

## Contents:

- ◇ Message from the Branch Secretary
- ◇ No Time For Hate
- ◇ HE Branch Seminar
- ◇ International report
- ◇ Winter Fuel Grants
- ◇ Conference Reports
- ◇ Free courses
- ◇ AGM time-off request

# UNISON

January 2020

# Nottingham FOCUS

The magazine for UNISON members at the University of Nottingham

## A New Year Message from the Branch Secretary.

Anne Kilker

A lot has happened since the last magazine...

### Pay 2019

The pay offer made by UoN was better than we have had in recent years. It was accepted by a large majority. Thank you to all of you who took the time to vote. If you have any feedback on how ballots are organised please let us know. We want to make the process as easy as possible for everyone.

We realise the offer wasn't great for everyone. An increase of 1.8% is, in effect, another pay cut. The Living Wage increase to £9.30 per hour is welcome, but it means that in some areas supervisors are being paid the same as the people they supervise, and the issue around the difference in pay rates between O&F pay grades still hasn't been addressed. UoN have confirmed they will not be taking part in national pay bargaining in 2020.

Those receiving 1.8% and those eligible to move one pay point or receive a non-consolidated payment should have received it in your November pay. The increase to £9.30 per hour was not paid until December. Please check your pay to make sure you have received the correct increase. Let us know if you

think it is wrong. We believe that there will be some challenges to be made.

### First payslips— now booking leave!

In order to check your pay you will need to look at your payslip. The lack of payslips for the O&F family has been an issue we have been discussing with HR for nearly a year. They are about to install tablets for O&F employees to use. We are not sure if these will work or that you will be given sufficient time to find a tablet and print off a payslip. We would like to hear your experiences of this. We understand you are also being asked to book annual leave electronically. Again if you have any problems doing this let us know so that we can feed back the issues.

### Outsourcing IT

A decision has been made by the University's Executive Board and University Council to outsource large areas of the IT Department. This is going to have a big impact on all of us. Details are not known of who will be at risk of either losing their job or being transferred to a new employer. It seems it may be the people we see and talk to on a daily basis, but nothing has been finalised yet.

The team implementing the change expect it to take 12 months. We keep referring them to Project Transform/ Campus Solutions that is still not working correctly after all the resources the University has invested - including a lot of our IT department's time and expertise.

### Together we are stronger

UCU have an online petition: <https://speakout.web.ucu.org.uk/halt-outsourcing-plans-at-the-university-of-nottingham/>. Please sign it if you can. We will be working with UCU and Unite on a campaign to keep IT Services in house over the next few months.

### AGM 2020—save the date

The date for the AGM has been set, and HR have agreed that all members can have the time to attend and for reasonable travel. If you foresee any difficulties let us know as soon as possible; there is a time-off request form on the back of this magazine. We will circulate details about the agenda shortly.

## UNISON Branch Annual General Meeting

Thursday 5 March 2020

10:00 - 12:00, refreshments  
from 9:30 and until 1pm

A48 Sir Clive Granger  
Building, University Park





This October, we were very proud to organise the **No Time For Hate** event. Local organisers Liam Jones and Martyn Tring were supported by Kalvinder Tiwana (Assistant National Officer) and Steve Elsey (Branch Secretary Staffordshire County Council).

The event was free to attend, and open to both members and non-members alike.

The event was a great success, staff and students were joined by a panel of speakers with wide experience of combatting hate crimes.

The speakers included **Roger McKenzie** (UNISON Assistant General Secretary), **Nadia Whittome** (then Labour candidate for Nottingham East), **Richard Townsley** (former police officer), and **Sarah Sharples** (PVC for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion).

UNISON is committed to ending hate crime in the workplace, and we were delighted to work alongside representatives from the University and the local community. We believe in a zero tolerance approach and will continue to fight in 2020 and onwards to stamp it out.

The purpose of the meeting was summed up by Sarah Sharples:

*"Our diverse University of Nottingham community celebrates tolerance, inclusion and respect. Hate crime of any sort has no place in society, and the University is proud to support all activities which will help to ensure that there is no time or place for hate."*

Brexit has been the catalyst to bring a very disturbing side to our society to the surface and given a platform to people with extreme views. As a



union we have a duty to speak out and support the victims of oppression in any form. If you want to help this cause in 2020, Martyn and Liam will welcome your support.

**Congratulations to Nadia Whittome who was elected to represent Nottingham East and is now officially "Baby of the House" - the UK's youngest MP.**



**Famously, Nadia has committed to use part of her salary to benefit her most needy constituents. We wish her well!**



## Unison's HE branch seminar in York—report by Vicki Morris, Branch Chair

In November I attended Unison's HE branch seminar in York. This is an annual event and it was a lot more interesting than the title suggests! It was a chance to meet other HE Unison members, particularly from our East Midlands region, and to hear interesting speakers on highly relevant topics for our work, including:

- Black members survey
- Gender pay gap
- Recruiting and organising young workers
- Pay
- Pensions

**Are you interested in representing the branch at this event next year, or do you have any questions about it?**  
Please email: [vicki.morris@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:vicki.morris@nottingham.ac.uk)

A highlight was hearing from Birmingham home care workers about their dispute with the council who wanted to bring in a triple split shift system. Through determined and energetic organising over two years, and with support from union branches around the country, the home care workers successfully beat back this attack. We also had a briefing from the lecturers' union UCU on their current industrial dispute. The description of how they organised to achieve a 50% vote for action - a legal requirement - was very interesting and gave me some good insights into what we should be doing to increase engagement in our own branch.

## UNISON's international campaigns

### Jack Nelson: branch International Officer

Some news from Unison's international campaigning over the past few months:

#### October 2019

Unison declared solidarity with the Confederation of Public Workers' Unions, a Turkish trade union centre that recently had 87 of its leaders put on trial, which has since been delayed until February 2020.

#### November 2019

Unison representatives attended the Unions4Cuba conference in London, which hosted a delegation of 14 union representatives from Cuba. This included Carmen Rosa Lopez Rodriguez, Deputy General Secretary of the Workers' Central Union of Cuba and MP in the Cuban National Assembly. Subjects covered included the medical outreach that the Cuban government provides across the world, the education system of the island and the long history of solidarity between the Cuban people and British trade unions. More information about the conference can be found on the [Cuban Solidarity Campaign website](#).

#### November 2019

Unison declared solidarity with Arzu Çerkezoğlu, president of the Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey, who is on trial for a speech she gave at an opposition party meeting three years ago. Arzu was charged for "provoking hatred and hostility" after opposing legislation that increased the control that President Erdogan has over the Turkish government. She has also called for peaceful protests with the eventual aim of regime change.

**"It is not a crime to say that the system and the regime should change, it is an idea."**

**Arzu Çerkezoğlu**

## Winter Fuel Grant 2019/20

### Get help to cover your winter fuel bills from **There for You, UNISON's welfare charity**.

Members living on a low income constantly struggle to make ends meet – and this can be particularly acute in the winter when the cost of heating homes rises as the outside temperature falls.

But it's not all bad news – help is available. The union's welfare charity There for You has once more set up a limited fund to help members on low incomes meet the cost of their winter fuel bill through a one-off payment of £40.

The process is very similar to previous years and an amount of money has been ring-fenced to support this initiative. However, once it's gone it's gone!

Don't miss out - apply early and send your form and supporting



paperwork in as soon as possible. All the information you need can be found on the UNISON website. If you need help, contact the branch:

BB-Unison-info@nottingham.ac.uk.

Alternatively, contact UNISON Direct on 0800 0857 857 for a form to be sent to you.

Please don't keep details of this grant a secret. Help us to help even more members and let your work colleagues know that help is at hand. There will be many, like you, worrying about how they will cope this winter.

Completed applications need to be sent to There for You, (WFG) UNISON Centre, 130 Euston Road, London, NW1 2AY by Friday 14 February 2020 at the latest.



### Finding There For You on the UNISON website

No website is perfect, and sometimes it can be difficult to find what you need. You can use the search function and if you are lucky get to where you want to be. However, if you go through the menu options you may find all sorts of useful information.

To find the forms for fuel payments:

<https://unison.org.uk/>

Click on 'Get help'

Click on 'Member support and services'

Click on 'There for You (UNISON Welfare)'

At each stage you may want to have a look round and find out a bit more about what UNISON can do for you.

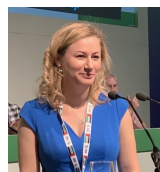
# Disabled Members' Conference

**Brighton 2-4 November.**

**Liza Aspell, branch Disability Officer**

I was pleased to be able to attend for the second year running such a wonderfully inclusive, educational and inspiring event.

## Key speakers:



**Josie Bird**, UNISON president, urged activists to take up the election challenge with a reminder to us that our current prime minister does not respect democracy, public services, and that we have to stand up to challenge the politics of hate.



**Christina McAnea**, UNISON Assistant General Secretary, who as head of bargaining for UNISON, reminded members of

the work we do on pay and fighting low pay – and this is of particular importance for disabled workers, since there's a 15% pay gap between disabled workers and those who are not disabled. This tied in with the official launch of UNISON's campaign to close the Disability Pay Gap during conference. With reference to the findings in the TUC report on disability employment and pay gaps (2019), where key findings included the following:

"Disabled people experience significant barriers to getting and keeping jobs. This results in an employment gap of around 30 per cent. But this report shows that disabled people face double discrimination. Not only are they less likely to have a paid job but when they do, disabled people earn substantially less than their non-disabled peers.

"This pay gap is a major contributing factor to the financial stress experienced by disabled workers."

The campaign to smash the disability pay gap was unequivocally supported by members.

## Threat to the NHS

Christina also reminded us of the threat to the NHS by the likes of Trump and big private health companies, urging members to vote against Johnson and against his continued lies and deception in the impending election.

## Motions passed

If you are interested in finding out more, a list of the motions passed can be downloaded from: <https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2019/11/2019-National-Disabled-Members-Conference-Decisions.pdf>

## Call for meaningful disability employment statistics

The Disability Confident Scheme which started in November 2018 is a voluntary scheme - aimed at large employers with over 250 employees. It is a nationally accredited scheme commonly used across our public services. However, the Scheme is not without its critics and of those participating only 1.8% (216 employers) are operating at a level that provides scrutiny through independent assessment.

## How UNISON helps members

- PIP assessment support - guidance and training for branches and members, There For You involvement.
- Disability Passport guidance and information on implementation in the workplace.
- Support of campaigns on victims of the Windrush Scandal and ensuring the needs of Black disabled members are being addressed.
- Domestic abuse services accessibility, raising awareness of the disproportionate impact of domestic abuse on disabled women.

It was a great reminder of the importance of UNISON politically, not just on the local scale and a reminder that many people still are not accessing the help they need or are blocked from accessing the help they are entitled to due to misunderstanding and lack of education.



# Retired Members' Conference

**Philip Bayly - branch Retired Members' Officer**

As this conference was in a period of high political activity, the conference had a leaning towards the political rather than the members.

The conference began with an address from Assistant General Secretary **Christina McAnea**.

During the conference the following topics were covered:

- ◆ Health and social care provisions for older persons
- ◆ Concessionary benefits
- ◆ Care crisis and austerity
- ◆ Telephone scams and fraud
- ◆ Universal Credit
- ◆ Intergenerational fairness
- ◆ Mobility and public transport
- ◆ The role of volunteers
- ◆ The state pension

## Not enough time!

I met with the East Midlands Retired (EMR) members' team to discuss the above issues, in particular ones that will be presented by the East Midlands area. One of the key discussions within the EMR was that the two days did not allow real discussion at the conference – discussions that would allow conference to make decisions – as time was limited. It was believed that various caucus meetings the day before took up too much time – it was agreed that these either need to be shorter, or for the conference to totally focus on the conference side of the proceedings. This would be discussed more at the regional meeting.

The next conference will be at the Bournemouth International Centre on 13th and 14th October 2020.

# Learn a new skill in the New Year



To apply for any of these courses, contact either:

steve.fuller@nottingham.ac.uk or unisonnottslearning@gmail.com

## January to March 2020 FREE Courses with UNISON



Welcome to our newsletter for **FREE** learning with UNISON.

All you have to do is apply to join the many other members who enjoy and participate in these learning opportunities.



### Working with Cancer

This 2 hour session presented by Maggie's Centre is for anyone affected by cancer and how it impacts on working. It will provide information for both employers and employees on ways to support people experiencing cancer treatment or recovery in a more empathetic and understanding way

Date: Wed 15th January 2020  
Time: 0900 - 1100  
Location: Nottingham City Hospital

### Social Media

"Have you ever heard the following from your colleagues, 'Facebook', 'Tweeting', 'hashtags', 'posting online', but you're not quite sure what they are talking about? This course is for people who are interested in gaining an overview of what social media is all about and how you can use it effectively and safely.

To include: What is social media and how it can be used, gain a greater understanding about some of the most popular social media sites e.g. Facebook and Twitter. Positive and negative aspects of using social media and hands on experience of using social media sites."

Date: Saturday 25th January 2020  
Time: 0930 - 1800  
Location: Nottingham



### Deaf Awareness and BSL

The first part of the course will be Deaf Awareness and will be provided by a deaf BSL user and accompanied by a BSL interpreter, after a short break, an introduction to BSL.

Date: Saturday 15th February 2020  
Time: 1000 - 1300 Location: Nottingham



### Men's Health and Wellbeing

What does it mean to be a man? How can men look after their mental, physical and sexual health? Look at the stigma surrounding men's mental health and ideas on staying socially active and looking after your health and wellbeing.

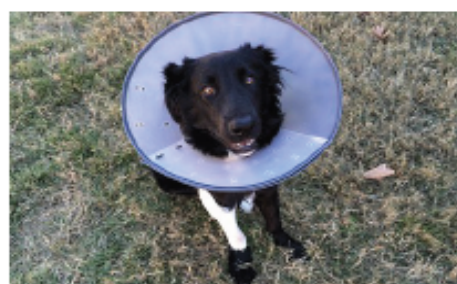
Date: Monday 24th February 2020  
Time: 0930 - 1500  
Location: Nottingham City Centre



### Understanding Depression & Anxiety

What is depression? What is anxiety? How does it affect us? Look at positive techniques and strategies to help self manage and where to go for help and assistance.

Date: Wednesday 11th March 2020  
Time: 0930 - 1500  
Location: Nottingham City Centre



### Pet First Aid

Provided by PDSA - Keeping our pets safe takes many important skills including a knowledge of first aid in an emergency - this course provides a mixture of theory, group discussion, video examples and practical tasks. Test your knowledge afterwards with an online quiz which you can receive a certificate for. Please wear comfortable clothing.

Date: Saturday 21st March 2020  
Time: 1000 - 1500  
Location: Mansfield Centre



### Car Maintenance

Provided by the professional team at Kwik-Fit, you'll learn all about basic car maintenance. How to check your tyres, change a wheel, do a regular vehicle check, topping up fluids and replacing screen wash plus much more. Please wear comfortable clothing because you will be hands on in the garage.

Date: Wednesday 25th March 2020  
Time: 1830 - 2030  
Location: Workshop

Date: Wednesday 15th April 2020  
Time: 1830 - 2030  
Location: Nottingham

## To apply

To apply for any of the above courses contact us at unisonnottslearning@gmail.com or contact your local Union Learning Rep or your branch office.



You can use this optional form to request time off to attend the Unison AGM. HR have granted paid time off for attendance and reasonable travelling time. Your manager should be informed of this in advance of the AGM and make appropriate arrangements, but it might be useful to you to complete this form. If you have problems, please return the form to the UNISON office or email [unison-info@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:unison-info@nottingham.ac.uk).

## TIME OFF REQUEST

University of Nottingham UNISON Branch Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday 5 March 2020 between 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

HR have been informed, and agreed that members can be released and allowed reasonable travel time to attend the AGM.

I ..... am requesting time away from my workplace to attend the meeting. I will be away from work between ..... a.m. and ..... p.m. (to include travel time).

Signed ..... Date .....

For the Manager to complete:

..... (name of employee)

has / has not (delete as appropriate) been given permission to attend the AGM

Signed.....Date .....

If permission is refused please give the reason below:

Please return this form to

UNISON, University of Nottingham Branch  
E133, Portland Building, University Park

