, where required cross sector influence would be established.

Imagine that being at the core in resolving the â??ongoingâ?? local authority dispute in Birmingham, involving shop stewards from those neighbouring authorities those other (now) outsourced companies whoâ??ve made profits from local authority services, workers being convinced the struggle of those Birmingham drivers pay cuts was their struggle as well.

Today despite the so called agreements reached being betrayed by the political influences we no longer have any influence.

Iâ??m not sure thereâ??s anything established since the last General Secretary election that promised has actually been delivered. Thatâ??s disappointing thatâ??s what Unite seems to offer today.

What still appears to be the focal concern of the administration is that, is claimed was inherited from the previous administration, something I was proud to have played my role in like others (past and present).

The largest union in the country the most financially sound union in Europe a union that wanted to flex its industrial and political strength and take that to the next stage. Iâ??m sorry for where we now appear to have ended up:

Disputes with Staff & officers.

Frustration in our political influence.

Executive Council split and in opposition in delivering the unions cause.

It was never our way, we established the greatest merger of 2 of the largest unions in Europe and that wasnâ??t easy, but it was delivered.

As I said in the beginning â??not what I expected or wantâ??!

Dave Williams ex RTC Warehousing & Logistics Executive Council member.

Challenge in Unite

As she seeks re-election, Graham faces a challenge from her left from the unionâ??s former international director [Simon Dubbins](#) Dubbins has been a complete contrast to Grahamâ??s betrayal of

the Palestinians, her support for militarism and her stubborn withdrawal of Unite from its former political clout for workers.

Graham's camp will have been shocked by Dubbins's performance in the nominations. Dubbins won almost twice the number required to stand in the general secretary election. More significant still, he [won many of Unite's biggest branches](#) in sectors that strongly supported Graham in 2021

He is also likely to have the backing of many of the union's 20,000 Community section members. Graham [wanted to close it](#) and merge it with the retired members section if she won re-election, but u-turned after Skwawkbox exposed the plan. Unite's environmental campaigners are also likely to turn away from her after Unite [ordered the Community section](#) not to support a climate day of action. In an election with a history of low turnouts, these factors could be decisive.

Stark contrasts between Graham and Dubbins

The differences between Graham and Dubbins are much wider than their approach to politics and their plans for different sections. Graham has [been almost invisible on the issue of Palestine](#) and Israel's genocide. She has, though, been highly vocal [advocating for a bigger UK arms industry](#)

Behind the scenes, meanwhile, she has been [accused by disgusted members of blocking activists](#) from supporting the anti-genocide movement on behalf of Unite. She has also [held secret talks with far-right Reform](#). Her lack of political engagement and education has seen [support for the far-right mushroom in the union](#)

Despite running a union, Graham has also repeatedly been [accused](#) of using appalling, anti-union tactics against workers employed by Unite, leading to several strikes. In many cases, these tactics have been seen as Unite's attempts to protect her [husband, Jack Clarke](#)

Soon after her accession in 2021, Graham created a new Bargaining and Disputes Support Unit (BDSU). [Outside of the union's usual procedures](#) Clarke was appointed to run it despite being on a final warning for [bullying and misogyny](#). Graham's faction has [staged counter-demonstrations against workers](#) striking against Clarke and attacked their union reps.

Stunningly, Unite's lawyers [admitted to Skwawkbox that the union had destroyed evidence that workers had gathered against him](#). This did not [stop further complaints and strike action](#) from workers in his new fiefdom, with almost all the women working under him quitting.

Dubbins, meanwhile, has spoken out [consistently](#) against Israel's genocide and against Unite's disengagement from wider politics to suit Graham's narrow "workplace only" agenda. Dubbins was [suspended as Unite's international director after refusing to cancel a pro-Palestine fringe event at a Labour conference](#)

And while Dubbins took questions at many branch nomination meetings, Graham refused to debate him and was called out for sending surrogates instead – even by previously close allies:



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Like Williams, Uniteâ??s core sectors appear to have woken up to the reality of Grahamâ??s tenure. Uniteâ??s defence sector branches, many of its key construction and air travel sector branches [swung](#)

behind Dubbins. Ballots in the Unite contest will be sent out from 14 July, with a deadline of 11 August for the receipt of votes.

Featured image via the Canary

By [Skwawkbox](#)

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