

2013 National Retired Members Conference UNISON PRELIMINARY AGENDA

Brighton Centre

08 Oct 2013 09 Oct 2013

AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS

1. AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDER 6 - TELLERS

Delete "Tellers will be appointed from amongst the members of staff present"

And insert "Conference shall appoint delegates to act as tellers".

National Retired Members' Committee

PENSIONS

2. SINGLE-TIER PENSION

Conference deplores the Government's Policy on a Single-Tier Pension of £144.00 a week for those retiring after April 2016.

It is clear from what is already known that existing pensioners, especially those that currently get less than £144.00 a week will not be included in the Government's plans. Future generations of pensioners will also end up with a state pension that is less generous than the current system.

One of the real anomalies in the Government's proposal is the transitional arrangements that will give public sector pensioners with better occupational pensions more money than their counterparts in low paid jobs, who never contracted out of the state second pension. This cannot be fair on some current and poorer pensioners.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee and call upon the National Executive Council to:

- 1) organise a campaign strategy to make our concerns known to the Government about a Single Tier Pension and to strongly campaign for a new scheme and a basic state pension of £178.00 per week that would take pensioners out of poverty;
- 2) to work closely with the National Pensioners Convention, pensioners organisations, and other trade unions and through Labour Link to seek support of Labour MPs to oppose this policy and replace it with a policy that is fair for all pensioners;

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- 3) to urge all Retired Members to write and lobby their MPs;
- 4) publicize opposition to the single tier pension through all appropriate channels;
- 5) report back to the National Retired Members Conference 2014.

Leicestershire Healthcare

3. GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED CHANGES TO BASIC STATE PENSION

In a White Paper published in January 2013 entitled "A Single Tier Pension – a Simple Foundation for Saving" the Government set out proposed changes to the State Pension scheme.

Conference is aware of the fact that it is the intention of the Government to introduce a flat rate basic state pension of £144 per week for a single pensioner in 2016. In 2012 the amount a single pensioner could exist on was estimated to be £178 per week before housing costs. This means that in 2016, a pension of £144 per week will be at least £34 below the poverty level, without taking into account other inflation costs.

Current pensioners will be excluded from the new scheme and this will create a two tier system. Under the new scheme pensioners currently in receipt of Pension Credit will continue to receive it. Other proposed changes will create problems.

The White Paper does nothing to help the existing pensioners who in 2013 are still living below the poverty level.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members Committee and calls on the National Executive Council to:-

- 1) urgently initiate a campaign for a basic state pension of at least £178 per week for a single pensioner in 2013
- 2) work closely with Labour Link, the National Pensioners Convention, Trades Union Congress, Scottish Trades Union Congress, Scottish Pensioners Forum, other trade unions and relevant organisations to gain support for the campaign.
- 3) involve UNISON National Women's Committee in order to emphasise the gap in pension provision between women and men
- 4) report progress on a regular basis in UNISON publications and at the National Retired Members Committee meetings for circulation to Regions and Branches.

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Isle of Wight LG

4. PENSIONS

Conference notes that the new Pensions Bill introduced to Parliament on 9 May 2013, will do nothing to address pensioner poverty and will perpetuate sex discrimination in the provision of pensions. Research shows that one in five people retiring in 2013 will fall below the income poverty line (£8,254 a year for a single pensioner in the UK) and nearly a quarter of women (compared to 8% of men) will enter retirement entirely dependent on the basic state pension - currently a maximum of £110.15 a week. Many women will be further disadvantaged by combining the basic state pension with the state earnings related pension (SERPS).

The proposed increase in the flat rate state pension to £144 per week from 2016 will be funded by making people work longer and remains well below the poverty level which currently stands at £178 per week. The changes will also mean an increase in employee National Insurance Contributions (NICs) for those in occupational pension schemes and any benefits for those already retired will be offset by the ending of Savings Credit.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members Committee to continue to work closely with the National Executive Council, Regional Retired Members Committees and other pensioner forums in a campaign that focuses on increasing the state pension to a level above the defined level of poverty in the UK; ending the inequality in pension provision between men and women; and reducing the state pension age".

UNISON Northern Ireland

5. COALITION GOVERNMENT'S BASIC STATE PENSION PROPOSALS

On 14 January 2013, the Coalition Government published a White Paper on the reform of the state pension system entitled 'A Single Tier Pension: a Simple Foundation for Saving'.

Contrary to the Coalition Government's view, the complexity of the current state pension system is less of a barrier to saving than the lack of spare capital which individuals can put aside for their retirement and also the risks associated with defined contribution occupational pensions which are wholly reliant on the performance of the financial market.

Conference notes that it remains the intention of the Coalition Government to introduce a new flat rate basic state pension of £144 per week for a single pensioner

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in 2016. The amount a single pensioner can exist on was estimated to be £178 (before housing costs) in 2012. Therefore, £144 in 2016 will be at least £34 below the poverty level without taking account of inflation or other costs.

Existing pensioners will be excluded from the new scheme therefore this will create a two-tier system, for many it would be a retrograde step. Under the new scheme, those pensioners currently in receipt of Pension Credit will continue to receive it. Savings Credit will be abolished and there will be a five year transitional arrangement to allow pensioners to get extra help when Housing and Council Tax benefits are abolished, but no firm details have been published on this yet. Obviously, these proposed arrangements will create an even more complicated means-testing system than at present, causing more poverty.

The White Paper will not put an additional single penny into the pockets of existing pensioners despite 1 in 5 older people still living below the poverty level in 2013.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members Committee and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) urgently initiate a campaign for a basic state pension of at least £178 per week for a single pensioner in 2013;
- 2) campaign for the basic state pension to be uprated annually in line with average earnings, Retail Price Index (RPI), Consumer Price Index (CPI) or 2.5% (whichever is the greater) in order to maintain its value;
- 3) work closely with the National Pensioners Convention, Trades Union Congress, Scottish Trades Union Congress, Scottish Pensioners Forum, other trades unions and relevant organisations to gain support for the campaign;
- 4) urgently organise a campaign strategy to make our concerns known to the Coalition Government, thoroughly researching the facts and figures beforehand;
- 5) involve UNISON National Women's Committee in order to emphasise the gap in pension provision between women and men;
- 6) report progress on a regular basis in UNISON publications and at all the National Retired Members Committee meetings for circulation to Regions and Branches.

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Hampshire (L)

6. REMOVAL OF GENDER DISCRIMINATION IN PENSION PROVISION

Conference notes that the median income of a woman pensioner is less than two thirds that of a man and that two thirds of pensioners living below the poverty line are women. This shocking injustice is the result of lifelong discrimination at work. In general compared to men women earn less so they save less and so in retirement they are therefore poorer.

Conference notes in particular that:

- 1) three quarters of part-time workers are women and, while the gender pay gap based on the median earnings of full-time workers has narrowed, the gap between full-time men and part-time women has hardly moved;
- 2) employers' failure to make jobs flexible enough to accommodate women's roles as unpaid carers affects women's employment rates and earnings. This especially affects older women workers so the gender pay gap widens as retirement approaches.

Conference also notes the Government's attacks on pensioners and how these have particularly affected poorer pensioners who are mainly women. These include:

- A) raising women's State Pension Age and the Pension Credit qualifying age;
- B) raising the Pension Credit Guarantee by less than that of inflation;
- C) cutting and now proposing to abolish Savings Credit;
- D) cutting Winter Fuel Allowance;
- E) proposing to increase the number of years' National Insurance Contributions needed for a full State Pension;
- F) removing Pension Credit from couples where only one partner is over Pension Credit qualifying age; and,
- G) ending over-60s' free swimming.

Conference believes that closing the gender pensions gap is crucial to ending pensioner poverty and therefore that ending sex discrimination must be put at the heart of further pension reform.

Conference considers that:

- i) any National Insurance Contribution requirement for a full State Pension ought to be set at a level that does not simply reproduce workplace sex discrimination or penalise women for their role as unpaid carers;

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- ii) the best route out of poverty is work (providing work pays) so the Living Wage should be set at a level that takes account of the need to save for retirement;
- iii) saving should pay too so Savings Credit should be restored to at least its 2010 real value;
- iv) campaigns for the Living Wage should concentrate, first, on areas of employment where the gender pay gap is most stubborn; and,
- v) there must be no repeat of Labour's 2007 Pensions Act which left existing pensioners high and dry; further reform must include retrospection so that all pensioners are treated alike never mind when they reached state pension age.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members Committee to discuss these points with the National Executive Council and the National Women's Committee with a view to UNISON developing a strategy and a programme of work to put an end to women's poverty in old age

West Midlands Region

7. 25 PENCE AGE ADDITION PAYMENT FOR OVER 80s

On 21 March 2013, Chancellor, George Osborne, made no mention of increasing the Age Addition Payment of 25 pence per week paid to pensioners receiving the State Pension on reaching the age of 80 years.

Conference is very concerned that the age addition of 25 pence per week was not increased in the 2013 Budget. It was introduced in September 1971 by Sir Keith Joseph, Conservative MP. He said it was to recognise 'albeit in a small way the special claims of very elderly people who need help rather more than others. As they grow old their possessions wear out and they need help for necessary jobs they used to do themselves' (Hansard). Nothing has changed that situation since 1971!

In 1971, 25 pence was 4% of the basic State Pension and would buy, for example, either 12 large eggs or one pound of bacon or one pound of Cheddar cheese or 4 white loaves costing only 23 pence! Today, 25 pence doesn't even buy a first class stamp! Sir Keith Joseph's good intentions have long been forgotten since his statement 42 years ago.

As the present Coalition Government has no intention of raising the basic state pension to the poverty level or above, a substantial increase in the age addition payment to £30 per week for the pensioners aged 80 and over is urgently needed.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members Committee and calls on the National Executive Council to:

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- 1) campaign urgently for an increase to £30 per week age addition payment to state pensioners aged 80 and over;
- 2) liaise with Labour Link to bring this situation to the notice of MPs;
- 3) work closely with the National Pensioners Convention, Trade Union Congress, Scottish Trades Union Congress, Scottish Pensioners Forum, other trade unions and relevant organisations to gain support for the campaign;
- 4) publicise the campaign strategy to Regions and Branches for their support in achieving the increase.

South East Region

8. PENSION CREDIT

Conference notes that:

- 1) there are two kinds of Pension Credit, Guarantee Credit which sets a minimum income for everybody over the qualifying age, and Savings Credit, which seeks to ensure that people over 65 who have saved a modest amount for old age are better off as a result;
- 2) four in ten pensioners qualify for Pension Credit but a third of them do not claim;
- 3) under Labour, both kinds of Pension Credit rose with prices, but under the Coalition, Guarantee Credit has risen each year by the same amount in cash as the State Pension cutting the living standards of the poorest pensioners while Savings Credit has faced even greater cuts;
- 4) the Welfare Reform Act removes Pension Credit from couples where only one partner is over the qualifying age;
- 5) the government intends to abolish both kinds of Pension Credit for people reaching State Retirement Age from 2016 but it will remain for older pensioners;

Conference considers that:

- a) the level of public service pensions in payment makes it likely that many UNISON Retired Members, especially women members, qualify for Pension Credit;
- b) Guarantee Credit should be restored urgently to at least its 2010 real value and restored to mixed-age couples;
- c) Savings Credit was never an adequate reward for savings but it is better than nothing so it too should be restored to at least its 2010 real value and to mixed-age couples and be retained for those reaching state pension age from 2016;

Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to raise the question of Pension Credit with the National Executive Council with a view to:

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- i) liaising with the Service Group Executives and with other trades unions as need be to urge the Local Government Pension Funds, the National Health Service Pension Scheme and other appropriate pension providers to promote Pension Credit take-up among their pensioners; and,
- ii) raising with the National Affiliated Political Committee (besides raising all UNISON's other policies on pensions) the need for an incoming Labour government to act urgently to restore the living standards of less-well-off pensioners by:
 - a) restoring the value of both kinds of pension credit;
 - b) restoring eligibility to mixed-age couples; and,
 - c) retaining Saving Credit for all pensioners.

Wolverhampton General Branch

BENEFITS AND INCOMES

9. DEFENDING UNIVERSAL BENEFITS

The Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and the Works and Pensioners Secretary Ian Duncan-Smith have joined the debate to argue that pensioners' benefits should be means-tested.

The Business Secretary Vince Cable suggested the Universal Benefits should become taxable income. This is evidence enough to show that the Coalition government is preparing to change the entitlement to pensioners' benefits.

The Labour Leader Ed. Milliband has also said that he will review pensioner benefits if he wins the next General Election.

Universal benefits such as winter fuel allowance, TV licence and the bus pass enable pensioners to stay independent and active and for many lift them above the poverty line.

Buses, for many pensioners are the only means available for them to travel away from their homes. Without the bus pass, bus travel would be unaffordable for many of our pensioners. This would leave many pensioners isolated, particularly in rural communities. It also gives them an opportunity to visit friends and family and help out in their communities through volunteering and unpaid caring.

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Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to call upon the National Executive Council to:-

- 1) work with other Unions, the National Pensioners Convention and other pensioners groups to lobby MPs of all parties to seek their pledges to maintain Universal Benefits for all pensioners'.
- 2) encourage members to write to their MPs.
- 3) to launch a public campaign with an on line and/or paper based petition using whatever media campaign groups are available in order to keep universal benefits for all pensioners.
- 4) to report back at the 2014 National Retired Members Conference.

Leicestershire Healthcare

10. CONCESSIONARY BUS FARES (PENSIONERS)

Conference has noted on several occasions that the concessionary bus pass is an important benefit for many pensioners affording them the opportunity of increased social activity and thus better health. Studies have shown that the cost of the pass is more than recouped by the unpaid contributions to the economy made by pensioners.

Conference is concerned about the comments emanating from politicians about means testing this and other universal pensioner benefits.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council (NEC), Labour Link and other relevant bodies about ways of opposing these views.

Lancashire UNISON

11. WINTER FUEL ALLOWANCE

Conference is very concerned that the Coalition Government's Budget on 21 March 2013 did nothing to help pensioners who are unable to cope with high winter fuel bills. The Winter Fuel Allowance was reduced in March 2011 by £100 (down from £400 to £300) for the over 80's households and by £50 (down from £250 to £200) for the under 80's households. George Osborne, the Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer, kept the cuts a secret in 2011 and buried the information in his Budget papers which didn't form part of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement.

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In the 21 March 2013 Budget, The Chancellor didn't even mention the winter fuel allowance, despite the fact that the 2012/13 winter had been particularly harsh and fuel prices had increased considerably. The combination of these two factors has resulted in an even higher number of cold-related deaths amongst older people. No wonder George Osborne didn't mention it!

Has anything changed to encourage the Government not to increase the Winter Fuel Allowance? No. Energy prices have risen substantially and consistently, the very cold weather lasted longer and was much worse this winter and the basic state pension has not been increased enough to allow pensioners to deal with their fuel bills. More and more pensioners have to choose between keeping warm or affording food causing many more cold-related deaths. The poverty level is £178 per week for a single pensioner and the basic state pension in April 2013 is £104.64, a shortfall of £73.36.

The UK is the 7th richest nation in the world but the Coalition Government is treating older people in this despicable way, obviously not caring that nations are judged on the way they treat their elderly. The UK state pension is one of the worst in Europe (4th from bottom); therefore coping during cold weather leaves very little if anything for other essential expenses, such as food.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members Committee and calls on the National Executive Council to:

- 1) campaign urgently for an increase in the Winter Fuel Allowance to £700 for the over 80's households and £500 for the under 80's households in 2013 and take positive action to make our concerns known to the Government through LabourLink, the UK Trades Union Councils (TUC) and UNISON MPs;
- 2) report on progress to the National Retired Members Committee meetings; the information must then be circulated to Regions and Branches;
- 3) publicise progress in UNISON magazines on a regular basis and report back to the 2014 National Retired Members Conference on action taken and actual achievements.

Hampshire (L)

CARE OF OLDER PEOPLE

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12. SOCIAL CARE FUNDING

From April 2016 the cost of care in residential homes will be capped at £72,000. This figure does not include general living costs (estimated at around £12,000) or domiciliary care. In order to qualify for this cap an individual will need to meet certain eligibility criteria which is either in the substantial or critical needs category.

Pensioners with income or assets, including property, of more than £118,000 will have to pay the full £72,000 before they receive any state support and pensioners with assets between £17,500 and £118,000 will have to pay a proportion of the cost up to a maximum of £72,000.

A universal deferred payment scheme is to be introduced so that the cost of care will be paid from the proceeds of the sale of their property after they have passed away.

The current system is dogged by means testing, a post code lottery of charges, a rationing of services and poor standards of care.

Setting a lifetime cap on care cost of £75,000 will help just 10% of those who need care whilst the majority of pensioners will be left to struggle on with a third rate service.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members Committee to work with the National Executive Council and other appropriate bodies to lobby Labour Party MPs to include in their Manifesto, the following proposals:

- 1) a National Care Service based on the NHS principles, free for everyone who needs some form of care;
- 2) improve terms and conditions for care staff, modernisation of residential homes and improve regulations and monitoring of public sector providers;
- 3) full merging of Health and Social Care with a single budget controlled by the NHS and run by the NHS. ONE PERSON to be RESPONSIBLE for the Care Plan of both residential and domiciliary care;
- 4) priority for independence at home so that people can remain in their home for as long as possible;
- 5) report back at the Retired Members' National Conference 2014.

Leicestershire Healthcare

13. CAP ON CARE FEES

Conference instructs the National Retired Committee and calls on the National Executive Council to liaise with the National Pensioners Convention, Trade Union Congress and all appropriate organisations to campaign for the abandonment of the

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current £75,000 cap on care fees and promote by any means, the provision of a free care service as required.

This to be financed from general taxation with no means testing or post code lottery.

Conference instructs the National Retired Member Committee and calls upon the National Executive Council to report on progress to all UNISON Members.

South East Region

14. THE CARE BILL

Conference believes that the Care Bill published on 13 May 2013 falls very far short of the needs of elderly people in many ways.

Most importantly, it does not provide for a National Care Service funded from general taxation, like the NHS. Instead, it proposes a “capped” financial arrangement whereby if the cost of a person’s care exceeds a particular financial limit, the excess costs will be met by Government through local authorities. The capping does not include daily living costs [accommodation, food etc] and can be assessed to mean different things in different cases. Cuts in local authority funding present the grim picture of other services being slashed so that statutory costs can be met, and the amount to be capped will be increased annually to meet inflation, though there is no guarantee that funding will be increased.

Carers, although the Bill is trumpeted as providing new rights for them, will encounter a minefield of varying assessments and doubts as to whether they will qualify for any support. Although there will be a deferred payment system for the uncapped costs of care [advertised as “no need to sell your home whilst you’re still alive”] carers could still find themselves not only grieving on the loss of their loved one but homeless as the required payment is no longer deferred and the home needs to be sold to meet it.

The provisions regarding elderly adults at risk of abuse are scanty and provide a time-consuming process which seems to lean in favour of the abuser rather than the abused.

The Bill contains many other “devil in the detail” provisions which will not in any way improve the lot of people needing care or their carers. If it is passed into law, UNISON must not stop campaigning for improvements until we achieve our policy of a National Care Service funded from taxation and free at the point of need.

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Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to work with the NEC and Labour Link to publicise the failings of the Bill and to continue the campaign by all means possible.

Suffolk County

15. CARER'S ALLOWANCE

Conference believes that as many older people as possible who need care and support should, where practicable, be able to remain in their own homes.

Conference believes that both the current and proposed means tested Carer's Allowance is inadequate and results in many people choosing not to be carers to family or friends because they cannot afford to do so. This means that many people have to choose institutional care rather than care within their own home.

Conference further believes that the cost of an increased Carer's Allowance would be offset by a reduction of cost incurred in providing state funded care.

Conference notes that the proposals for Care of Older People to be introduced from 2014/15 will not greatly change the existing situation whereby many older people have to sell their homes to pay for their care.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members Committee and calls upon the National Executive Council to campaign for a Carer's Allowance which is not means tested, available for up to 20 hours a week and is at least equivalent to the National Minimum Wage.

Shropshire General

16. ETHICAL CARE

Conference recognises that with an ageing population, older people will increasingly need quality home care services. Therefore it is vital to improve the UK's homecare system for the people who receive it and the workers who provide it.

However, a survey commissioned by UNISON into the current state of homecare illustrated the many failings of the current system. For example 79.1% of respondents reported that their work schedule is arranged in such a way that they either have to rush their work or leave a client early to get to the next visit on time. One homecare worker wrote in the report: "I never seem to have enough time for the human contact and care that these people deserve".

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Conference notes that in response to this situation, UNISON has created an Ethical Care Charter which provides a set of standards that Councils should stick to when they commission homecare services.

The Charter calls for service users to be given the time to talk with their homecare workers and receive the same worker wherever possible. It also calls for homecare workers to be treated with dignity and allowed to do their jobs better, to be paid at least a living wage, including travel time and to receive regular quality training.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members Committee to promote the Ethical Care Campaign amongst UNISON's retired members so that they can be involved in helping to create communities where people in receipt of care and those who provide it are both treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve.

National Retired Members' Committee

17. PLEDGE TO CLOSE THE HEALTH AND CARE GAP

NHS and Local Government leaders have announced a shared commitment to 'close the gap' between the health and care systems. A series of pilot projects will begin in the autumn of 2013 to explore new ways of pooling budgets, speeding up discharge from hospital and conducting assessments. This initiative is to be welcomed – if it can be shown to improve the experiences of older people and their families and carers. It is predominantly older people – especially those with multiple long-term conditions – who find themselves victims of the overall failure of successive governments to recognise and plan for the needs of a growing elderly population. We hear reports of the manifestations of this failure nearly every day, and Age UK – using government statistics – has measured the size and extent of some of the problems. They illustrate a growing disconnection between the health and social care systems – something that many older people, their families and their carers know only too well.

With Local Government facing further cuts and the NHS struggling to run A&E Departments and meet even basic standards of dignity and care, these pilot projects are a big challenge.

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This Conference urges the National Retired Members Committee and the National Executive Council to work constructively with the Department of Health, the NHS, the Local Government Association and Directors of Social Care – together with Age UK, the NPC and other relevant organisations – to demonstrate that health and care services can work together to meet the needs of older and vulnerable people, whilst fully supporting good employment conditions and relevant training for staff in these services. The pilot projects are a first step. A properly-funded, well-staffed, National Health and Care Service – centred on the person and their family and carers - must be our goal.

York City Branch

HEALTH

18. INFLUENCING THE NEW NHS

Conference is aware that health and social care are areas of major concern to retired members and that the changes to the NHS arising from the Health and Social Care Act 2012 will impact on the services provided to older people.

Conference notes that UNISON fought a hard battle against the government's Health and Social Care Bill because the moves towards wholesale marketisation are completely inappropriate for our NHS – a system that has always thrived on co-operation and solidarity.

Conference also notes that although UNISON disagrees with the new structures, it is important that we work within the structures to exert an influence over the future direction of our health services.

These structures provide an opportunity for patients and members of the public to get involved in various decision-making bodies including for example:

- 1) HealthWatch which replaces LINKs as the patient representative body locally;
- 2) Foundation Trusts

Conference believes that UNISON Retired Members are ideally placed to take up these roles because many of them have:

- a) the time not available to working colleagues to get involved;
- b) acquired experience and knowledge of the functions of the NHS, either through their employment in the Healthcare sector or as patients.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to work with the Health Care Service Group Executive and appropriate organisations such as the National Pensioners' Convention to involve UNISON retired members and the wider

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pensioners' movement in influencing the new NHS using tools such as the UNISON guide "Stronger Together".

National Retired Members' Committee

19. PENSIONERS AND PROSTATE CANCER

Conference notes with concern that prostate cancer has overtaken lung cancer as the single most common cancer in all men in the UK and accounts for 24% of all new cancer diagnoses.

Research has shown that 1 in every 9 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer at some point in their lives. 100 cases of prostate cancer are diagnosed every day or 1 every 15 minutes.

Conference further notes that prostate cancer mainly affects men over the age of 50 and the risk increases with age. The average age for men to be diagnosed with prostate cancer is in their retirement years between 70 and 74 years.

All pensioners need to be educated on the symptoms and treatment available and early diagnosis is important if the cancer is to be successfully treated.

Men including pensioners are reluctant to visit the doctor and many find it difficult to talk about prostate cancer.

Conference calls upon National Retired Members' Committee to work with the National Executive Council and other relevant organisations to:

- 1) campaign for greater understanding and awareness of prostate cancer and the benefits of earlier screening for pensioners;
- 2) disseminate and publicise the research and other information about prostate cancer in UNISON publications.

Greater London Region

20. INEQUALITY OF HEALTH SCREENING

This Conference notes there is inequality of screening in the Health Service. Once people reach 70, they are not automatically called for screening, but have to request it. This gives people the assumption that the incidence of diseases goes down, whereas with breast cancer the incidence actually increases after 70. This gives rise to people not requesting screening as they feel there is little risk.

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This Conference calls on the National Retired Members Committee to mount a campaign to inform members that people over 70 are more at risk and therefore should request screening on a regular basis.

Cymru/Wales Region

21. BREAST CANCER SCREENING

The NHS Breast Cancer Screening Programme provides free breast screening every three years for all women aged 50 and over. At present routine invitations are sent to women up to age 70 and in England the age range is being extended to age 47 to 73. This extension should be completed by 2016. However, the incidence of breast cancer increases with age and women are encouraged to continue receiving screening after the cut-off for routine invitations by requesting mammograms from their local unit every three years. Breast screening units aim to help women remember to do this by handing them a card at their last routine screening appointment.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee and calls upon the National Executive Council to liaise with the National Women's Committee, to publicise the fact that the risk of developing breast cancer increases with age and that women should continue to access three-yearly breast screening after age 73 by making requests as necessary to their local breast screening unit.

South East Region

22. CANCER TREATMENT IS BEING DENIED TO OLDER WOMEN

Conference is very concerned that women aged 70 and over are being denied adjuvant (i.e., additional treatment) chemotherapy in the treatment of breast cancer – the standard of care in younger patients according to a new study.

Researchers from Brighton & Sussex Medical School, University of Sussex, found that only 14% of patients over 70 with early breast cancer are offered standard chemotherapy after surgery. Professor Lesley Fallowfield states that elderly breast cancer patients should be assessed in the same way that younger patients are, without prejudice or unreasonably ageist perceptions. Unfortunately, routine testing for HER2, recommended for women diagnosed with invasive breast cancer because results may affect treatment, recommendations and decisions, is not being received by elderly women. This is essential information and, without it, it is a guess as to the most appropriate treatment.

It should be noted that about 13,000 women in the UK are diagnosed as having breast cancer each year, and that figure is expected to increase as the population ages.

A further statistic from the Office for National Statistics states that women aged 70 have a life expectancy of a further 17 years. National guidelines should be

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developed to support recommendations if elderly patients are to receive fair and equal assessment of their treatment requirements for breast cancer in the future.

Conference therefore requests that the National Retired Members' Committee work with UNISON's National Executive Council and Healthcare Service Group Executive to:

- 1) urge the Government's National Cancer Initiative, Department of Health, to produce the appropriate National Guidelines to ensure elderly patients receive comprehensive assessment and treatment when diagnosed with cancer in order to avoid unnecessary suffering and death;
- 2) publicise information to UNISON retired members to help elderly patients with breast cancer to understand the assessment and treatment process and therefore improve their survival likelihood.

National Retired Members' Committee

23. MEDICATION PACKAGING AND CONTENT ISSUES

Modern day packaging of many types of medication is becoming increasingly difficult for elderly people to cope with, in particular the 'bubble strip' type packaging of tablets. This type of packaging often results in the user suffering finger cuts and sometimes the destruction of the capsule encased in the 'bubble'.

In addition to difficulties with inappropriate packaging, inconsistencies in the size and colour of the box, and even the size and colour of the tablets are causes of concern for the elderly. Depending on where each pharmacy sources their supplies, it is possible to receive medication in a different form on each occasion a prescription is processed. This may not be too much of a problem for younger patients, but for the elderly it can at the least be very confusing and at its worst very dangerous.

Conference calls upon the National Retired Members Committee and the National Executive Council to use all powers at their disposal to seek to campaign for better, more easily manageable medication packaging and consistency and standardisation of packaging and contents across medication manufacturers.

York City Branch

24. LIVERPOOL CARE PATHWAY

This Conference notes that the Liverpool Care Pathway (LCP) has been the subject of emotive reporting across all media recently. These reports have included allegations that NHS staff are using the LCP to justify prematurely ending the life of older people who are bed blocking and/or costing too much to treat. It has also been

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suggested that there are "targets" for the use of LCP and NHS Trusts are rewarded financially if these are met.

The Pathway, developed in the late 1990's for the care of terminally ill cancer patients and then extended to include all patients deemed to be in the last days or hours of life, involves a multi-disciplinary team caring for the patient agreeing that all reversible causes for the patient's conditions have been considered and that the patient is in fact in the last days or hours of life. This team should then make suggestions for palliative care including whether non-essential treatments and medications should be discontinued. Continuing care would include treatments to manage pain, agitation, airway blockages, nausea, shortness of breath etc. In other words, anything to make the patient more comfortable. Used correctly the Pathway involves clear communication with the patient where possible, the relatives and ensures that everyone understands the procedure and is in the best interest of the patient.

This is the central premise of the Pathway. It is to enable the medical and caring team to act in the best interest of the patient to cover the medical, physical, emotional, social and spiritual and all other factors relevant to the patient's welfare.

Regular reassessment of the patient's condition may indicate an improvement in which case removal from the Pathway is indicated.

In a recent survey 90% of palliative care specialist doctors would be prepared to be placed on the programme if they were nearing death.

So much for the principles of the Pathway. Currently the procedure is mired in controversy. The Daily Mail and the Telegraph have run stories covering claims made by families that:

- 1) they were not told their relatives had been put on the Pathway;
- 2) people are put on the Pathway inappropriately in an attempt to save money and free up beds;
- 3) people removed from the Pathway have lived for a period thereafter.

This Conference recognises there have been loud calls through the press to totally ban the Pathway due to adverse outcomes when it has been wrongly, inappropriately or mistakenly implemented. However, this criticism is misdirected. Criticism should be directed at the abuse of the procedure - not the procedure itself.

It is essential for our peace of mind that we are fully aware of:

- a) the benefits of Pathway when used correctly by knowledgeable multi-disciplinary teams;
- b) the possible abuses that can occur;
- c) which local NHS services use the procedure;

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From this position of knowledge we can ensure we have a choice as to whether the Pathway is used and either our relatives or ourselves are treated according to the full principles of the Pathway.

An independent review was launched in February 2013 to investigate concerns, particularly around accounts of the withdrawal of foods and fluids from dying patients, and the use of financial incentives. It is being chaired by Baroness Neuberger, Senior Rabbi at the West London Synagogue and former Chief Executive of the King's Fund. The review will report to Department of Health Ministers and the NHS Commissioning Board with its conclusions and recommendations by summer of 2013.

This Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to:

- i) work with Regions and Branches to promote awareness of the Liverpool Care Pathway and the possible abuses;
- ii) encourage Branches to seek information from their own Health Board/Trusts regarding the use of the Pathway; and
- iii) publicise the outcome of the independent review both through Regions, Branches, U Magazine and In Focus.

Scotland Region

INTERNAL / ORGANISATIONAL

25. RETIRED MEMBERS ORGANISING IN UNISON

Due to the Coalition Government's twin track to on the one hand selling off as much of the public sector as they can, and on the other hand frantically slashing any services and budgets they still control in order to cut their way out of the recession caused in part by their policies in the first place – UNISON is facing unprecedented challenges in organising and representing our members effectively.

In the core public services experienced activists are retiring or being made redundant, or seeing facility time attacked – while the growing percentage of our membership in outsourced and privatised employers as well as in fragmented work environments like care homes and the homecare sector which many retired people rely on are having to work twice as hard just to gain and maintain recognition and they and branches are forced to find new ways to provide adequate support and representation.

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Conference recognises that the appointment of Fighting Fund Organisers across the country over the last few years has strengthened our organisation and had a big effect in terms of recruiting new members and activists.

However Conference also believes that all members of the union, including retired members have a role to play in terms of challenging the government's agenda and in terms of building and contributing to the union's activist base.

Retired members with our wealth of knowledge and experience built up over years of activity and with our connections and strength in the wider community as both the users of services delivered by our members, and as the friends and relatives of service users have a massive role to play.

Social Care is a growing industry in the UK with an estimated 1.5 million people working in the sector and on top of that some reports claim up to 5 million people providing unpaid care and support to a loved one. The social care industry is notorious for long hours, low pay, and high turnover of staff.

All of us will require social care at some point - and quality and dignity of care should be a right for all – quality and dignity of work for those providing social care is an essential part of providing that, and UNISON as the lead union has a responsibility to work towards this as a key alternative to austerity.

Conference therefore resolves that all retired members should aim to work with their branch and regional committees to develop organising strategies that recognise our strengths, knowledge, and community links to help the union to further our organising agenda in a way that takes local priorities and circumstances into account.

Conference also calls on the National Retired Members Committee to do the following:

- 1) work with the Strategic Organising Unit (SOU) to explore how retired members can work with the union nationally to improve our organising in the social care sector and build stronger links with other community based organisations such as Age UK and Carers UK;
- 2) work with the Strategic Organising Unit (SOU) and Learning and Organising Services (LAOS) to develop a support and training programme that will encourage and assist UNISON members whether retired or working to play a

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more active role in the wider community in order to engage with potential allies – such as by becoming trustees, school governors, or local councillors etc.

National Retired Members' Committee

26. RETAINING MEMBERS WHEN THEY RETIRE

Conference recalls the resolution (motion 27 as amended) of the 2011 Retired Members' Conference which noted the efforts of many branches and branch retired members' groups to retain members when they retire but regretted the apparent lack of support, co-ordination and reporting to sustain these efforts.

The resolution instructed the National Retired Members' Committee (NRMC), seeking the support of the National Executive Council as need be, to develop a target-led approach to retaining members at retirement supported by appropriate reporting and monitoring and arrangements to share best practice between regions and branches.

The resolution expressed the fear that a haphazard approach may reproduce or exaggerate patterns of inclusion and exclusion among Full Members and in the workforce.

Conference recalls that NRMC reported to last year's conference that its agendas have a standing item on recruitment (meaning perhaps retention at and after retirement?) under which regional initiatives are discussed and best practice shared. However, asked what best practice there had been, NRMC, in reply, did not give a single instance.

Also, in reply to a supplementary question at the 2011 conference, NRMC said it would, in future, look at diversity in relation to retaining members at retirement. However it notes that, asked in 2012 whether it had done so, NRMC made no reply.

Conference regrets the lack of progress on this matter. It repeats and confirms the instructions it gave NRMC two years ago and seeks a full report next year including:

- 1) numbers retained and numbers lost at retirement;

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- 2) a breakdown of these numbers and an analysis of who is kept, who is lost and why;
- 3) examples of good practice and measures of their impact; and,
- 4) proposals.

Wolverhampton General Branch

27. UNISON WEBSITE - RETIRED MEMBERS' PAGE

Conference notes that, in contrast to the rest of the UNISON website, the Retired Members' page is sparse, seldom revised, badly out of date and has been so for a long time.

Conference believes this reflects poorly upon UNISON.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to seek to have the page maintained to the same standard as the rest of the website.

Wolverhampton General Branch

28. LACK OF PUBLICITY FOR RETIRED MEMBERS

Since Interactive ceased production very little information of direct relevance to retired members has been made available by UNISON to individual members. U-magazine has mentioned retired members only in passing on the letters page. It was suggested that an on-line version of Interactive might be produced but so far this has not happened and the UNISON website continues to contain nothing recent relating to retired members except for conference information. Unfortunately, due to failing health or distance, many retired members are unable to have meaningful contact with retired members' sections and therefore receive no information on UNISON or National Pensioners' Convention (NPC) action on behalf of pensioners.

Therefore, this Conference instructs the National Retired Members Committee (NRMC) to ensure that retired members are kept fully informed and able to participate in relevant campaigns by posting on the Retired Members section of the UNISON website:

- 1) a post-conference report containing information on campaigns to be supported during the coming year;
- 2) a report following each meeting of the NRMC outlining ongoing action on campaigns it is supporting, including e-petition addresses, letter-writing campaigns and demonstrations;

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3) timely information on NPC activities.

East Sussex Area (L)

29. ONE IN EIGHT – MAKE IT COUNT!

Conference notes that of UNISON's membership of 1,306,500 at 30 September 2012, over 160,000, nearly one-eighth, were Retired Members.

Conference also notes that the general management and control of the union between National Delegate Conferences is vested in the National Executive Council (NEC) which has full power and authority, subject to the rules and National Delegate Conference policy decisions, to act on behalf of the union in every respect and for every purpose falling within the objects of the union.

However, conference fails to see how the NEC is able to exercise its function and authority with respect to one-eighth of the members excluded from the democratic process, who may neither serve on the NEC nor vote for those who do and to whom, therefore, the NEC owes no accountability.

Conference considers that the NEC's annual report to this year's National Delegate Conference reflects this weakness: it is a report of 220 paragraphs only one of which refers directly to Retired Members (paragraph 82 concerning "Abdullah" equal pay claims) and only one to older people (paragraph 86 concerning universal pensioner benefits).

Conference instructs the National Retired Members Committee to seek a discussion with the NEC about how to overcome this apparent weakness including, in particular, whether enfranchising Retired Members would help do so or, if not, what else would.

Conference further instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to make a full report of this discussion to next year's Conference.

Wolverhampton General Branch

30. UNISON CHARTER FOR OLDER PEOPLE

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Conference recalls the UNISON Charter for Older People which was, it found, useful material to retain members at retirement and to promote UNISON, its Retired Members' Organisation and trades unionism generally to old people and their organisations.

Conference is disappointed that the charter is long out of print and there are no plans to re-issue it.

Conference notes that:

- 1) in reply to a question on its Annual Report in 2011, the National Retired Members' Committee said that, instead of the charter, reference to older members' issues will be included as Million Voices materials are updated; but,
- 2) asked in 2012 what materials had been updated and what references there had been, the committee gave only one instance, the Home Care Campaign.

Conference considers there is a need for both:

- a) material which integrates old people's issues into the wider work of the union to promote UNISON as a whole including its Retired Members; and,
- b) material which concentrates on old peoples issues in particular and which promotes the Retired Members' Organisation as such.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to seek a revision and reprint of the charter or something similar.

Wolverhampton General Branch

31. BRANCH RETIRED MEMBERS' SECRETARIES' HANDBOOK

Conference notes the handbook has been out of print for several years and although, in reply to a question on its 2011 Annual Report, the National Retired Members' Committee confirmed that a reprint had been ordered, this turned out not to be true.

Conference recognises that the handbook's guidance is available elsewhere but notes that since, by and large, retired members occupy no other roles in UNISON, they may not have as easy access as full members to a wide range of materials.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to seek a revision and reprint of the handbook as soon as possible.

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Wolverhampton General Branch

32. RESTRUCTURING THE ANNUAL RETIRED MEMBERS' CONFERENCE

Conference notes that major part of the business very rightly at the Annual Retired Members' Conference is spent debating and discussing resolutions on matters of interest to retired members over long periods during the day and half of conference time. This can be tiring and demanding on elderly delegates.

The Conference business can be modified utilising the morning period on the first day to commence the business of the Conference. This extra time could be used to break the conference time into chunks to offer opportunities for delegates to make contributions in a participative manner.

Conference instructs National Retired Members' Committee to work with the National Executive Council and other relevant bodies and individuals to:

- a) investigate re-structuring the conference business including the possible inclusion of outside speakers with expert knowledge, power and influence on matters that affect pensioners
- b) report back with possible proposals for consideration at the 2014 National Retired Members' Conference.

Greater London Region

33. SELF-ORGANISED GROUPS

Conference regrets the persistence of mistaken guidance on retired members taking part in Self-Organised Groups (SOGs)

Conference largely welcomes the guidance developed in 2008 and revised in March 2010 on retired members taking part in the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGB&T) SOG. It has appeared on the LGB&T Members' page of the UNISON website ever since and, lately, on the Retired Members' page too.

Conference considers this guidance ought to apply equally to the four SOGs and, since it amounts to an interpretation of rule, it is a matter for the National Executive Council (NEC) under Rule A.2.2.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to approach the four SOG National Committees with a view to revising the guidance so it applies to all four SOGs and making a joint approach to the National Executive Council for its

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formal adoption and to seek steps to ensure the guidance is applied consistently throughout the union.

Wolverhampton General Branch

OTHER CAMPAIGNS

34. SCOTTISH INDEPENDENCE AND POSSIBLE IMPACT ON PENSIONERS

This Conference notes the referendum on Independence for Scotland will be held on 18 September 2014 and if carried it is likely Independence will be gained in 2016 - less than 3 years from now to totally separate the existing integrated financial systems and set up new systems for both Scotland and England/Wales/Northern Ireland. Even in the event of a “no” vote, it is fully anticipated that further powers will be devolved.

Many services used by pensioners e.g. Concessionary Bus Schemes, Health Services, Local Authority provided Services etc. are already devolved and therefore negotiated Regionally. However, the main “benefit” pensioners receive is the State Pension which is a reserved power. Many pensioners who have an Occupational Pension pay income tax which presently attracts age related allowances which is not devolved. Other “benefits” such as free TV licences for the over 75 are not devolved.

The 2012 National Delegate Conference (NDC) agreed support and resources for campaigning and bargaining to safeguard the position of employed Members in the devolved nations and recognised a “yes” vote in the referendum will affect UNISON Members wherever they live.

This Conference welcomes that decision of the NDC. However, emphasis has naturally been given to the needs and aspirations of employed Members. This we fully appreciate, but it is also necessary to ensure UNISON at all levels protects the interests of retired members, particularly as those members are often the most vulnerable and least likely to seek help.

In order to keep the interests of retired members to the fore, this Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to ask the National Executive Council to

a) recognise the needs and aspirations of retired members,

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- b) protect and defend retired members' interests in negotiations in the event of either increased devolved powers or full independence in the event of a "yes" vote in Scotland.

Scotland Region

35. TUC PENSIONERS' COMMITTEE

This Conference considers that the Trades Union Congress (TUC) Pensioners' Committee is not as effective as it could be and that as a result the TUC sometimes fails to gain pensioners' support for its aims and campaigns etc.

Conference considers the committee would be more effective if:

- 1) its constitution and purpose were clearer and more widely understood;
- 2) the affiliated trades unions had a greater opportunity to influence its priorities; and,
- 3) it was more accountable.

Conference believes this could be achieved with a structure like the ones of the other TUC equality bodies, that is:

- a) an annual Conference consisting of delegates from affiliated trades unions and observers from trades union councils, county associations and TUC regional councils to which the affiliated unions may submit motions;
- b) a committee, accountable to the conference and made up of members elected by and from among the conference delegates and of representatives of the TUC General Council.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to canvas support for such a proposal (in ways consistent with the Democracy in UNISON Guidelines) with a view to UNISON or another trades union putting it to the TUC.

Conference also instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to consult the Regional Retired Members' Committees in Cymru/Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland whether there is any need for equivalent initiatives in relation to the Wales TUC, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the Scottish TUC respectively.

West Midlands Region

36. FRIENDS OF THE NPC

The National Pensioners' Convention (NPC) was founded in 1979 by Jack Jones, former General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union because he was aware that there was no single organisation which represented and campaigned on behalf of pensioners. Although some trade unions had retired members' sections,

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and there were various pensioner organisations and charities in existence, there was no umbrella body that could coordinate and lead the campaign.

Conference notes that today the NPC is the major voice of retired people in Britain. Its campaigning work particularly on the state pension, universal benefits and health and social care, is vital not only for today's pensioners but also for future generations of pensioners.

Conference further notes that since its foundation, the NPC has operated on a modest income with a small number of dedicated staff and many unpaid volunteers. However, just at a time when it is facing new challenges because of the Government's austerity programme, one of its funders is reducing its annual grant by £30,000 over the next three years.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to take appropriate steps to positively promote amongst UNISON members the Friends of the NPC Scheme which involves a small annual donation of not less than £1 paid by standing order, thus:

- 1) sustaining the NPC over the coming years;
- 2) reinforcing the connection and solidarity between today's pensioners and the pensioners of tomorrow.

National Retired Members' Committee

Motions Ruled Out of Order

Action not specific to the Conference

Motion Gay Marriages and Pensioners

Conference notes with satisfaction that the government is considering introducing legislation to legalise same sex marriages. This radical step should be welcomed as it will provide dignity and equality for our pensioner colleagues who may wish to enter into same sex marriages.

It cannot be right that our gay retired members in their twilight years should continue to be denied the dignity and respect of being equal members of society enjoying the same rights as all of us.

Conference calls upon the National Retired Members Committee to work with the National Executive Council and other relevant organisations:

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a] to endorse the initiative to legalise same sex marriages and;

b] to give full support to any campaigns to ensure same sex marriage legislation is successfully implemented.

Greater London Region

Motion National Health Service

Conference wholeheartedly supports the National Health Service as an integrated public service funded through taxation and free at the point of access. It recognises the threat posed to the NHS by provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 which are intended to accelerate the transfer of public NHS services to ownership and control by private health companies with a detrimental impact on patients, access, quality of care and public health.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members Committee to work with UNISON structures and our allies in the National Pensioners Convention to

- Campaign for the repeal of the Health and Social Care Act 2012's provisions for privatising health services.
- Encourage retired UNISON members to become involved with their Patient Participation Groups and other local structures and campaigns to oppose privatisation of their local services.
- Seek support for a national demonstration in support of the NHS.

East Midlands Region

Motion Keep Our NHS Public

This Conference calls upon the National Retired Members Committee to work with the National Executive Council to step up its campaign to stop the privatisation of Health and Social Care Services and take steps to put pressure on the government to bring all these services back into public administration.

Aneurin Bevan, Minister for Health in 1948, declared that "The NHS will survive as long as there are folk with faith to fight for it".

We must keep that faith and fight this wholesale privatisation through local Public Services Alliances and by putting pressure through Labour Link on the Labour Party to strengthen its position against NHS privatisation. We must also focus on influencing the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) to keep as much of their commissioning budget as possible within the public domain and outside of the market which will see private firms profiting.

South Tyneside Local Government

Motion Rural Bus Services

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Conference Instructs the National Retired Committee and calls on the National Executive Council to liaise with the National Pensioners Convention, Trade Union Congress and all appropriate organisations to campaign for the improvement in the provision where currently are unavailable a regular Rural Bus Service. Such services are an important facility for the countries pensioners as there being often no other form of transport , to enable them to get to Post Offices, Banks , Shops, Social clubs and Medical Centres. This will play a part in maintaining the general health and welfare of Pensioners as part of the local population.

Conference instructs the National Retired Member Committee and calls upon the National Executive Council to report on progress to all Unison Members.

South East Region

Motion National Care Service

Conference Instructs the National Retired Committee and calls on the National Executive Council to liaise with the National Pensioners Convention, Trade Union Congress and all appropriate organisations to campaign for the abandoning of the current privatisation of parts of the NHS and promote by any means, the development of a National Care service, to include the NHS to provide for all in need, totally free care as required, to live in a stress free environment

This to be financed from general funds with no means testing, rationing or post code lottery.

Conference instructs the National Retired Member Committee and calls upon the National Executive Council to report on progress to all UNISON Members.

South East Region

Motion Renationalization of energy supplies

This Conference proposes that energy supplies (i.e. gas and electricity to both industry and households) in the UK should be renationalized, and calls upon UNISON to support this policy.”

University College London (M)

Motion National Health Service

Conference wholeheartedly supports the National Health Service as an integrated public service funded through taxation and free at the point of access. It recognises the threat posed to the NHS by provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 which are intended to accelerate the transfer of public NHS services to ownership and control by private health companies with detrimental impact on patients, access, quality of care and public health.

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It therefore instructs the National Retired Members Committee to work with the NEC, Labour Link and our allies in the National Pensioners Convention to

- Campaign for the repeal of the Health and Social Care Act 2012's provisions for privatising services.
- Encourage retired Unison members to become involved with their Patient Participation Groups and other local structures and campaigns to oppose privatisation of their local services.
- Seek support for a national demonstration in support of the NHS

Derbyshire County

Beyond remit of the Conference

Motion Concessionary Bus Pass

Conference notes that since 2008 concessionary travel arrangements have been available to retired members throughout the UK. However, in recent years local councils faced with ever increasing cuts in the level of their formula grant funding have sought to reduce the value of the travel concession to a bare minimum.

Increasingly, Members of the Government are questioning the basis of the concession, claiming that it should be means tested and that better off retired members should return their concessionary bus passes to fall in line with other planned changes to welfare benefits and other concessionary allowances paid to older people.

Conference therefore calls upon the national Union to form a Working Party comprising retired members' representatives from each of the Union's regions; together with representatives of the national Water, Environment and Transport Service Group, to campaign and lobby to ensure there is no further erosion in the value of the concessionary travel scheme.

East Riding Of Yorkshire

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Motion Universal Benefits

This conference reaffirms its' commitment to the principle of universal benefits.

Benefits for older people such as winter fuel allowance, bus passes, free prescriptions and free television licences for the over 75's are currently available to all who qualify on grounds of age, and are not subject to means testing.

Universal benefits are much cheaper and easier to administer than means tested benefits. Paying benefits universally also ensures that they reach those most in need, whereas means testing results in many of the poorest people not claiming benefits to which they are entitled, whether through pride, fear, ignorance, incapability of claiming, either due to illness, disability or just being ground down by bureaucracy.

This conference therefore instructs the NRMC in conjunction with the NPC and other similar organisations to mount a campaign to resist any attacks on age related benefits.

Derbyshire County

Motion UNIVERSAL BENEFITS

Conference condemns the measures being considered by this conservative-led government to change benefits for those who are retired.

The austerity package attacks the most vulnerable groups in society who should not be paying the costs of a crisis they did not create.

The intention to ask some pensioners to pay back their winter fuel payment is the thin edge of the wedge. It can be seen as a "reasonable idea" by some but will lead the way for means-testing of the other benefits that have been struggled for – bus passes, TV licences for the over 75 year olds and the winter fuel allowance.

This is another way of protecting the very wealthy who have had a tax cut in April, and the multi-national companies who bank off-shore in order to pay minimum tax.

Conference calls on the National Executive Committee to:-

- a) Highlight the intentions of this government on pensions and benefits

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- b) Run a campaign to inform all UNISON Retired Members of this
- c) Encourage pensioners to lobby/write to their MP's, and produce a draft letter for this purpose
- d) Ask Unison to include information about cuts to pensioners in all material about welfare cuts.

Yorkshire & Humberside Region

Beyond the remit of the Committee

Motion The Peoples Charter for Change

Conference condemns the fact that retired people are facing unprecedented attacks on their income and every aspect of their lives. The economic and financial crisis is being used as a cover for an economic, political and ideological assault on everything we and generations before us have won over the last 60 years to secure dignity and a decent livelihood for older people.

Conference believes that there is an urgent need to develop further the growing campaign of resistance to the austerity programme, of which attacks on older people's livelihoods forms a significant part, into a movement reaching every town, city and rural community. It further believes that if such a movement is to be successful, it needs to fight not only against cuts but for an alternative programme for Britain based on the needs of the people.

To this end, Conference holds that the People's Charter must receive the full backing of the trade union movement and welcomes the fact that it is officially endorsed as policy by the TUC.

Conference supports the clauses of the Charter related to pensions and pensioners, which call upon whichever government is in office to:

- 1 Promote longevity and longer periods of retirement as an aim rather than an economic problem to be overcome
- 2 End all 'work until you drop' increases in the age of retirement
- 3 Increase social support for all retired people – including free heating and transport – and for those needing assistance in old age in their own homes and in community provision
- 4 Link state pensions and benefits to average earnings

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5 Protect and improve pension provision

Conference believes that a mass popular movement against the anti-people measures of this Con-Dem government and for the People's Charter is essential.

Conference therefore calls upon the NEC to:

1. Ensure that UNISON is affiliated to the Charter and promotes and supports its clauses on 'Pensions and pensioners', takes part in the work of its central and local organisations, provides it with assistance as appropriate and encourages UNISON members at every level to do likewise.
2. Encourage retired members sections to promote and support the Charter
3. Work with the TUC, other affiliated unions and with trades councils, encouraging them to give similar full support to the work of the People's Charter, including its clauses on pensions and pensioners, to publicise the Charter throughout the labour movement and to build its demands and activities into their plans of work.

South West Region

Motion Upated State Pension for All

According to a European Commission study and an OECD paper (Public Expenditure on Old Age and Survivors Benefits – 2011) referred to in a 2013 study prepared by the South West Region's Retired Members' Advisory Committee, it is clear that benefits for elderly people, including State Pensions in the UK, are among the lowest in the European Union.

While welcoming the Government's approach of providing a "universal" State Pension from 2016 of £144 to those who will have paid the requisite level of contributions, conference notes with concern that current pensioners and those retiring before the new system comes in will not be included in the changes and will receive significantly less a week than those who retire under the new system and a large number of them will thus remain in pensioner poverty.

Conference also deplores the fact that the level set for the new state pension of £144 a week, though higher than the current state pension, is still significantly below the

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decency threshold (currently £178 per week) and notes that this will condemn a new generation of pensions to poverty and deprivation. Conference further deplores the fact that the changes will be funded by requiring people to work longer and retire later.

This Conference therefore calls for a concerted campaign by UNISON to achieve the following:

- 1) That existing pensions be included in the new system so that all pensions are treated fairly and consistently after 2016.
- 2) A commitment by all political parties that the basic payment to future pensioners will be at least equivalent to the decency threshold.

South West Region

Can be dealt with in other ways

Motion Voting Rights of Retired Members

This conference calls upon the National Retired Members' Committee to strongly pursue clarification of Rule C2.6.2 which states that retired members can only vote for positions in the Retired Members' Organisation. This is supported in paragraph 11.4 of the Code of Good Branch Practice even though it also says that all members should be equally able to cast their vote.

Retired members are an integral part of our union at all levels and are able to vote in the ballot for General Secretary and political fund ballots and are included in the total membership for representation at the Trade Union Congress.

The General Secretary is involved in national negotiations on behalf of working members as is the Branch Secretary at local level and we fully understand why retired members cannot vote on Conditions of Service issues of working members.

This conference considers that because of the wording of National Rule C2.6.2 which relates to the election of Retired Members' Officers, this rule and the paragraph in the Code of Good Branch Practice exclude retired members from voting for Branch Officers whilst being included in the count to achieve a quorum at Branch AGMs.

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This conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to take steps to have discussions with the National Executive Council to give retired members the right to vote at branch level for all branch officer posts with the exception of the post of Branch Secretary.

North West Region

Could place the union in legal jeopardy

Motion Age Discrimination

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

Wolverhampton General Branch

Not sufficiently clear

Motion FIGHT REGARDING UNIVERSAL BENEFITS

Conference agrees that the obvious threat from the Political parties to reduce or eliminate Pensioner State Benefits should be contested at every opportunity.

This Conference calls on UNISON at all levels to defend against reductions in all State Pensioner Benefits.

We also ask that any cost savings from benefit reduction or removal shall be added to the State Retirement Pension to bring it up to the poverty level or above National Minimum Wage, whichever is the highest.

East Midlands Region

Requiring a rule change

Motion RETIRED MEMBERS RECRUITMENT

This Conference notes that there is no formally established recruitment mechanism for the recruitment of retired members at the present time, each branch having their

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own methods. Conference instructs the NRMC to enter in discussions with the NEC a revision of the current recruitment system for employed members.

A simple addition of a 'tick' box on the form that would give members the option to remain in full membership upon cessation of employment, should they elect to do so. Those consenting to this option would pay a one-off amount to cover life membership in addition to the usual, monthly subscriptions, unless the parent branch agreed to waive this requirement.

Northamptonshire County