

# Shocking pictures show Tyneside firm putting workers & families in danger



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**A shocking image of workers crowded together shows the company is 'putting workers and their families at risk' says GMB Union**

The North East's biggest general union says the image shows staff at Smulders, a steel construction company in Newcastle upon Tyne, 'packed together like sardines' in the company canteen last week—clearly breaching the two metre social distancing guidelines.



GMB says if the company cannot keep workers safe it should furlough until the crisis is over.

Workers now appear to have been drafted in from London – where the Coronavirus crisis is more severe – to cover local staff who are staying at home because they don't feel safe.



**Etain Stobbart, GMB Organiser, said:**

“Our members are being asked to work, without the ability to socially distance themselves properly and are clearly being put at risk – they’re packed in like sardines.

“It took social media posts by workers and questions by GMB for the company to react.

“If people were to gather in this way outside or at a supermarket the police would attend.

“Putting people’s lives and those of their families and the community they live in at risk is not acceptable. Our members face the choice between health and income, as Smulders continue to carry on with no regard for their employee’s safety.

“If the company can’t keep their workers safe, they must take up the Government’s positive announcements over furlough until this crisis is over.

“Smulders is reaping what it has sowed from a business model at the mercy of health and safety, at the very time when Coronavirus demands a change in culture.

“Their business model is the very opposite of what they could get away with in the EU, the fact that this hostile and anti-trade union company is acting in this way shows that in the current health and safety environment.

“Smulders is gaming the system”.

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**Member requiring help?**

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