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On The Tools urges construction industry to join +500 fathers setting Out of Office for upcoming Dad Strike

Research from The Dad Shift shows just 3% of UK's investment in parental leave supports active fathers

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On The Tools has joined forces with campaigning group The Dad Shift to support the UK's first-ever Dad Strike, encouraging fathers in the industry to down tools early on June 11th, spend time with their families, or join a protest in London calling for paternity leave reform.

Lee Wilcox, CEO and Co-founder of On The Tools said, "This is such an important cause and one that's particularly close to our hearts at On The Tools. A large proportion of tradespeople are self-employed, meaning they often fall through the cracks when it comes to parental leave and support. We're proud to stand with The Dad Shift in calling for fairer paternity pay, because every parent deserves the chance to be there for those first, vital moments."

New research by The Dad Shift and Shaun Davies MP has revealed that less than 3% (£103.4 million) of the £3.3 billion spent in the UK's parental leave system is spent supporting fathers and non-birthing parents.

More than twice as much is spent on Statutory Maternity Leave (SML) in the South West than in Statutory Paternity Leave & Shared Parental Leave in every UK region and nation combined, and nearly twice as much is even spent in locations listed by HMRC as "Other / Unknown" (£194.1 million) as spent on dads and non-birthing parents. Full breakdown [here](#).

Of the little that is spent on fathers and non-birthing parents more is spent in London and the South East (£30.1 million) than in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the North East and North West combined (£27.4 million).

[Research](#) from the OECD had already shown that Britain ranks far below its peers on investment into families, spending just 1.5% of GDP compared to France 3.5%, Sweden 3.5% and Germany 2%.

George Gabriel, co-founder of The Dad Shift said, "the UK invests way less in parents than our peers. The pie is small, and the crumbs left for dads and non-birthing parents are honestly pretty pitiful. 3%? That's like making the mums play a full 90 minutes and bringing on the dads to play out a couple of minutes of injury time."

“That HMRC spends more money on maternity leave in locations it can’t even name than on every father in the country would be funny if it weren’t so tragic. And of course it’s no surprise that of the little that’s left more goes to the South East than half the country.”

The research has prompted an outpouring of frustration, prompting dads across the country to work with their kids on Out of Offices messages and notes to their bosses and customers - informing them that they’ll be taking the afternoon of June 11th off for the world’s first Dad Strike, just ahead of Father’s Day. Strikers will picket the Department of Business and Trade with their kids, while those who can’t make it to London will make a statement by taking the time to do the school and nursery run, as polling shows more than half of British kids are never picked up by their father.

Gabriel said, “Dads are fed up and it’s time for action. Labour is launching a review of parental leave this Summer and this is their opportunity to prove they’re on the side of working families and working fathers.”

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Notes to Editor:

For all media enquiries contact

Celia: Celiavenables@gmail.com

Tel: 07756525004

NOTES FOR EDITORS

The DadStrike [draws grateful inspiration](#) from the Icelandic Women’s Day Off where women took the day off from both work and domestic labour to call for gender equality. Rather than taking the day off domestic labour however, where fathers can’t make it to the London picket line, they will use the time specifically to step into caring responsibilities that often fall to mums. The Dad Shift is indebted to the organisers of the recent Icelandic Women’s Day Off for their insight and advice.

About On The Tools:

On The Tools is the UK’s largest and most engaged construction community with over 8 million followers. We’re connecting construction to improve the lives of every tradesperson in the UK; we actively work with the community to understand their thoughts and opinions about the industry’s critical issues.

About The Dad Shift

The Dad Shift is a group of men, dads and other parents campaigning for better paternity leave in the UK.