

## Contents:

- ◇ Message from the Branch Chair
- ◇ Pay
- ◇ Not real news article
- ◇ World Strike
- ◇ Hate Crime events
- ◇ Women's Lives Course



August 2018

# Nottingham FOCUS

The magazine for UNISON members at the University of Nottingham

## Message from the Branch Chair

Dear member,

Welcome to another edition of the branch magazine. I am writing looking out of the window on a sunny Open Day! I, for one, enjoy Open Days: the enthusiasm of the potential students and their parents is infectious, and any cynicism goes out of the window for a day or two!

The University can be a great place to work – but it can also be grim some of the time. For any of our members who are struggling with personal or work issues and need support, please get in touch at any time. There is always some help we can offer and sometimes it is just good to talk: email [unison@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:unison@nottingham.ac.uk).

We are currently balloting over the 2019-20 pay offer. HR are spinning it as a good offer but, as they admit, the 3.8 to 5.6% includes increments where applicable. The University is still not committing to becoming an accredited Living Wage employer, which is something we continue to campaign for. In essence, the pay rise hovers around the inflation rate, and does not compensate us for losses in previous years. It also does not take account of the fact that a possible 'no deal' Brexit could impact significantly on our livelihoods.

The branch is advising that we believe we have achieved all that we can in the negotiating round, so further progress will only be achieved by industrial action. If you vote to reject the offer, we will call meetings and find out what action you are prepared to take. It is worth noting that Birmingham University Unison recently took two days' strike action in support of their pay claim – like us in Nottingham they also have local pay bargaining. So, as rare as industrial action has become these days, it still happens, including in our own sector!

Finally, to return to the unseasonably sunny weather: we all know by now that Climate Change really is a thing. The branch is supporting the Earth Strike on Friday 20 September. The TUC has voted to support the 'strike' by school students to highlight the drastic threat posed to the planet and mankind by global warming.

If you would like to take part in the rally in Nottingham Market Square, a number of us will head there at lunchtime. Meet at the 34 bus stop at 12.30am or meet us in the Square, where there is a rally from 11am-2pm. Please email me if you would like more details.

Vicki Morris, Branch Chair  
[vicki.morris@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:vicki.morris@nottingham.ac.uk)

## PAY 2019

By now you should have received your pay ballot. Please return this as soon as we need to have a good response in order to make the result valid.

But just to lighten things up, the following article was spotted in a spoof news

### Lazy slacker scumbag only working hours specified in his contract

**A MAN is loathed by his colleagues for not working regular extra hours for no money.**

Accounts assistant Tom Booker is considered a bone idle waster because he turns up at nine and goes home at 5.30pm, like it says in the contract he signed when offered the job.

HR manager Mary Fisher said: "That guy is just taking the mick, coming in here at the correct time, having an hour for lunch as specified on page two of his contract and then leaving at the exact time stated in the 'Hours of Work' section on page three.

"It's almost as if he considers that contract to be some sort of legally binding agreement rather than a worthless scrap of paper to be disregarded if the company wants more of your time and energy without paying for it.

"We all stay late most days, because our lives are governed by fear. How dare he have some basic integrity."

Booker said: "I just go in and I do the work and then I go.

"Don't tell anyone, but I don't even think about my job after I get home."

## Calls to action

Many years ago I was told that although it is important to know what you stand for; it is far more important to know what you will not stand for!

The typical image of a trade union is that we only care about pay. Well yes, that is important when low paid members are consistently being told that they will not get to share in the increases that senior managers deserve. However, UNISON has a proud tradition of supporting wider causes, and raising its voice when there is a problem that needs to be addressed. So please think about the following causes that we believe deserve our support.

### Earth strike Day:

20 September

Children will once again prove they are not just our future, they are our conscience.

Earth Strike day started when **Greta**

**Thunberg** a sixteen year-old girl from Sweden decided she knew what she had to take action, because all the adults were doing was talking! It is only a year ago when she walked out of school and organized a strike to raise awareness of global warming, protesting outside the Swedish parliament and grabbing the world's attention. Now millions have watched the YouTube videos of her calm but moving call to action. "The climate crisis has already been solved. We already have all the facts and solutions," Thunberg explains. "All we have to do is to wake up and change." You can help her on the 20<sup>th</sup>—if you feel that it is time to make a stand. Contact Vicky, the Branch chair to find out more and join in the Nottingham action.



If you are in the right people will listen!

## No time for Hate

The Branch are organising two events for staff and students that address the issue of hate crime.



16 October 2-3 pm

Room A03 Learning and Teaching Building,  
University Park

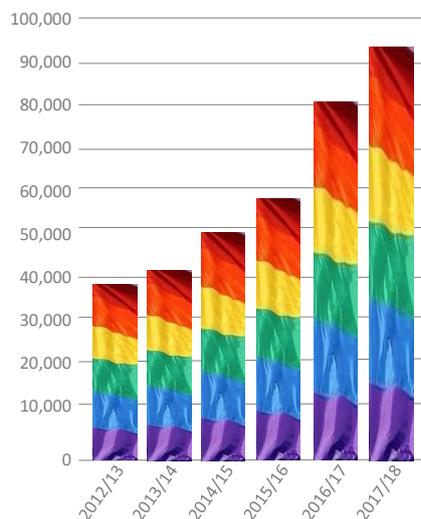
30 October 2-3 pm

LT3 Exchange Building  
Jubilee Campus

At each of these sessions you will have a chance to hear and speak with national and regional officers from UNISON who are involved with combatting hate crimes and supporting those affected.

Attendance is free, but you will need to register. You will see posters appearing soon with a link to eventbrite for registration.

If you don't realise how important it is to make a stand, here is the rise in reported hate crimes in England and Wales in just five years.



### UNISON WOMEN'S LIVES COURSE NOTTINGHAM

Monday evenings 6.60-830

30 September 2019, until 16 December

Women's Lives is for women of all ages and from all walks of life who would like to take up new learning opportunities. It is designed to build your confidence as well as help you to develop your study skills. It is exciting, fun and challenging!

Previous course members have said that it increased their confidence and self-esteem as they developed new skills and brushed up on old ones. The benefits helped them in their work, social and family lives.

The course will help you to:

Develop Study Skills – get into the swing of following a course of study. This will include reading and understanding texts, note taking, writing, research skills and being better able to analyse things.

Develop your understanding of issues which relate to women – culture, tradition, opportunities (or lack of them), expectations, hopes and fears.

The sessions are run in a relaxed and informal way and you will have the opportunity to share experiences. No-one will be put on the spot or made to feel uncomfortable. There are no tests or exams, but you will have some homework!

The course will be delivered by an experienced tutor from the Workers' Educational Association (WEA). As well as running the study group meetings, the tutor will also be available to talk to you on the phone when you need help or advice and to give you individual feedback on your work.

### INTERESTED?

Contact-  
UNISON Learning and Member Development Team on 0115 847 5457 or email [imd@unison.co.uk](mailto:imd@unison.co.uk)