**NATIONAL RETIRED MEMBERS’ CONFERENCE 2019**

**PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

**MOTIONS ADMITTED TO THE AGENDA**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Amendment to Standing Order SO2.1 | National Retired Members Organisation |
| 2 | Standing Order 10.1 | City of Wolverhampton |
| 3 | Amendment to Standing Orders | Islington |
| 4 | Withheld and unclaimed benefits | East Midlands Region |
| 5 | Universal Credit and the effect on pensioners in mixed aged couples | South East Region |
| 6 | Equal Pension | City of Wolverhampton |
| 7 | National Insurance and the state pension | Lancashire |
| 8 | Ensuring that volunteers do not undermine the role of staff in the NHS | National Retired Members Organisation |
| 9 | Seasonal deaths | National Retired Members Organisation |
| 10 | Standards should not be allowed to drop for our elderly in care | Northern Ireland Region |
| 11 | Cancer screening | Scotland Region |
| 12 | Dental Care | South West Region |
| 13 | Health and Social Care provision for older people | Scotland Region |
| 14 | The future of Social Care | East Midlands Region  Derbyshire County |
| 15 | Care crisis for the elderly | Hertfordshire |
| 16 | The future of Social Care | Norfolk County |
| 17 | Routine NHS health checks for older persons “Prevention is better than cure” | Dumfries and Galloway |
| 18 | Austerity and older people | City of Wolverhampton |
| 19 | Defending living standards of older people | Knowsley |
| 20 | Attacks on our benefits | Eastern Region |
| 21 | Universal Credit and pensioners | South West Region |
| 22 | Television licences for over 75s | Greater London Region |
| 23 | Young people do need help, but not at the expense of older people | George Eliot Hospital |
| 24 | Intergenerational fairness and provision | Norfolk County |
| 25 | Intergenerational fairness or their Lordships are after our ‘perks’ | Derbyshire County |
| 26 | Home sweet home? | National Retired Members Organisation |
| 27 | Lack of uptake of the 25% reduction of council tax for dementia sufferers | National Retired Members Organisation |
| 28 | Impact of technology on older people | Leicestershire County |
| 29 | Celebrate the concessionary bus pass and the bus | East Midlands Region  Derbyshire County |
| 30 | Benefits of older people using the concessionary bus pass | South West Region |
| 31 | Effect on older people of declining public transport | National Retired Members Organisation |
| 32 | Senior Railcard travel restrictions | South East Region |
| 33 | Free Travel Pass for those aged 60 | Wakefield |
| 34 | Telephone and e-mail scams | East Midlands Region |
| 35 | Fraud and the elderly | Leicestershire County |
| 36 | Compulsory Assessment for Older Drivers | Dumfries and Galloway |
| 37 | UNISON Charter for older people | National Retired Members Organisation |
| 38 | Joint Branch Assessment | Scotland Region |
| 39 | Rulebook Benefits – Retired ex-members of NUPE – Death Benefit and Death of Spouse Benefit | West Midlands Region |
| 40 | Retired Members’ national committees | Leicestershire County |
| 41 | Retired Members and Self-Organised Group conferences – Three years on | City of Wolverhampton Local Government |
| 42 | Retired Members’ Representation Review | Southwark |
| 43 | UNISON website – Retired Members’ Section | Southwark |
| 44 | Scores on the doors | Islington |
| 45 | More than just a tablecloth | Islington |

**MOTIONS RULED OUT OF ORDER**

**ACTION NOT SPECIFIC TO THE CONFERENCE**

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| Hands off our NHS | Kingston University |
| European Union residents in the UK | Kingston University |

**BEYOND THE REMIT OF THE CONFERENCE**

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| Resourcing Branch Retired Members’ groups | Wakefield |
| Retired Members’ Conference – Order of Business | West Midlands Region |
| Making Conference more effective | AQA |
| Publish National and Regional Committee Retired Members’ Minutes | Southwark |
| Slow down the I.T rush | East Riding of Yorkshire |

**BEYOND THE REMIT OF THE COMMITTEE**

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| More consistent support for Retired Members | Enfield |
| Improving facilities for visitors at the UNISON National Retired Members’ Conference | Cymru/Wales Region |

**CAN BE DEALT WITH IN OTHER WAYS**

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| Conference venues | City of Wolverhampton |
| Conference venues | Leicestershire County |
| Conference venues | Islington |

**COULD PLACE THE UNION IN LEGAL JEOPARDY**

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| Payment to Retired Members acting as Stewards at UNISON conferences | North West Region |
| Not Printed on the advice of the SOC Officer:  Bournemouth used as a conference venue | George Eliot Hospital |

**NOT COMPETENT**

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| Foot Care & Advice Service | Highland |
| Birmingham Homecare strike | Birmingham |

**REFERRED TO OTHER BODIES IN THE UNION**

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| Taking mobility scooters on public transport | Lancashire |

**REQUIRING A RULE CHANGE**

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| Retaining Retired Members’ skills, experience and commitment | Bristol |
| Regional Retired Members’ Committees’ representation at National Delegate Conference – the right to send sharers | West Midlands Region |
| Accident Benefit | West Midlands Region |
| Fatal Accident Benefit | West Midlands Region |
| Retired Member participation | Scotland Region |
| Branch Retired Members’ Secretary | West Midlands Region |
| Retired Members’ Rule Review | East Riding of Yorkshire |
| The role of Retired Members in the Branch | Bolton Metro |

**STATEMENT NOT A MOTION**

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| Retired Members finances | East Riding of Yorkshire |
| Personal Wills & Registration | Solihull |

**PRELIMINARY AGENDA**

**Amendment to Standing Orders**

**1. Amendment to Standing Order SO2.1**

In SO2.1

Delete "end of one Retired Members' Conference" and insert "time of their election onto the Standing Orders Committee".

***National Retired Members Organisation***

**2. Standing Order 10.1**

After “report to” delete “members” and substitute: “the relevant Branch or submitting body”, and, after “submission of motions and amendments” add: “to Standing Orders”

***City of Wolverhampton***

**3. Amendment to Standing Orders**

Conference instructs that the following amendment to Standing Orders be made:

In Standing Order 10.1;

after “report to” delete "members" and substitute:

"the relevant Branch or submitting body",

and, after "submission of motions and amendments" add:

"to Standing Orders".

***Islington***

**Pensions**

**4. Withheld and unclaimed Benefits**

Conference expresses its deep concern that the suicide of an 81 year old pensioner left with no money because the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) wrongly stopped her State Pension and Winter fuel allowance because of changes to her pension credit entitlement. She had only £5 when she died. Older people often cannot easily access advice and are reticent about discussing their financial situation with friends and family . They do not wish to be seen as a financial burden and will suffer in silence.

Conference is also concerned about the number of pensioners who are not claiming benefits to which they are entitled. They are living with financial constraints which could be alleviated so they can enjoy a better quality of life, missing out on millions of pounds.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to work with the National Executive Council, National Pensioners' Convention, Scottish Pensioners' Forum, Age UK and the relevant trade unions to press the Government to ensure that:-

1. The DWP is adequately staffed and trained to ensure that mistakes like withholding pension or benefit entitlements do not occur again;
2. All Local authorities receive sufficient funding to maintain a Welfare Rights Service which is able to run regular benefit take up campaigns its its area and which is able to target older and disabled people so that they are aware of their rights and where and how to get help and advice to rectify mistakes and obtain the benefits they are entitled to receive.

***East Midlands Region***

**5. Universal Credit and the effect on pensioners in mixed aged couples**

Conference condemns the Government’s decision to implement a benefits cut that impacts mixed-age couples – where one partner is of pension age and the other is not of pensionable age who are in receipt of Universal Credit. The charity Age UK has calculated that this change could leave some pensioners up to £7,000 worse off each year – based on the number of mixed age couples who would be worse off under Universal Credit - than if the pensioner continued to claim pension credits. From April 2019, the rates will be £255.25 per week of pension credit for a couple, and approximately £115 a week under Universal Credit.

Prior to May 15 2019, couples could claim pension credit if one half of the couple was of pension age (65 for men, 63 for women, and gradually going up), even if the other was not of pensionable age. However, this has changed with the introduction of Universal Credit which means entitlement to the credit for a mixed-age couple will be defined by the working-age person, not the pensioner.

This change came into law in 2012 as part of the Welfare Reform Act, The Department for Works and Pensions announced the implementation date in a written ministerial statement on January 14 2019 and this change has come in from 15 May 2019.

From 15 May, all mixed-aged couples who apply for benefits are affected, as well as existing couples who claim pension credit who have a change of circumstances that stops their benefits temporarily for whatever reason.

National Retired Members' Conference states its condemnation of these changes and the damaging effect it will have on a wide and arbitrary cross section of society, especially those of pensionable age.

Conference therefore calls upon UNISON National Retired Members' Committee to:

1. Campaign publicly for the withdrawal of this unfair change in benefits for mixed-age couples where one partner is of pensionable age;
2. Work with the National Pensioners' Convention, appropriate community groups, and other unions though Trades Union Congress, to coordinate efforts against this change;
3. Publicise the issue through the appropriate UNISON communications channels to raise awareness of this situation;
4. Encourage retired members to write to their MPs on this issue and ask them to support the withdrawal of this unfair change.

***South East Region***

**6. Equal Pension**

Conference notes that:

1. The Supreme Court decision in Walker v Innospec in July 2017, that upon John Walker’s death his husband should get the same pensions as would a wife had he married a woman, relies upon European Union (EU) law and sets aside a provision of the United Kingdom’s Equality Act 2010 that permitted occupational pension schemes to pay benefits to surviving same-sex spouses and civil partners only in respect of contributions made since the introduction of civil partnerships in 2005;
2. On 28 March 2018 the Treasury confirmed the position for couples in public service pensions schemes:
3. The widow of a male spouse will receive benefits based on service since 1972;
4. The widow of a female spouse will receive benefits based on service since 1972;
5. The widower of a male spouse will receive benefits based on service since 1972;
6. The widower of a female spouse will receive benefits based on service since 1988.

and,

3) On 27 April 2018, the government issued a briefing paper, Pensions: Civil Partnerships and Same-sex Marriages, outlining its intention to introduce regulatory changes to provide survivors of same sex marriages and civil partnerships the same pension provision as widows of opposite-sex marriages but there has been no subsequent progress

Conference observes:

1. The court has only decided John Walker’s case; we’ll only know, once it’s tested, how wide a precedent it sets; there have been reports of pension schemes advising members with same-sex partners, at least in the first instance, as if Walker v Innospec does not apply;
2. The decision remains to be transposed into UK Law in accordance with the EU (Withdrawal) Act; and,
3. Public service pension schemes continue to treat widowers of female spouse less favourably than other surviving partners and the proposals in the Government’s briefing paper do not address this question.

Conference affirms UNISON’s aim to bring surviving same-sex spouse and civil partners’ pensions and those for widowers of female spouses into line with those for widows of male spouses in all respects. It considers that UNISON should continue to campaign to do so by means of primary domestic legislation.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members’ Committee:

1. To work with the National Executive Council, the National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Members’ Committee, the National Labour Link Committee and others as appropriate to continue to campaign to achieve equality; and
2. To encourage the Trades Union Congress (TUC) Pensioners’ Committee to give the matter regular attention and to raise it, if need be, with the Scottish TUC, the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and others as appropriate.

***City of Wolverhampton***

**7. National Insurance and the state pension**

The National Insurance scheme was established in 1948 to provide unemployment benefit, sickness benefit, retirement pensions and various other benefits to employees and pensioners in the United Kingdom (UK). From the contributions an initial allocation is set aside for the National Health Service (NHS) and the remainder held in the National Insurance Fund (NIF) which is monitored by the Government Actuary. The NIF is run on a pay as you go basis and legislation means that contributions to it can only be used for contributory benefits with any surplus held in a short term investment account. That surplus is estimated to be £26.2 bn at 31 March 2019 (up from £24.2 bn in March 2018). For some years the Government has been borrowing from this surplus to fund other public expenditure thus reducing their need to borrow from other sources in order to “balance the books”. This however means that the surplus cannot be used to improve benefits including the state retirement pension.

At present the full rate weekly state pension under the “new” system is £168.60, and under the “old” system is £129.20, representing an annual income of £8767 or £6718 respectively. By comparison the National Living Wage / National Minimum Wage is set at £8.21 per hour for someone over 24. Thus someone of that age working a 40 hour week receives £328.40 a week – equivalent to £17076 annually. However for a fair comparison income tax and National Insurance must be considered. The annual income tax personal allowance is £12500, and so someone whose only income is the basic state pension is not liable for income tax nor (because they are pensioners) for National Insurance. However in the scenario above a “living / minimum wage” employee would pay £1013 in tax and £915 in National Insurance giving a residual income of £15248. That is more than twice as much as a pensioner on the “old” system and 1.7 times that of one of the “new” system.

The Organization for Economic Development reported in December 2017 that the UK population is ageing rapidly with high levels of relative poverty among the over 75s and with 20% of British over 80s classified as obese compared with 10% of Italians.

Definition of the UK poverty level varies but one indicator, the Relative Low Income Threshold, is defined as 60% of the median national income. For 2016/17 it was £296 a week for a pensioner couple before housing costs. No figure is given for a single pensioner but for a working age single person it was £198 a week. Another indicator, the Minimum Income Standard, is the weekly amount needed to have an acceptable standard of living. For 2018 the weekly UK Minimum Income Standard for a pensioner couple before housing costs was £364 and for a single working age adult it was £288. However it has to be remembered that in pensioner couples one or both often receive less than the full state pension. These figures exclude housing costs and the cost of food is the same for all so the implication is that two pensioners can live nearly as cheaply as one working age adult. That’s clearly an indefensible assumption. It’s no wonder that UK pensioner poverty is so high.

Conference notes the increasing level of the NIF surplus and the disparity between the financial treatment of state pensioners and other low paid groups, and calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council, the National Pensioners' Convention, Age UK, the Scottish Pensioners' Forum and other relevant organisations to press the Government to increase the basic minimum state pension so that by 2020 all pensioners receive an income at least equivalent to the Minimum Income Standard.

***Lancashire***

**Health and Social Care**

**8. Ensuring that volunteers do not undermine the role of staff in the NHS**

Conference will recall that last year Conference debated a motion concerning Helpforce a Community Interest Company which works to improve volunteering practice within the National Health Service (NHS). The debate highlighted concerns over volunteers, many of whom are retired, threatening the jobs of UNISON members in the NHS and the motion was lost.

It is recognised that large numbers of people undertake volunteering when they retire. Recent research has identified that 6.2 million 55–74 year olds volunteer.

It is further recognised that volunteering has had a role in the NHS since its inception in 1948. There are an estimated 78,000 volunteers providing help and support to patients in hospitals across England. This might include running book clubs, talking to patients to relieve anxiety and loneliness, or taking them for walks in the hospital grounds.

As a result of the above facts, Conference is pleased to note that UNISON Health Service Group has agreed a pioneering charter entitled “Charter to strengthen relations between the Helpforce programme and staff in the National Health Service (England)” with Helpforce and other health trade unions. The aim of the Charter is to ensure that the tens of thousands of people who give up their time to provide comfort and help to patients are given guidance about their roles. It’s also intended to safeguard against their use as cheap substitutes for trained health staff.

Conference notes that the core principles of the Charter are as follows:

1. The Helpforce volunteer programme will not undermine current or future paid roles in the health workforce, and tasks to meet the essential health and care needs of patients and service users will always be undertaken by paid staff;
2. Volunteers will never be included in any counts of staffing levels and will wear uniforms/badges that clearly distinguish them from staff;
3. NHS trade unions should be engaged at local level in setting out and monitoring the way that volunteers are deployed within the organization, with the need to maintain patient safety and confidentiality as the key consideration;
4. Advice, materials and training provided to volunteers by Helpforce will be consistent with the contents of the Charter.

Conference believes that the Charter addresses the concerns raised by retired members at last year’s UNISON Retired Members’ Conference and therefore calls on the National Retired Members’ Committee to work with the UNISON Health Service Group to promote amongst UNISON retired members the Charter to strengthen relations between the Helpforce programme and staff in the National Health Service (England).

***National Retired Members Organisation***

**9. Seasonal deaths**

Conference notes with concern the growing number of winter deaths year by year as a result of cold related illnesses in England and Wales. An estimated 50,100 older people died in England and Wales between December 2017 and March 2018. This equates to 417 deaths a day or 17 deaths an hour which was the highest figure since 1975/76. The figures also showed a significant rise in winter deaths in each of the two preceding years. Whilst some of these deaths are as a result of falls and viruses the majority resulted from cold indoor temperatures. Winter mortality was greatest amongst women pensioners and people aged 85 and over. The figures for 2018/19 will not be available until November 2019.

Many poorer pensioners have a stark choice between heating their homes and putting food on their table. The potential loss of the £200 winter fuel allowance can only make matters worse and lead to a further unacceptable rise in winter deaths. Age UK estimates that fuel poverty costs the National Health Service around £1.3 billion every year.

Furthermore, preliminary data collected during the heatwave in June and July 2018 in England and Wales indicated a spike in seasonal deaths and an increase in emergency hospital admissions of older people often suffering from dehydration. Those with pre-existing heart, lung and kidney problems being most vulnerable.

Poorly insulated homes, lack of specialist housing stock and the inadequacy of social care have aggravated this problem.

Conference calls upon the National Retired Members’ Committee to:

1. Raise awareness of these issues with the National Executive Council, Labour Link and the Trades Union Congress;
2. Campaign with the National Pensioners Convention and Age UK for the retention of the winter fuel allowance and call for improvements to the heating and insulation standards of all existing homes and continue to call for improvements to staff terms and conditions of service, training and staffing levels in adult social care and care homes.

***National Retired Members Organisation***

**10. Standards should not be allowed to drop for our elderly in care**

Conference notes with serious concern the June 2018 report of the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland (COPNI) into Dunmurry Manor Care Home and believes that the abuse and neglect of residents in the home that it details is both shocking and appalling. Council notes that COPNI began its investigation into Dunmurry Manor after former members of staff alleged that poor and unsafe practices were taking place. The COPNI report states that the relevant authorities were aware of the concerns around the low standard of care within Dunmurry Manor but did not provide an appropriate response to protect the basic human rights of residents and their families. Similarly, Dunmurry Manor and Runwood Homes are accused of systemic failure in their response to concerns which were raised with them.

The report details unsafe working practices, a lack of appropriate equipment, inadequate staffing levels and high levels of use of agency staff, a high turnover of staff, a lack of training and poor morale. The report details numerous changes in management of the home and staff being told not to speak to the regulator in Northern Ireland, the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA), during inspections.

Conference agrees that this report raises serious concerns about how social care settings are inspected, monitored and regulated, including in relation to how our members are enabled to raise concerns about unsafe practices, abuse or neglect. Conference notes that in the Northern Ireland region, a programme of work is on going to enable and empower UNISON members to raise concerns and protect older people using social care services. This has included seeking the establishment of information sharing protocols between UNISON, the relevant regulatory bodies and the Health and Social Care Trusts responsible for the commissioning and delivery of services.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members’ Committee to draw on the experiences of the Northern Ireland region in developing a campaign aimed at ensuring that the delivery of care means that our older people would receive the dignity, respect, empowerment and equality which will make them feel valued in life. This campaign should ensure that the standards of care, safeguarding, and training for all staff are at the highest level of excellence in both our care homes and our hospitals and that high quality of care for our elderly becomes the norm.

***Northern Ireland Region***

**11. Cancer screening**

Breast and bowel cancers are two of the biggest cancer killers in the United Kingdom (UK). There are around 10,000 deaths from the former and 16,500 from the latter.

Across the different parts of the UK upper age limits for breast and bowel cancer screening are routinely set by the relevant health authorities. This motion will state that this is discriminatory against older people. It does not include cervical and/or prostate cancer. Cervical cancer affects older people to a relatively lesser degree, being most frequently diagnosed in the 35 to 44 year old age group. There is currently no screening programme in England, Wales or Scotland for prostate cancer.

Although there has, in recent years, been an increase in diagnosis of the diseases among people under 50, older people are disproportionately affected. The most recent figures show 80% of those diagnosed with breast cancer being over fifty years old and the similar figure for bowel cancer as 95%. In addition, in the case of bowel cancer, 59% of those diagnosed were 70 years old or over.

In Scotland breast cancer screening is offered to the age group 50 to 70 every three years. In England and Wales the age group is 50 to 71 with the same gap between screenings. Although a pilot is underway in England with a view to increasing the coverage to 47 to 73 years.

In the case of bowel cancer Scotland screens the 50 to 74 age group every two years. In England and Wales the age group is 60 to 74 every 2 years, but the intention is to bring the latter into line with Scotland.

In both countries, when one reaches the top of the age range they can phone the screening centre and “opt in” to continue to participate in the programme.

Given that 74 years is no longer seen as an “old age” and the prevalence of breast and/or bowel cancer diagnosis in the over 70 age group, Conference believes that the “opt in” requirement after one reaches the top of the age ranges is discriminatory to older citizens.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to campaign for National Health Services in England, Scotland and Wales to move from an “opt in” system when a user reaches the top end of the age range/s to one where citizens continue to receive the screening officer from the present bottom end of the age range until the end of their life unless they “opt out” of receiving the test. Conference also calls on the Labour Link representative to lobby that party in the three countries asking for its support for this policy change.

***Scotland Region***

**12. Dental care**

This Conference recognises that older people find it difficult to afford the cost of National Health Service (NHS) dental care. Regular dental checks can detect other more serious medical conditions, such as oral cancer and heart disease, and, as such, act as preventative health screening. Conference, therefore, calls upon the National Retired Members’ Committee to pursue and campaign, with other relevant bodies, for the provision of free NHS dental services for people of pensionable age.

***South West Region***

**13. Health and Social Care provision for older people**

Conference recognises that health and social care workers are dedicated and hard working but lowly paid with poor terms and conditions. They do their best to provide quality care but against a background of crisis within health and social care services.

Research confirms care for residents in privately run homes for the elderly can be inadequate due to poor terms and conditions and lack of training. This results in large numbers of vacancies and staff shortages which further affects the quality of care. Care Inspectors highlight examples of abuse to residents and inadequate care while the private providers continue to make a substantial profit.

In recent years changes have been made with the intention to improve social care service for the elderly e.g. personalisation, re-ablement, self directed support and health and social care integration. However the focus has been budget management or reduction rather than real improvements. The challenges of these these new approaches have been highlighted in those areas where they have been introduced or trialled.

UNISON has recognised the problems and produced Residential Care and Ethical Care Charters. Conference commends those local authorities who have signed up to these Charters but these are few in number, around 5% across the UK.

If we want a health and social care system that meets the needs of older people then public money should be spent on services and invested in staff who provide these services.

Conference calls upon the National Retired Members' Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council, the National Pensioners' Convention, the Scottish Pensioners' Forum, Age UK, the Trades Union Congress (TUC), Scottish TUC and Labour Link and to:

1. Continue to campaign against any privatisation of health and social care for older people; and
2. To further call for the adoption of the principles of UNISON's Ethical Care and Residential Care Charters by all public bodies commissioning or providing health and social care services for older people;
3. To ensure that social care staff are paid the living wage in all sectors;
4. Adequate staffing levels are adopted; and
5. Appropriate training provided.

***Scotland Region***

**14. The future of Social Care**

Conference views with great concern the situation of those requiring adult social care.

Earlier this year the largest commercial provider of residential care went into administration, and many others are struggling as cash strapped local authorities cannot fund adult care adequately, resulting in it not being an economically viable proposition for providers in the private sector. It is becoming increasingly difficult to find residential care for those suffering from even mild dementia or from more challenging conditions.

In a report for the Centre for Policy Studies, Damien Green MP has recognised the crisis situation ahead of the government’s Green Paper on the Future Funding of Care, which is due out in June 2019. His proposals are said to include that about half the cost of domiciliary and nursing care could be met by the state.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members' Committee in cooperation with the National Executive Council and UNISON to carefully consider any proposals and respond to any consultation (if possible within the constraints of deadlines) and to press for a National Care Service funded from general taxation.

***Derbyshire County***

***East Midlands Region***

**15. Care crisis for the elderly**

Many of us would have seen the recent shocking Panorama programme looking at the crisis in social care shown on TV.

The prospect of the promised social care green paper ever being delivered is looking more and more unlikely as time goes by. For over two years now we’ve been promised action and seen nothing to back that up.

We have an ageing population and it is time to get real. More and more of us will need support when we grow older.

Meanwhile, a report from the County Councils Network (CCN) has predicted that English councils risk insolvency if government does not move rapidly to fill a £50bn funding black hole opening up in local authority budgets. Without extra funding, the CCN said rising demand for social care will see council finances plunged into disarray and services cut to legal minimum levels. According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, spending on adult social care has already fallen by 5% in real terms between 2009 -2018.

To add to the misery abuse in care home continues.

Private care homes (approximately 80% of all social care is delivered by the private sector) often use untrained staff or staff with limited training and the turnover of staff, often poorly paid, is high.

There is often not enough staff to be able to afford the care, dignity and respect to the elderly they deserve, many of whom have had long working lives since leaving school at 14/15 years of age.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to seek support of the National Executive Council;

1. To work to challenge practices that are contrary to human rights legislation.
2. To work to bring all of the provision of care back into the Public Sector.

***Hertfordshire***

**16. The future of Social Care**

Conference notes that the Government has been promising a Green Paper on Social Care since 2017 and that, to date, nothing has been produced. Conference further notes that Social Care is now in crisis and deemed by many to be unsustainable in its current form.

The Government’s approach to this crisis has been to put it off for another day whilst it deals with the existential crisis of its own making that is Brexit. This dithering approach has led to the state of crisis we now face.

In order to resolve this crisis, conference agrees that

1. The Government’s Green Paper should be scrapped;
2. Government should move immediately to legislate to put in place a scheme whereby Personal Care is delivered, free at the point of need to all who need it whether in residential care, supported housing settings or at home;
3. The default position for the provision of services should be that they are delivered in-house. There are more than enough examples of failing care homes and home care agencies to provide evidence that in-house provision is better regulated, better staffed and better managed and so major investment of the kind being suggested here should be subject to this proviso given that Social Care should be seen to be a public service and not a means of making profits for hedge funds;
4. In order to fund this investment, Government needs to consider all possibilities including, as suggested by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) a rise in the basic rate of income tax of up to 2 pence in the pound or a rise in National Insurance contributions, or a combination of the two: the hypothecated use of Inheritance Tax to contribute to the cost and the introduction of a wealth tax amongst other possible tax raising mechanisms;
5. Government also needs to ensure that local Councils and National Health Service Organisations receive the necessary funds and protect their use for this purpose.

To this end Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to support any campaign which favours the introduction of free personal care, such as that being conducted by Independent Age and the IPPR. To this end, the National Retired Members' Committee will:

1. Work with the National Executive Council to establish this policy, in conjunction with other Trade Unions, and within the Trades Union Congress;
2. Work with other organisations within the United Kingdom to promote this policy such as Age UK and equivalent organisations in Scotland (where this is already policy), Wales and Northern Ireland;
3. Encourage Branches and their Retired Members' Committees to vigorously pursue this policy at a local level, with local representatives of all of the above and with local Councils.

***Norfolk County***

**17. Routine NHS health checks for older persons “prevention is better than cure”**

Conference acknowledges that early identification and diagnosis of a range of health conditions e.g. heart and lung problems, diabetes, kidney disease and early cancers can have a significant impact and increase the chance of success of subsequent treatments.

Health professionals widely agree that early diagnosis of many conditions can be of major personal health benefit for the individuals concerned. Patients who are “treated early” are usually “treated easily”. Recovery time is generally quicker if the patient is relatively in good health before treatment starts.

Routine health checks often flag up serious conditions which have hitherto gone undetected in the course of examinations for what might be regarded as relatively minor ailments.

Early diagnosis and treatment will almost certainly result in significant cost savings for the National Health Service (NHS) by avoiding the need for more complicated medical procedures if serious conditions go undetected and are allowed to develop.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to campaign for fully comprehensive personal health checks to be made available through the NHS to all older persons as a matter of routine when they reach the age of 65 years and at five-yearly intervals thereafter.

***Dumfries and Galloway***

**Other Campaigns and Issues**

**18. Austerity and older people**

Conference recalls how concerned we were last year about the Intergenerational Commission’s final report published in April 2018. Conference notes, now, that the report’s publication has foreshadowed a series of further attacks on older people’s entitlements and standards of living including:

1. The Taxpayers’ Alliance’s report, Pensions Inequality, issued in August 2018 calling for an end to defined benefit pensions for public service workers; the Taxpayers’ Alliance has since called for the freezing of state pensions;
2. The BBC’s announcement on 11 September 2018 that it would consult on the future of free TV licences for over 75’s and may scrap them:
3. The Intergenerational Foundation’s report, “Baby-boomers’ concessions: How ticket discounts for a wealthier generation reinforce unfairness”, issued on 17 September 2018, attacking senior discounts at visitor attractions and proposing, instead, free entry for people on Pension Credit and ‘Bring a Granny’ schemes;
4. The ‘Toyboy Tax’, announced on 14 January 2019. From 15 May this has started to deprive couples of Pension Credit and Housing Benefit if one partner is over state pension age and the other under that age. They must apply for Universal Credit instead, typically making a couple £7,000 a year worse off; and,
5. The House of Lords report, “Tackling intergenerational unfairness” released on 25 April 2019 which recommends:
6. Removing the triple lock for State Pensions;
7. Phasing out the free TV licences based on age;
8. Raising age thresholds for free bus passes and Winter Fuel Payment; and,
9. Making some workers over State Pension age pay National Insurance.

Conference rejects the idea this is a war of young versus old. Although accompanied by crocodile tears shed for young people, these attacks come not from the young but from the rich, who contend there is not enough money to go around because the baby-boomers have run off with it.

Rather, Conference asserts, there is plenty of money to go around. What makes it appear otherwise and the reason we are being set against one another is that, over the last forty years, the proportion of the United Kingdom’s gross domestic product going to wages has dropped from 65% to less than half with correspondingly more going to rent, interest and profit. It is a question of class not age. The most effective way for UNISON to defend older people from these attacks is to make solidarity between generations a key part of its strategy to oppose austerity and to develop a strategy against austerity that mobilises many more older people.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members’ Committee to develop proposals to raise with the National Executive Council for implementation by the whole union which will both:

1. Enable UNISON as a whole to support efforts to defend retired members from attacks on their standard of living; and
2. Mobilise the retired members’ organisation to make a greater contribution to UNISON’s campaign to end austerity.

***City of Wolverhampton***

**19. Defending living standards of older people**

This Conference notes a recent report from the House of Lords which proposed severe attacks on the living standards of older people, including:

1. Scrapping the Triple Lock mechanism for raising the State Retirement Pension;
2. Abolishing the free TV licence for over 75 year olds;
3. Delaying the Winter Fuel Allowance and Bus Pass until 5 years after Retirement Age;
4. Regarding the Winter Fuel Allowance and Bus Pass as taxable income;
5. Subjecting people over the State Retirement Pension age to National Insurance payments.

Conference rejects this attempt to divide generations, by setting younger people against retired people.

Conference opposes these proposals and calls upon the National Retired Members' Committee to campaign vigorously against them by all appropriate means.

***Knowsley***

**20. Attacks on our benefits**

Conference notes that, whoever wins the Tory Party leadership race, there is a possibility of an early general election. In any case, the next one has to be in 2022 at the latest.

Conference is extremely perturbed at noises coming from the Government about saving loads more money by axing the benefits older people receive such as winter heating allowances, free bus passes etc.

The indication is there is the decision of the BBC on 10th June 2019 to stop the free TV license [responsibility but no cash handed to the BBC by Government already] for people over 75 except for those receiving pension credit.

Whilst the individual amounts may seem trivial to members of the Bullingdon Club, many of our members rely on them for a reasonable standard of living, given that their “gold-plated” pensions have become a bit tarnished by austerity.

Conference notes that elderly people [the “Grey Vote”] tend to turn out to vote in higher proportions than younger people may. At the next general election it will be crucial to harness this vote.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members’ Committee to work with the National Executive Council, Labour Link, The Campaign Fund and other appropriate bodies to add into UNISON’s campaigning a dimension specifically targeted at retired members/elderly people in order to convince them of the need to vote for candidates who oppose the attacks on our benefits.

***Eastern Region***

**21. Universal Credit and pensioners**

Conference deplores the government policy that from 15 May of this year when a mixed age couple living together has one partner over state pension age and another of working age, new claimants will no longer qualify for Pension Credit or Pension Age Housing Benefit. They will instead need to apply for Universal Credit.

This is likely to result in a 50% reduction in benefit income, affecting all such claimants, amounting to approximately £7,000 a year and in some cases even more. This is not only divisive but it is unacceptable. Both will need to reach State Pension age before they are eligible for Pension Credit or Pension Age Housing Benefit.

Furthermore, there have been significant problems with the rolling out of Universal Credit which have not been overcome, including delays and administrative errors.

The impact for pensioners and their partners is likely to be significant, not least in making a claim which has to be done on-line and we know that many pensioners and those nearing pension age do not have access to computers or the internet.

Older people are in effect being penalised for having a partner younger than themselves.

Conference calls upon the National Retired Members' Committee to campaign to raise awareness of this legislative change with the National Executive Council and campaign with the National Pensioners' Convention, the Scottish Pensioners’ Forum and Age UK to assess Pension Credit and Pension Age Housing Benefit on an individual basis, irrespective of whether one or other is of state pension age.

***South West Region***

**22. Television licences for over 75s**

Conference notes that since November 2000, those over 75 have been entitled to a free television licence and that until 2017/18 this was wholly funded by the government. Conference also notes that it is now partly government funded, and that the funding for the scheme will become entirely a matter for the BBC from June 2020. Conference observes that between November 2018 and February 2019 the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) conducted a consultation on options including alternatives to the current arrangement, aiming to publish its response to the consultation in June 2019.

Conference recalls the Emergency Motion passed by 2018 National Retired Members Conference and notes motions 54 and 55 to National Delegate Conference 2019 regarding television licences for the over 75s.

Conference further notes with approval the Early Day Motion tabled in the House of Commons by Jeremy Corbyn MP on 4th February 2019 which reads: “That this House notes that maintaining free TV licences for over 75s was a 2017 Conservative manifesto commitment; acknowledges that 2.2 million over 75s live alone and that paying the licence fee could push 50,000 pensioners below the poverty line; acknowledges that 4 million households will be affected if the concession is ended, that 3 million will be impacted if the concession is linked to Pension Credit, and that 1.5 million households would lose out if the qualifying age was raised to 80; welcomes the petition by Age UK on the issue; and calls on the Government to guarantee the maintenance of free TV licences for the over 75s beyond 2020”, which has attracted 135 signatures from members across all parties.

Conference considers that there is a need for UNISON and its allies to continue to campaign for the existing scheme to remain available to everybody over 75, be made permanent, and return to being funded from taxes rather than by younger licence payers or by cutting BBC services.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to work with the National Executive Council with a view to UNISON helping to defend this universal benefit in both the short and long term, including raising with Labour Link the need for a renewed commitment from the Labour Party in its manifesto for the next general election.

***Greater London Region***

**23. Young people do need help, but not at the expense of older people**

It is acknowledged that younger people are facing significant falls in living standards; however, this is not as a consequence of older people stockpiling all the wealth, as suggested by the House of Lords Committee on Intergenerational Fairness and Provision (April 2019). On 25th April 2019 the above committee called upon the Government to: “Take steps to deliver a fairer society by supporting younger people in the housing and employment market, and deliver better in-work training and lifelong learning to prepare the country for the coming 100-year lifespan.” The above committee believes that some of this can be achieved as follows:

1. Removal of the ‘triple lock’ for State Pensions;
2. Phase out free TV licences based on age;
3. Free bus passes and Winter Fuel Payments should only be available five years after a person becomes eligible for the State Pension;
4. Better off workers over State Pension age should pay National Insurance while they continue to work.

Thus, the House of Lords have concluded that the young are being denied a chance of buying or renting a home because overindulged pensioners soak up loads of ‘benefits’ most of them do not need. The privileged members of the House of Lords receive generous daily allowances and subsidised food and drinks as well as being able to claim expenses for various activities. It follows that they are not in any position to judge what is a reasonable quality of life for the older people of our society.

Our young people are our future and need well paid employment and affordable housing or rental accommodation. Constantly rising rents, the cost of living, and benefit freezes affect both old and young, and the House of Lords, the Government and other bodies must stop trying to divide the generations by creating myths about pensioner wealth. We need the support of each other, and we need to retain the benefits that we have now so that when younger people reach older age they can have these or better benefits to help improve their quality of life.

Therefore, Conference calls upon the National Executive Council to work with National Retired Members’ Committee to:

1. Co-ordinate a nation-wide campaign involving agencies such as Age UK (including Age UK Scotland), National Pensioners’ Conventions, Pensioners’ Parliament, Scottish Pensioners’ Forum, and all relevant bodies to dispel the myth that all older people are wealthy and that by diminishing older peoples’ benefits that this would resolve the problems faced by older people;
2. Oppose any and all Government action to implement the recommendations of the House of Lords Committee on Intergenerational Fairness and Provision report. This includes lobbying of MPs and possible march(es) to the Houses of Parliament;
3. Work closely with UNISON’s Young Members’ Organisation and encourage them to assist with the campaign and to disseminate information condemning the division of the generations to as many youth groups and bodies as possible.

***George Eliot Hospital***

**24. Intergenerational fairness and provision**

Conference notes that a Lords Committee on the above issue has recently set out a set of proposals to deal with it. They propose that:

1. The triple lock on state pensions be scrapped;
2. Free TV licences based on age be phased out;
3. Free bus passes and winter fuel allowances only become available 5 years after a person is in receipt of the state pension;
4. “Better off" pensioners continue to pay National Insurance contributions while at work.

Whilst the committee has recommended improvements funding for education and vocational training it is important that we stress that taking benefits from older people to fund improvements for younger people is the wrong approach and takes no account of the fact that younger people get older.

Conference deplores this approach. Whilst understanding that these are recommendations and not legislation it nonetheless shows some of the thinking that happens in Parliament that somehow older people are getting a really good deal when the reality is that, for many, the reverse is the case.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to continue to support genuine intergenerational co-operation in the interests of all of the community and to that end:

1. Will continue to work across UNISON and the wider Trade Union movement to develop genuine intergenerational co-operation which does not set one section of the community against another;
2. Encourage Branch Retired Members' Committees to pursue this at the local branch level and with other local organisations;
3. Work with the National Executive Council to put pressure on UNISON sponsored MPs and Peers to refute the approach contained within the Lords Committee and to engender proper policies of intergenerational co-operation across parliament.

***Norfolk County***

**25. Intergenerational fairness or Their Lordships are after our “perks”**

The House of Lords, largely composed of some of the most privileged older people in the country, has produced a Select Committee report that argues the scrapping or means-testing of universal pensioner benefits, arguing that concessions such as the bus pass and winter fuel allowance are outdated and unfair to younger people!

The report also recognises the part played by the “gig economy” and the lack of social housing in the fact that many young people are disadvantaged. This sign of being in touch with reality is to be welcomed.

However, at a time when the United Kingdom State Retirement Pension is once again at the foot of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) league table and last year's toll of excess winter deaths reached a 40 year high, this is clearly not the time to cut back on older peoples’ benefits.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members' Committee, the National Executive Council and UNISON to respond to any such attacks against older people.

***Derbyshire County***

**26. Home sweet home?**

Conference notes that the 2019 National Pensioners’ Convention (NPC) Biannual Conference endorsed the NPC’s policy document on housing and older people entitled “Home Sweet Home?”.

Conference further notes that UNISON was represented on the NPC Housing sub-committee that produced the policy document.

Everyone needs a decent, secure and affordable home – but at different times in our lives, we may require different things from our housing. Older people want comfortable and attractive housing alternatives that promote healthy and attractive lifestyles – but too often they find themselves in poor or inaccessible housing, in the wrong places.

Getting housing right for older people could have immense benefits for society. Although there have been some positive initiatives in mainstream and specialist housing, they are not enough to respond to the rapidly expanding population of older people, in a way that significantly expands the options available.

With this in mind, the policy document makes a number of recommendations including the building of at least 85,000 properties a year which comply with the Lifetime Homes Standard. This Standard makes it easier and less costly to adapt a house for people who develop a disability or mobility issues in later life.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members’ Committee to:

1. Publicise the NPC policy document on housing and older people “Home Sweet Home?” to UNISON retired members;
2. Work with the UNISON National Executive Council and other appropriate bodies within UNISON to pursue the recommendations of the policy document;
3. Work with the NPC on any campaigning undertaken on the issue of housing and older people.

***National Retired Members Organisation***

**27. Lack of uptake of the 25% reduction of council tax for dementia sufferers**

Conference deplores the lack of information provided by local authorities about entitlement to council tax discounts for dementia sufferers, the majority of whom are pensioners.

It is a fact that the older you are, the more likely you are to be affected by dementia. Approximately 1 in 70 people aged 65-69 have dementia. Nearly 1 in 4 people aged 85-89 have dementia.

Many people in the UK living in England, Wales and Scotland are unaware that they are entitled to claim a 25% discount on their council tax payments if they are living with someone who is medically certified as suffering from dementia. Many local authorities do not publicise this information and some provide confusing advice or have prevented people claiming by stating that the exemption does not exist. It is estimated that this discount could be worth up to £500 per annum depending on property price band and the rate set by each local authority.

Those who have failed to make a claim may in some cases be able to claim back any council tax discount to the point of diagnosis of dementia.

Conference calls upon the National Retired Members’ Committee to:

1. Raise awareness of this issue with the National Executive Council, the National Disabled Members' Committee, Labour Link and the TUC;
2. Campaign with the above and with the National Pensioners' Convention, Age UK and other relevant organisations to raise awareness of the council tax discount and encourage local authorities to publicise information and improve awareness of this within the community.

***National Retired Members Organisation***

**28. Impact of technology on older people**

Conference notes the increasing use of technology in everyday life and its impact on elderly and vulnerable people. With moves to make most access to local and national government and many other organisations including UNISON only available online it risks leaving a significant part of the older demographic behind. Given that many older people either do not have a computer, smart phone or equivalent, their access to everyday services will be adversely affected and could result in them missing out on key necessities essential to their everyday lives.

In Leicestershire for example a new system of requesting repeat prescriptions is being trialled whereby patients must either do this online or go to, or telephone, their GP surgery. For many who have no computer or access to one this has led to more journeys to collect the prescriptions, more errors resulting in extra, unnecessary journeys and even for those with computers the process can be far from easy causing unnecessary stress and anxiety.

Conference is concerned that many government agencies are introducing online-only access, for example from this summer passport applications will only be able to be completed online. UNISON also requires all aspects of conference motions, delegate registration, reasonable adjustment requests etc to be submitted online through the Online Conference System (OCS) thus disadvantaging the many retired members who do not have computers or easy access to them. This concern is often dismissed and/or marginalised by comments that people can go to their local library (where they still exist) or for UNISON business, their branch office. Both options assume geographical ease-of-access, staff in situ who can help with the task and the member able to travel just to do this.

Whilst 21st century society would like to promote the use of technology for all and every service and make online the default position, it must take account of the significant number of people, particularly the older demographic, who do not have or use computers and find this whole approach bewildering, frightening and stressful. In short, technology should not BE the system, but part of the system.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to:

1. Liaise with the National Executive Council on ways to address this issue including viable means for retired members to access online systems easily;
2. Liaise with other relevant organisations such as the National Pensioners' Council, Scottish Pensioners' Forum about ways to address this issue;
3. Ascertain the numbers of retired members who do not have or use computers;
4. Consider ways in which this issue can realistically be resolved ensuring that retired members do not continue to be disadvantaged by not being part of the computer society;
5. Report back to Retired Members’ Conference 2020.

***Leicestershire County***

**29. Celebrate the concessionary bus pass and the bus**

Conference reiterates its support for the concessionary bus pass but recognises that many pensioners are unable to make use of their pass because of the scarcity or unavailability of buses in their area.

59% of passenger journeys are made on buses but since 2010 3,000 bus routes have disappeared, buses are less frequent and may cease operation in the early evening. This leaves pensioners who are not able to use a car stuck at home or having to use expensive options like taxis or private dial-a-ride services which put further pressure on bus routes. Conference notes that provision is worse in rural areas.

Conference welcomes the campaign by Midlands Trade Union Congress Pensioners and Transport unions to promote the bus pass and the bus as socially beneficial and to engage Members of Parliament.

Conference welcomes the Report of the Transport Select Committee into the Health of Bus transport and the proposal that the Government draws up a national bus strategy to reverse the decline in bus usage. It further welcomes the commitment by the Labour Opposition to provide funding to reverse the cuts to 3,000 bus routes and repeal legislation which limits public provision. The Transport Select Committee report noted that privatisation had worsened the situation outside London.

The most successful, best quality and best used bus services in London, Reading and Nottingham are publicly controlled.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to work with the National Executive Council, organisations representing pensioners, Labour Link and Transport unions to:

1. Maintain the concessionary bus pass for all pensioners;
2. Encourage retired members to support any future campaigns to celebrate the bus organised by Trade Union Congress pensioners;
3. Press the government to ensure that it provides to Local Authorities funding which meets the full cost of the concessionary bus pass in their area;
4. Support the recommendation from the Select Committee for a national bus strategy to reverse the decline in service and passenger usage;
5. Support the extension of successful models of publicly provided bus services such as exist in London, Reading and Nottingham which has pioneered an Eco bus fleet.

***Derbyshire County***

***East Midlands Region***

**30. Benefits of older people using the concessionary bus pass**

A recent report in the Journal of Transport and Health by Dr Sarah Jackson, highlighted important benefits for older people who use a concessionary bus pass:

1. Older people who use a concessionary bus pass tend to be more happy and physically active;
2. They are also less likely to be socially isolated when they have a bus pass, which facilitates better contact with friends and family;
3. This has a positive impact on mental health, as social isolation can cause depression;
4. The knock on effects for both physical and mental health, maintaining wellbeing, is likely to help people stay physically healthy in later life, reducing financial costs to the National Health Service, Social Services, etc, associated with an ageing population.

Conference calls upon the National Retired Members’ Committee to raise awareness of this with the National Executive Council to use what influence they can and to work with the Trades Union Congress, National Pensioners’ Convention, Scottish Pensioners’ Forum and Age UK to retain the Concessionary Bus Pass for those older people currently eligible in the UK.

***South West Region***

**31. Effect on older people of declining public transport**

Conference notes with concern that in an ageing society the public transport system in the UK fails to meet the needs of older people. This is as a result of a reduction in bus services, lack of rural transport, rising fares, increased journey times and cancelled trains.

The inability to travel has a major impact on health and well-being. Lack of accessible transport acts as a barrier to independence and freedom of movement and increases loneliness, depression and social isolation especially in rural areas. This is made worse by the increased number of pensioners living alone and those who are less mobile needing assistance with travel on buses and trains. Those most adversely affected are the oldest, the poorest and those in poor health.

The lack of provision of adequate public transport results in older people struggling to go shopping and visit the bank or post office, attend doctor and hospital appointments, visit libraries, swimming pools, sports centres, community centres and churches, or meet and visit family and friends. The inability to maintain an active lifestyle has been shown to result in a massive decline in both physical and mental health.

Conference calls upon the National Retired Members’ Committee to:

1. Raise awareness of these issues with the National Executive Council, Environment and Transport Service Group Executive, the National Disabled Members' Committee, Labour Link and the Trades Union Congress;
2. Continue to campaign with the above and with the National Pensioners' Convention and Age UK for the retention of the bus pass;
3. Call for improvements to the provision of accessible and affordable public transport that will meet the needs of older people with other appropriate organisations including All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Ageing and Older People and transport providers.

***National Retired Members Organisation***

**32. Senior Railcard travel restrictions**

This Conference notes that since the denationalisation of the Railways and the breaking up of British Rail, several train companies have now taken over the running of the trains all over the country. The introduction of the Senior Rail Card which is national and is recognised by all the companies is excellent and very helpful to keep older citizens active, but it has culminated in different travel conditions in different areas of the country, regarding what times it can be used.

This means you have to check each operator’s times of when they consider off peak times are in their area. There is no consistency.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to:

1. Lobby the Westminster Government Department of Transport to instruct all train companies to have consistent time restrictions in all areas of the country;
2. Campaign to ensure restrictions on use of the Senior Rail Card in the morning are no later than 9.00am and for afternoon restrictions to be lifted entirely.

***South East Region***

**33. Free Travel Pass for those aged 60**

We ask Conference to consider the impact of rising travel costs on older men and women not yet in receipt of a free travel pass due to their eligibility rising with state pension age. Many are experiencing loneliness and isolation, which in many cases affects their health and well-being.

Even men and women with a free travel pass who live in areas with limited bus services are affected as they have to rely on family and friends and even taxis that they can ill afford.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to campaign to seek a change in government policy that would allow men and women at 60 to apply for a free travel pass.

***Wakefield***

**34. Telephone and e-mail scams**

Conference notes that some of our vulnerable retired members are still being taken in by these fraudsters.

It has recently come to our attention that several of our retired members who received calls from these people offering to stop scam and unwanted calls free of charge. When they accept their services they are then asked for their bank details, if the services are supposed to be free why ask for bank details, when they then go to their bank to withdraw a sum of money they find that money has been withdrawn from their accounts.

We need get the message over to these vulnerable members to never, never give bank details to anyone on the telephone or on e-mail as their bank would never ask for their details by this method. If they give you a telephone number which is supposed be your bank's for you to verify, then make sure you do it from another phone as they block your phone and instead of getting your bank to verify you actually get back to them!

Also when informed by e-mail that you have won a sum of money on a lottery in another country if you have not entered any of these lotteries then you cannot win anything.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members’ Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council to ensure that warnings are given through UNISON magazines and newsletters to inform these vulnerable members to be aware of these scams.

***East Midlands Region***

**35. Fraud and the elderly**

Conference notes with concern the 'BBC 5 Live Investigates' report on fraud broadcast in September 2018 stating that fraudsters scammed nearly 49,000 older people across the UK in the past year, equivalent to almost six reports every hour. Furthermore the total number of reports has nearly doubled in the past 3 years and one expert believes the true number of elderly victims was likely to be in the millions.

The 5 Live Investigates team asked Action Fraud, the UK police’s cyber-crime reporting centre, for a breakdown of the five most common types of fraud affecting older people reported to them over the past 3 years. It revealed:

1. In 2016-17 there were 40,487 frauds affecting people aged over 60 reported and 49,981 last year - equivalent to nearly six crimes every hour;
2. This was up from 25,659 in 2015-16;
3. Last year 1,140 victims were aged over 90 and 13 were aged over 100.

Conference also notes the deleterious impact these scams have on the health of its many older victims - the health of the older demographic successfully scammed declined so much that a significant number ended up in residential care within 6 months of the scams being exposed.

Conference recognises that whilst such frauds are perpetrated against the whole population, this report highlights the particular vulnerability of older and elderly people who are clearly targeted by the criminal gangs engaged in these types of fraud. The figures suggest that they see this demographic as “easy pickings” and tailor their approach to convincing these victims to hand over their money through a variety of imaginative and sophisticated scams.

Conference believes that every effort must be made to get the message out to our vulnerable contemporaries that attempts to steal their money through false claims about compromised bank accounts; non-existent lottery and prize draw winnings and the many other means used by the fraudsters are no more and no less than criminal enterprises. We must counter the many means used by fraudsters with publicity about such activities and try to prevent this becoming a criminal epidemic affecting millions of potential victims. In particular efforts must be made to publicise the scale of the problem and the fact that many victims feel embarrassed and ashamed that they have fallen for these scams and so fail to report it to the police resulting in it remaining hidden.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to:

1. Liaise with the National Executive Council (NEC) about publicising this report as widely as possible;
2. Liaise with the NEC to ensure warnings about these scams are publicised through UNISON magazines, newsletters and other relevant publications to reach as wide a readership as possible;
3. Liaise with the National Pensioners Convention and the Scottish Pensioners Forum about ways of publicising these frauds and informing pensioners and other older/elderly people of the scale of these scams;
4. Urge members to report these scams to Trading Standards and the Police;
5. Report back to National Retired Members’ Conference 2020.

***Leicestershire County***

**36. Compulsory assessment for older drivers**

Conference acknowledges that access to car transport can be an essential personal asset for many older people - particularly in rural locations where access to regular public services may be limited.

Conference accepts, however, that it is imperative that older drivers are considered to be able to drive safely and do not pose a risk to themselves and other road users. Where accidents occur, these may threaten not only the driver’s life and limb - but also those of passengers, other road users and members of the public.

Conference notes that recent cases have encouraged commentators to rush to judgement on the ability of all older people to drive safely.

Police Officers may currently assess a person’s driving competence if requested, but this should not be a matter of choice. Life and death are concerned. If the older driver is competent then assessment is not something to be feared. In fact, an assessment may prove useful by drawing the driver’s attention to minor issues which may be readily improved.

Conference accepts, therefore, that it is no longer sufficient to leave the responsibility of assessment to the driver. A formal independent assessment of driving ability for older drivers could prevent unsubstantiated offensive comment and prove or otherwise the competence of the older driver.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to press for the introduction of compulsory assessment of older drivers at 5-yearly intervals after their 75th birthday.

***Dumfries and Galloway***

**Internal and Communications Issues**

**37. UNISON Charter for older people**

Conference supports the view expressed by previous motions that a revised UNISON Charter for Older People could be a valuable resource to promote the UNISON Retired Members’ Organisation, help retain members when they retire, involve and activate retired members and showcase UNISON and trade unionism among older people.

Conference notes that there is much existing policy agreed by retired members which could form the basis for a UNISON Charter for Older People.

However, Conference believes that in order for the Charter to be as relevant as possible there should be a consultation exercise with UNISON retired members with regard to the content of the charter.

Therefore, Conference calls on the National Retired Members’ Committee to:

1. Produce a revised UNISON Charter for Older People based on:
2. Existing policy agreed by UNISON retired members;
3. A consultation exercise with regions and self-organised groups;
4. Circulate the Charter as widely as possible.

***National Retired Members Organisation***

**38. Joint Branch Assessment**

Joint Branch Assessment (JBA) is powerful organising tool, which all branches are required to use. It should involve discussion between branch officers and organising staff on future activity and resourcing. The standard JBA form now includes a section on retired member activity.

In Scotland it is now established practice to involve the Branch Retired Members' Secretary in discussion on this part of the JBA. This results in joint ownership of the plans for the branch for the coming year. In addition it is recognised that proper training is needed to allow Branch Retired Members' Secretaries to fully participate in the JBA exercise. In Scotland training for retired members’ secretaries and retired member activists has now been added to the Branch Officer training programme.

This Conference agrees that this practice is to be commended and calls on the National Retired Members' Committee and the National Executive Council to consider the extension of this practice across the whole Union.

***Scotland Region***

**39. Rulebook Benefits - Retired ex-members of NUPE - Death Benefit and Death of Spouse Benefit**

Conference notes that:

1. Rule L4 provides that “Members ... on Vesting Day (1st July 1993) ... retain entitlement to any financial benefits of membership of their former union ... providing that they continue to remain in membership of UNISON”;
2. Schedule B, paragraph 2.6.4(iv) confirms the entitlement to Death Benefit of ex-members of NUPE (the National Union of Public Employees) who retire after 1st July 1993; and,
3. The Guide to UNISON Rule Book Benefits appears no longer to be available but an edition based upon the 2010 rule book confirms that Death Benefit is also payable to ex-members of NUPE who had already retired by Vesting Day and that there is a half-rate Death of Spouse Benefit.

Conference is concerned that some retired ex-NUPE members and their loved ones do not know about their entitlement and do not claim.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members’ Committee to raise this concern with the National Executive Council and with others as appropriate with a view to:

1. Improving, monitoring and reporting take-up; and,
2. Better informing ex-NUPE members of their entitlement by including it in all appropriate material such as the retired membership application form, the retired members’ page of the UNISON website, the UNISON Charter for Older People and the electronic replacement for Interactive.

Conference urges Regional Retired Members’ Committees and Branch Retired Members’ Sections to take all available steps to inform retired ex-members of NUPE similarly.

***West Midlands Region***

**40. Retired Members' National Committees**

Conference recognises the important work undertaken by the Retired Members’ National Committees: the National Retired Members’ Committee (NRMC) and the Standing Orders Committee (SOC) and acknowledges the contribution made by the members of these Committees on behalf of Retired Members throughout UNISON.

However Conference is concerned that membership of these Committees seems to be open-ended with representatives elected year-on-year by their respective Regional Retired Members’ Committees without any limit of time. Thus the opportunity for new people to be elected to these Committees may be significantly reduced by an unwillingness to oppose a long standing member in their Region, and only when an incumbent member dies or stands down does a vacancy arise.

Conference believes that this situation can be deleterious to the work of the National Committees and that a time limit for membership such as that used by the UNISON National Women’s Committee should be considered.

Conference therefore instructs the NRMC to:

1. Consider a change to the current rules for the two National Committees with the introduction of a time limit such as 4 or 5 years with a break of at least 2 years before a previous member can be considered again for re-election to the respective Committee;
2. Report back to National Retired Members’ Conference 2020.

***Leicestershire County***

**41. Retired Members at Self-Organised Group Conferences - three years on**

Conference recalls the resolution of the 2016 Retired Members’ Conference, motion 35 as amended, ‘Retired Members at Self-Organised Group (SOG) Conferences’ which instructed the National Retired Members’ Committee (NRMC) to:

‘seek the views of (relevant) retired members and, subject to gaining their support, liaise with the National Executive Council (NEC) and the SOG National Committees about submitting a …rule changes to National Delegate Conference to allow…(them) to … submit motions and amendments to respective SOG conferences”.

Conference notes that:

1. NRMC reported in 2017 that a survey had been produced. Only in response to a question, did NRMC say it would be launched at the 2017 conference;
2. The survey was put on the retired members’ page of the UNISON website about that time but there appeared to be no launch nor accompanying publicity. Although the survey closed on 8 December 2017, it remained on the website for many months but no results of the survey were made public;
3. Nor were results included in NRMC’s 2018 annual report which did not indicate how the committee intended to proceed’; only in response to another question, did NRMC make known that a majority of those taking part in the survey identified the issue as a crucial one.

Conference is glad its proposal has gained the support of relevant retired members. It now repeats and confirms the remaining instructions in its 2016 resolution.

Conference observes that NRMC has, so far, taken three years on this matter. It therefore further instructs NRMC to take a less tardy approach and to report in detail next year on its liaison with the NEC and the SOG National Committees with firm proposals and timescales to bring the matter to a conclusion.

***City of Wolverhampton***

**42. Retired Members' Representation review**

Conference calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to work with the National Executive Council and/or officers on reviewing the current situation where retired members are not allowed to represent members.

***Southwark***

**43. UNISON Website - Retired Members' section**

Conference calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to work with the National Executive Council and/or officers to review the Retired Members section of Unison's national website (https://www.unison.org.uk/about/what-we-do/fairness-equality/retired-members/) and report back progress at the 2020 National Retired Members' Conference.

***Southwark***

**44. Scores on the doors**

Conference notes that at the conclusion of each National Retired Members’ Conference there is a ballot of suitable motions from which the two with the highest votes are chosen to be submitted to next year’s National Delegate Conference by the National Retired Members’ Organisation.

However Conference notes that only the two successful motions are disclosed on the UNISON website.

Conference believes it would be instructive to see the number of votes received by each of the eligible motions, and therefore Conference instructs the National Retired Members’ Committee to publish the number of votes received by each and every motion in the ballot for National Delegate Conference motions on the relevant pages of the UNISON website as soon as is practicable after the end of the National Retired Members’ Conference.

***Islington***

**45. More than just a tablecloth**

Conference notes the National Retired Members’ Organisation is able to book stalls at other UNISON Conferences to publicise the existence and work of the Retired Members’ Organisation.

However, whilst members running such stalls are lent the National Retired Members’ Organisation tablecloth, it is accompanied by little, or in one case, no literature to hand out to delegates and visitors to conference.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members’ Committee to provide a stock set of literature, including an up to date version of the UNISON Charter for Older People, to accompany the tablecloth to Conferences.

***Islington***

**Motions Ruled Out of Order**

**Action not specific to the Conference**

**Hands off our NHS**

This conference notes that during his recent state visit President Trump said "when you're dealing with trade, everything's on the table - so the NHS or anything else". He back-tracked on this but there is a very real danger that the privatisation of the National Health Service (NHS) could be back on the agenda post Brexit especially if the United Kingdom turns to the United States of America (USA) more for its future trading partnership.

The conference also notes that the danger of creeping privatisation could come from nearer to home as well as from the USA and other countries as austerity measures have lead to funding for the NHS being eroded in real terms. The NHS has recently put out to tender contracts worth £127 to private companies despite the Health Secretary saying that there would be “no privatisation on my watch”. If this creeping privatisation continues this puts at risk the jobs and livelihoods of UNISON members, and in the long term the decisions about the NHS being more and more determined by private corporations operating for profit and their shareholders and not for the benefit of patients or service users, many of whom are retired members of this union. From whichever direction the threat of increasing privatisation of the NHS is very real.

This conference calls on UNISON to continue campaigning for increased public funding for the NHS and for the input of private companies to be reduced and rolled back especially after Brexit.

***Kingston University***

**European Union residents in the United Kingdom**

This conference notes that Brexit for many of our European comrades looks very uncertain. The National Health Service (NHS) and many other services rely very heavily on staff from the European Union (EU) to function. For example, The Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has said the United Kingdom (UK) has become a “less attractive place” to work, and the RCN has called for urgent action to address workforce shortages. Between June 2017 and June 2018 10,487 EU nationals, including 4,086 nurses and also health visitors, left the health service. This further shows how Brexit may impact on the NHS and other services.

This conference calls on UNISON to campaign for members and others who are EU citizens already in the UK to be granted full UK citizenship status post Brexit without undue layers of bureaucracy and cost.

***Kingston University***

**Beyond remit of the Conference**

**Resourcing branch Retired Members’ groups**

Conference notes with concern the disparity across Branches in their support of their Retired Members' Groups.

UNISON's General Secretary Dave Prentis has said:

“UNISON's retired members are an important organising asset as they continue to be committed to protecting our public services and have a wealth of personal experience to contribute to our campaigns. Retired members often have time, experience and help to give which can be a real benefit to those branches that are short of people to take appropriate active roles. But the foundation for all retired member involvement in UNISON is how retired members are organised in branches".

It was noted at last year's National Retired Members' Conference that delegates from the Yorkshire and Humberside Region were far smaller than those from other comparable regions. Several of the Region's largest Branches appeared to have had no representation whatsoever.

It is also apparent that many Branches do not have any representatives on the Regional Retired Members' Committee.

It also became apparent from members attending the Regional Retired Members' workshop held in Leeds in February of this year the difficulties many retired members sections were encountering.

This ranged from: -

1. Full support and financing of local activities;
2. No support whatsoever;
3. Minimal support i.e. rooms made available for meetings;
4. Full support for members to attend National Retired Members' Conference;
5. Denying retired members funding to attend National Retired Members' Conference.

For many retired members one of the major issues they encounter as they become older is that of loneliness and isolation. These feelings will increase if their trade union appears to have no further use for them.

At branch level the sense of isolation can be overcome by organising social events to enable retired members to interact and come together in areas which otherwise would be closed to them.

How Retired Members' Groups should be resourced is explained within the UNISON Rule Book and the Branch Retired Members Secretaries Handbook.

The UNISON Rule Book, section D 7.4 states: “Such Retired Members’ sections shall have adequate agreed funding for retired members activity and access to other resources subject to union guidelines”.

The Branch Retired Members Secretaries Handbook explains how after establishing a Retired Members Section it should be financed.

It states:

1. Ideally branches should provide adequate resources to ensure the participation of retired members as recommended in UNISON's Code of Good Branch Practice;
2. Social activities such as coach trips and lunches should be self-supporting but branches are able to subsidise such events;
3. UNISON branches should fund activities such as the following:
4. Distribution of Newsletters to retired members.
5. Distribution of Branch and retired members group meetings information.
6. Administrative tasks and costs involved in running the section including expenses for postage, stationery, printing and telephone costs etc.
7. Accommodation (and perhaps refreshments) for regular meetings of retired members.
8. Payments of substance expenses for a delegate attending the UNISON Retired Members' Conference.
9. Affiliations to outside bodies e.g. National Pensioners' Convention.

It also states that there should be liaison with the Branch Treasurer to ensure that budget setting and spending is part of the budgetary process.

It is vital that to ensure full participation that retired members' sections are funded by inclusion within a branch's annual budget.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to call upon the National Executive Council to ensure that Branches:

1. Establish Retired Members Groups in their Branch, if they currently do not exist;
2. Fully support their Retired Members Groups by:
3. Ensuring venues are available for meetings;
4. Support is given for the production and distribution of Newsletters;
5. Reasonable provision is made within the Branch's annual budget for retired members activities these to include social events, organising seminars and workshops on subjects relevant to retired members and the wider union e.g. social care for the elderly;
6. Encourage retired members to become delegates and attend their Regional Retired Members Committee;
7. Support delegates attending National Retired Members' Conference (including all relevant financial costs).

***Wakefield***

**Retired Members’ Conference – Order of Business**

Conference notes that our Standing Order 2.3.3 provides for the Standing Orders Committee (SOC) to ‘determine the order in which the business of conference shall be conducted, subject to the approval of conference’.

Conference recalls adopting, last year, an SOC report recommending we continue with a prioritisation process to ‘ensure that debate is more varied and that motions of greatest interest and/or importance ... be heard’. The report recommended and conference agreed an order of business in six sections as follows, with motions in sections 1-5 heard in score order:

1. The ten motions with the highest scores;
2. Pensions;
3. Health and Care;
4. Campaigns;
5. Communications/Internal Issues; and,
6. Non-prioritised motions.

Conference also recalls that, last year, we heard no motions in sections 5 or 6.

Conference observes that, after the first ten motions, the remaining order of business makes a motion on pensions (providing it receives any priority points at all) more likely to be heard than one on communications even where priority scores indicate the latter to be of greater interest and/or importance.

Conference would like motions with similar priority scores to have a similar chance of being heard and urges the SOC to review the matter.

***West Midlands Region***

**Making Conference more effective**

This Retired Members' Conference recognises that ‘austerity’ has been a means of attacking the poor and vulnerable. And that includes benefits and services to retired members of society. Retired Members' Conference is essential in protecting those services and payments for both current recipients but also future retired members. The issues are vast and this has been reflected in the number of motions submitted to the Retired Members' Conference. And Conference has closed with unfinished business.

It has been very disappointing that the arrangements have not been altered to take consideration of the current circumstances. The current conference arrangements are:

Day 1

11.00 a.m Conference Desk and Exhibition Opens

11.45 a.m. Card Vote collection desk open

12.00 – 2.00 p.m. Caucus meetings

2.15 – 3.45 p.m. Panel/Discussion groups

4.00- 6.00 p.m. Regional meetings

Day 2

9.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. First Conference session

2.00 p.m. – 4.00 p.m. Second Conference session

The arrangements for future Conferences should be changed to:

Day 1

10.30 a.m. Conference Desk and Exhibition Opens

10.45 a.m. 12.00 Panel/Discussion groups

11.45 a.m. Card Vote Collection desk opens

12.00 – 2.00 p.m. Caucus meetings

2.15 p.m. – 4.00 p.m. First Conference session

4.15 p.m. – 6.15 p.m. Regional Meetings

Day 2

9.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. First Conference session

2.00 p.m. – 4.00 p.m. Second Conference session

This Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to take the appropriate measures to implement the changes to 2020 National Retired Members' Conference structure or bring to the 2020 Conference proposals that extend the debating time at the Conference.

***A.Q.A.***

**Publish National & Regional Committee Retired Members' Minutes**

Conference calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to work with the National Executive Council and/or officers to investigate publishing minutes and agendas for National and regional committee meetings and report back progress at the 2020 National Retired Members' Conference.

***Southwark***

**Slow down the I.T rush**

Conference recognises that not everyone is comfortable with the Information Technology onslaught that is happening in our society today. Whilst the Young Members are attached to their devices there are still a great many of our members both working and retired that still prefer to use cash and have face to face contact with people. Conference would like to acknowledge that not everyone has access to a computer and conference would like to request that the National Executive Council campaigns to ‘slow down’ the rush to IT at the detriment of some members who do not have that capability. It is alienating some of the more vulnerable in our society as the generation gap widens. Conference notes that retired members are not all silver surfers.

***East Riding Of Yorkshire***

**Beyond the remit of the Committee**

**More consistent support for Retired Members**

This Conference acknowledges the financial and other support given by the union in supporting UNISON retired members activity, e.g. in subsidising Retired Members’ Conference, and its other democratic structures.

This Conference recognises, however, that the level of support is not consistent across all branches and regions, and that this can lead to some retired members sections becoming moribund.

This Conference further recognises that such inconsistency arises from a number of causes, including:

1. Some branch retired members' groups experiencing a fall in new members because of outsourcing, etc;
2. Some branch retired members' groups experiencing a rising average age, and the impact that can have on participation and activist numbers;
3. Rising costs of basic resources e.g. printing, postage, accommodation, refreshments, travel;
4. Failure to properly include retired members’ activity in branch planning and budgeting;
5. Increasing pressure from cuts making it harder for our volunteer activist base in some branches to meet the growing need for support for members.

This Conference calls on the National Retired Members' Committee (NRMC) to review the level of support for branch retired members’ sections, and formulate a plan to improve the sustainability of branch retired members’ sections, and to:

1. Increase the recruitment of retired members generally, and particularly amongst those members in outsourced etc. employment;
2. Deliver more consistent financial and other support for such sections, taking account of the level of proposed planned activity, including, if necessary, a review of retired members’ subscriptions for new joiners;
3. Require branches to consult with their retired members’ sections on including their activity in the branch development and organising planning process;
4. Draft any rule changes required arising from these actions;
5. Report on the plan at Retired Members’ Conference 2020, along with any associated rule changes (if required) with the aim of taking them to National Delegate Conference 2021.

***Enfield***

**Improving facilities for visitors at the UNISON National Retired Members’ Conference**

Members are well aware that the National Retired Members' Conference grows in numbers of delegates and visitors year on year reflecting its expanding importance in debating the needs of Retired Members.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members' Committee (NRMC) to ensure rooms set for the Workshops are large enough to accommodate Visitors as well as Delegates at the National Retired Members' Conference.

The Cymru/Wales region requests that the Retired Members' Conference be more inclusive in providing access to Workshops for Visitors as well Delegates. The Conference is open to all Retired Members, be they Delegates or Visitors but Conference organisers do not presently allow Visitor members to take part in the Conference Workshops.

We pride ourselves on being a fully inclusive union with anti-discriminatory practices, but this practice still exists. Every union conference has an open door policy for fringe meetings, caucus meetings, workshops, etc., except for the National Retired Members' Conference which does not allow Visitors into the Workshops.

As a trade union we pride ourselves on being fully inclusive, being fair and equitable to all our members, whilst we do not discriminate against any member at any gathering or conference, it is true to say that only delegates speak and vote on the conference floor and Visitors observe, but outside of that Conference does not exclude Visitors from enjoying the same facilities as Delegates.

Therefore the UNISON Wales Retired Members' Committee requests the NRMC to review this practice to resolve this issue of discrimination against Visitor members at our National Retired Members' Conference so that every member attending conference can enjoy, be informed and learn from the workshops and carry that knowledge back to their branches.

Conference therefore calls on the NRMC to ensure there is adequate space at Conference Workshops to accommodate Delegates and Visitors.

***Cymru/Wales Region***

**Can be dealt with in other ways**

**Conference venues**

Conference notes that the “Retired Members’ National Committee (NRMC)… may hold an annual conference of retired members” (rule D7.8) and the committee’s chairperson has stated that it is not the committee’s role “to find the locations which have to meet a range of criteria.”

Conference also notes that UNISON’s aims and objectives include:

1. B1.2 To seek to ensure equality of treatment…for all members…on grounds…(including) … age;
2. B2.2 To promote and establish a member-led union and to carry out and fulfil decisions made by members in a spirit of unity and accountability; and,
3. B4.6 To seek to ensure that members, activists, representatives and staff are treated with dignity and respect at all times when participating in the Union’s democratic structures.

Conference observes that not everywhere is suitable to hold UNISON conferences and some places may be suitable for certain conferences but not others. It understands that several requests not to go, or not to return, to a particular place have been treated with consideration.

Conference considers that a place as hilly as Bournemouth is unsuitable for the age group likely to attend a retired members’ conference. It understands that, over the last two years, this point has been made repeatedly to NRMC but no undertaking not to return to Bournemouth has been forthcoming.

Conference is disappointed it has not seemed possible to resolve the matter in the spirit of unity and accountability which is UNISON’s aim.

Conference also understands that, although at its October 2017 meeting, the NRMC was informed conferences are booked “years in advance”, later clarified as “a minimum of three years ahead” nothing was said at that meeting, amid a discussion about the 2018 conference, about UNISON also booking Bournemouth for retired members’ conference in 2020.

Conference is disappointed that, on that occasion, our committee appears not to have been treated with the respect that is UNISON’s aim.

Conference instructs NRMC to seek from the National Executive Council a statement, to be included in the Committee’s annual report next year, of the “range of criteria” which guides booking conference locations, who determines these criteria, how, in our “member-led union”, these criteria may be influenced or changed and what timescales are involved.

***City of Wolverhampton***

**Conference venues**

Conference is concerned about the suitability of certain locations for some UNISON conferences. Bournemouth is one such location whose hilly topography makes it unsuitability for National Retired Members’ (and National Disabled Members’) Conferences.

Conference notes than when retired members, including the National Retired Members’ Committee (NRMC), were advised in 2017 that Bournemouth was the venue for their 2018 Conference this concern was expressed unequivocally with the view that such a hilly venue was totally unsuitable for this demographic and would lead to predictable and avoidable difficulties.

Not only did this prove to be the case with no end of complaints about Bournemouth as a location, but was further exacerbated when delegates discovered that the Retired Members’ Conference was due to return there in 2020. This was received with anger and disbelief that UNISON seemed to be ignoring the genuine concerns of retired members about its unsuitability.

Conference understands that when a similar situation faced the National Disabled Members’ Conference, who were also due to return to Bournemouth, they were able to re-negotiate this and have the venue changed accordingly.

Whilst Conference appreciates that conference venues are booked well in advance, Conference believes that retired members should be afforded the same consideration and that locations for their conferences must take account of the unsuitability of some locations.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council about venues for Retired Members’ conferences with a view to ensuring that unsuitable venues like Bournemouth are not used in the future.

***Leicestershire County***

**Conference venues**

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Whilst Conference appreciates that conference venues are booked well in advance, Conference believes that retired members should be afforded the same consideration and that locations for their conferences must take account of the unsuitability of some locations.

Conference notes Motion 7 to National Delegate Conference (NDC) 2019 entitled “Time for Change – A Review of How UNISON is Structured and Funded” submitted by Northamptonshire County, which called for the National Executive Council (NEC) to conduct a thorough review of UNISON and listed fifteen specific areas that should be considered.

Conference further notes that amendments were submitted (by Islington and City of Wolverhampton) to one of the areas of the review so that the amended text would read:

“iv) Are all current conferences within the union inclusive and effective in terms of location, frequency, length and relevance in delivering the best level of services to branches and relevant members?”

Conference further notes that, at the time of submission of motions to National Retired Members' Conference, motion 7 to NDC although prioritised, appears forty fourth in the remaining order of business for NDC, and also that the recommendation on motion 7 from the NEC was to remit the motion and that the amendments be deferred.

In the event that motion 7 to NDC 2019 is either remitted or, not being reached on the agenda, falls to be considered by the NEC under Standing Order P.18, Conference therefore instructs the NRMC:

1. To liaise with the NEC about suitable venues for the National Retired Members’ Conference; and;
2. Establish what action is being taken by the NEC in relation to amended point iv) of motion 7 to 2019 NDC;
3. Clarify what criteria UNISON uses when selecting venues for conferences, and;
4. Publish the results of such discussions on the Retired Members' Pages of the UNISON website by the end of April 2020.

***Islington***

**Could place the union in legal jeopardy**

**Payment to Retired Members acting as stewards at UNISON conferences**

Conference notes that when UNISON arranges its various conferences

throughout the year, Branches and Regions are contacted in order to see if

Retired Members are willing to act as stewards for these events.

Retired Members carrying out stewarding work are expected to be able to

carry out these duties from 8.00 am until 5.00 pm each day.

Payments made to Retired Members for carrying out conference stewarding

duties are based on a subsistence payment per day (currently £50 per day

gross, less tax @20% i.e. £40 net payment).

This payment falls far below the recently revised National Minimum Wage

hourly wage of pay, which from April 2019 is fixed at £8.21 per hour, for

any worker aged 25 or over, as would be much as up to £2 less per hour.

As UNISON throughout the UK is involved every day in issues which both fight

to maintain as well as improve members' pay and working conditions in all the

services in which it is involved, is it right that Retired Members who agree to

assist UNISON at Conferences are paid less than the National Minimum Wage?

Conference therefore agrees that the UNISON National Executive Council

immediately revises its payment arrangements regarding Retired Members

acting as conference stewards and that for all future conferences these

members are paid at least the National Minimum Wage hourly rate of pay.

***North West Region***

**Bournemouth used as a conference venue**

Not printed on the advice of the legal officer

***George Eliot Hospital***

**Not competent**

**Foot care and advice service**

The Highland Branch believes the needs of our vulnerable elderly, and other vulnerable groups are not being met under current levels of NHS Highland provision.

Sutherland Care Forum in the Highlands of Scotland have identified this need, through consultation and research.

Research – this was carried out amongst the Sutherland Care Forum clients and through a general survey in East & Central Sutherland area with General Practitioners, Practice Nurses, NHS Highland and Private Sector Podiatrists.

Consultation – with General Practitioners, NHS Highland and older peoples' groups and organisations.

The Consultation and Research identified that there is an unmet need for foot care and advice, particularly for basic toe-nail cutting, which is not being met at present. The need included a number of other vulnerable clients, not only the elderly, but also the disabled, amputees, and expectant mothers.

Currently NHS Highland do not cut toe-nails. General Practitioners and Medical Practices do not cut toe-nails. Private Podiatrists are expensive, (approximately £20 per visit), and are in short supply for remote rural areas in the Highlands, and often Podiatrists will not travel to those areas for single isolated clients, without charging extra for travel. Many of our clients are on Guaranteed Pension Credit and would not be able to afford private treatment.

Sutherland Care Forum having recognised this need, through their research and consultation and have set up a grant funded amount of money for a limited short-term pilot Foot Care and Advice Service for the Sutherland area, using a very limited number of professionally trained volunteers, from local communities and family members to visit and assess the client need.

If the need is basic toe-nail cutting the volunteers will carry this out. If the need is for more professional advice the volunteers will refer the client to their own General Practitioner. Since the launch of the pilot scheme – demand is rapidly outweighing the work volunteers are able to deal with.

Future – It would be prudent for NHS Highland, other NHS Boards, and the Government to recognise that there is a definite need for NHS provision of a foot care and advice service.

Highland Caithness and Sutherland Area Retired Members Group call on the Scottish Retired Members Committee to recognise that NHS Highland foot care and advice service provision is a problem in the Sutherland Area of the Highlands of Scotland, and send a letter of support for the pilot scheme to NHS Highland. We call on the Committee to lobby NHS Highland to provide adequate provision of foot care and advice service in the Sutherland area.

***Highland***

**Birmingham Homecare strike**

This Conference congratulates the Birmingham City Council Home Care Workers on their victory in their recent dispute with Birmingham City Council. The Home Care Workers had been in dispute for nearly two years and have taken 86 days of industrial action. They have forced the Council to back down over the implementation of a restructure of the service, which would have seen the implementation of £2 million worth of cuts, that would have resulted in 200 care workers being forced to work shorter hours, with some workers facing the loss of £11,000 per annum in wages.

Whilst this battle has been won however, the war continues locally and nationally to defend Adult Social Care Services, against the backdrop of what is being acknowledged as a “crisis in the care system”, with the care of the most vulnerable sections of our society being left to the vagaries of the market. We reject the vague promises of the Conservative Government’s Green Paper – they claim the austerity agenda is now over, yet are still cutting services to the bone and pushing those who need care and their families to desperation.

Conference also notes that:

1. The UNISON Save Care Now campaign reports that £5.4 billion would be needed immediately to bring Adult Social Care levels back to those of 2010-11;
2. The Association of Directors of Adult Social Services say the continued squeeze by Central Government on finances means that currently local authorities are still pushing through further cutbacks, with £700 million’s worth of cuts to Adult Social Care in 2018-19, saying the service is “increasingly failing and fragile”;
3. The Chair of the Local Government Association’s Wellbeing Board, Conservative Cllr Izzi Seacombe, has said the service is at “tipping point” and that “councils risk not being able to fulfil their statutory duty under the Care Act”.

As the Retired Members' section, representing older UNISON members many of whom are now the service users facing the slow death of Adult Social Care Services, we call upon National Conference to:

1. Engage with the Labour Party through UNISON Labour Link, to ensure the implementation of the policies outlined in the Labour Party Manifesto, of an £8 billion investment into Adult Social Care Services over five years, with the formation of a National Care Service and the ring fencing of mental health services;
2. Engage with the Labour Party through UNISON Labour Link, to give our support to the Labour Manifesto demand for the professionalisation of the Home Care provider service, by introducing for Care Workers a real living wage; the end of 15 minute visits; paid travel time; choice of regular hours; and access to training;
3. Demand that Adult Social Care Services are free at the point of delivery, funded through general taxation, with all Adult Social Care Services brought back under the financial control of, and delivery by, the public sector.

***Birmingham***

**Referred to other bodies in the Union**

**Taking mobility scooters on public transport**

Buses designed to carry over 22 passengers on local and scheduled routes must comply with the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations which require vehicles to be designed to accommodate the needs of mobility handicapped passengers including the provision of spaces for wheelchair users. The Regulations also require the driver to assist wheelchair users and disabled people to board or alight from the bus if necessary and to deploy the boarding ramp if required by a wheelchair user. On rail similar provisions are imposed by the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations and the Disabled Persons Protection Policy (DPPP) with which all operators must comply in order to obtain a licence. The DPPP for each operator will vary slightly but must cover issues such as passenger assistance, free transport to the next station if the joining station is not accessible and provision of boarding ramps. Both these regulations refer to a “reference wheelchair” which will be acceptable for carriage but there is no equivalent right for mobility scooter users. In addition the Equality Act 2010 imposes duties on transport providers and public bodies to make reasonable adjustments to ensure accessibility.

There is therefore a long standing issue about the conveyance of mobility scooters on buses and the difficulties the present system creates for disabled people who use these machines. The Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT) has developed a Code of Practice for the conveyance of mobility scooters on buses but this is not mandatory and depends on the Bus Company adopting the Code and scooter users obtaining a permit. However not all Bus Companies have adopted the Code and so scooter users face inconsistency. Similarly train operators have their own rules as to which, if any, mobility scooters will be accepted for carriage. Clearly there should be national regulations to avoid this situation, as there are for wheelchairs. Disappointingly the Department for Transport’s Inclusive Transport Strategy does not address the problem. Whilst it may take longer to develop a Code of Practice for the carriage of mobility scooters on rail it is extremely hard to understand why, when given a workable Code of Practice for mobility scooters that is the equivalent of the reference wheelchair, the Government cannot ensure that the CPT Code is quickly adopted by all operators of local and scheduled buses in Britain.

Conference notes the situation with concern and calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council, the National Pensioners' Convention, Age UK, the Scottish Pensioners' Forum and other relevant organisations to request the Government to take action to require all operators of local and scheduled bus services in Britain to adopt the CPT Code of Practice as a matter of urgency, and to take action to develop a similar Code for rail.

***Lancashire***

**Requiring a rule change**

**Retaining retired members’ skills, experience and commitment**

We, the members of Bristol Retired Members Section, are seeking to strengthen and develop the role of retired members in the work of our union. We welcomed and were encouraged by the speech from Dave Prentis, General Secretary, at last year’s National Retired Members' Conference, expressing his support for retired members and their “bigger involvement”. We are aware of the many pressures on full members, union staff and activists. We want to harness the skills, experience and commitment of retired members to support UNISON’s work.

We note that there are currently barriers to the extent to which retired members can contribute to UNISON’s work, for example, the withdrawal of public liability insurance for retired members engaging in union work on behalf of other members, and the lack of access to up to date relevant training.

Other retired members across the regions have raised these issues in the past. In view of the pressures on the union to support members we call on Conference to address these concerns on the agenda and press for action:

1. To enable access to retired members with experience to undertake relevant up to date training;
2. To extend the Union’s Public Liability Insurance to retired members with accredited training.

This would prevent the loss of much needed expertise and experience of retired members and relieve some of the pressure on Union staff and stewards in supporting current members.

***Bristol***

**Regional Retired Members’ Committees’ Representation at National Delegate Conference – the right to send sharers**

Conference notes that:

1. Rule B2.3 sets UNISON an aim “to promote fair representation in all (its) structures for women, ... black members, disabled members and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender members”;
2. Rule D1.6 provides, “where a branch ... (has) the right to be represented (at National Delegate Conference) by only one delegate, the branch ... may, in order to promote proportionality, fair representation or equal opportunities, elect two members to share the delegation”; but,
3. Rule D1.7.8 provides for each Regional Retired Members’ Committee to appoint one representative to attend the conference with no similar opportunity to send two sharers.

Conference would like Regional Retired Members’ Committees to have the same opportunity as branches to promote proportionality, fair representation or equal opportunities by sending two sharers to National Delegate Conference.

Conference observes that the Retired Members’ Organisation may submit a total of two motions and/or amendments to rule to National Delegate Conference each year. It therefore agrees that, should this motion be carried and subject to the result of the ballot to select two motions and/or amendments to rule for National Delegate Conference 2020, to submit the following amendment to rule:

National Delegate Conference – The Right to Attend and Speak

At the end of rule D1.7.8 add:

Each regional retired members’ committee, having the right to be represented by only one retired member, may, in order to promote proportionality, fair representation or equal opportunities, appoint two retired members to share attendance between them. The respective region shall be responsible for any extra costs of this arrangement.

Should this motion be carried but the rule amendment not be selected in the ballot for submission to National Delegate Conference 2020, conference instructs the Retired Members’ National Committee to:

1. Ask the National Executive Council to submit a similar amendment to rule; and,
2. Urge branch retired members’ sections and regional retired members' committees to make the same request of their branch or region.

***West Midlands Region***

**Accident Benefit**

Conference notes that paragraph 2.2 of Schedule B excludes retired members from benefits under paragraph 2.7 of the schedule. In other words, where an accident befalls a retired member whilst upon Union business, there is no rulebook benefit though there would be one for a full member in the same circumstances.

Conference wants to see retired members brought into line with full members in this respect.

Conference observes that the Retired Members’ Organisation may submit a total of two motions and/or amendments to rule to National Delegate Conference each year. It therefore agrees that, should this motion be carried and subject to the result of the ballot to select two motions and/or amendments to rule for National Delegate Conference 2020, to submit the following amendment to rule:

Schedule B

At the end of the first sentence of paragraph 2.2 of the schedule add:

and Schedule B para 2.7 providing the accident happens whilst upon union business

Should this motion be carried but the rule amendment not be selected in the ballot for submission to National Delegate Conference 2020, conference instructs the National Retired Members’ Committee (NRMC) to:

1. Ask the National Executive Council (NEC) to submit a similar amendment to rule; and,
2. Urge branch retired members’ sections and regional retired members’ committees to make the same request of their branch or region.

Conference understands that, following a resolution of 2016 Retired Members’ Conference, the NEC declined to support an earlier similar proposal on the basis that the benefit is intended to assist members when they are unable to work. According to an answer to a question on its 2018 annual report, NRMC considers this intention is “shown by Schedule B2.7.4”

Conference observes that:

1. Paragraph 2.7.4 of the schedule describes the circumstances of the accident not the intention of the benefit;
2. The schedule describes accident benefit as a “one-off responsive service” (para 1.1) payable while “the member is unable to work by reason of the accident up to a maximum of 30 days ... in any calendar year” (para 2.7.2); and,
3. The benefit is payable to members in education whether or not currently employed (Schedule B, para 2.3), full members on certain kinds of unpaid leave from their employment (rule C2.3.2.1) and full members on strike or locked out from their employment (rule C2.3.2.2)

Conference is insulted that the NEC appears to think that, unlike these other members, retired members do nothing worthwhile or which deserves compensation if an accident whilst upon union business stops them doing it. Conference urges the NEC to reconsider.

***West Midlands Region***

**Fatal Accident Benefit**

Conference notes that paragraph 2.2 of Schedule B excludes retired members from benefits under paragraph 2.8 of the schedule. In other words, where a fatal accident befalls a retired member whilst upon Union business, there is no rulebook benefit though there would, in the same circumstances, be one for a full member’s surviving partner or dependant.

Conference wants to see retired members brought into line with full members in this respect.

Conference observes that the Retired Members’ Organisation may submit a total of two motions and/or amendments to rule to National Delegate Conference each year. It therefore agrees that, should this motion be carried and subject to the result of the ballot to select two motions and/or amendments to rule for National Delegate Conference 2020, to submit the following amendment to rule:

Schedule B

At the end of the first sentence of paragraph 2.2 of the schedule add:

and Schedule B para 2.8 providing the fatal accident happens whilst upon union business

Should this motion be carried but the rule amendment not be selected in the ballot for submission to National Delegate Conference 2020, conference instructs the National Retired Members’ Committee (NRMC) to:

1. Ask the National Executive Council (NEC) to submit a similar amendment to rule; and,
2. Urge branch retired members’ sections and regional retired members committees to make the same request of their branch or region.

Conference understands that, following a resolution of 2016 Retired Members’ Conference, the NEC declined to support an earlier similar proposal on the basis that the benefit is intended to assist members when they are unable to work. According to an answer to a question on its 2018 annual report, NRMC considers this intention “is shown by Schedule B2.7.4”

Conference observes that fatal accident benefit is not covered by that paragraph of the schedule. Conference quite accepts that members are, indeed, unable to work whilst dead but does not see how this depends on category of membership.

Conference therefore continues to see no case to treat retired members and full members differently in the event of fatal accident whilst upon union business and it urges the NEC to reconsider.

***West Midlands Region***

**Retired Member participation**

Retired Members represent a significant and growing proportion of UNISON membership. They remain members of society and retain any protected characteristic they may have had during their working lives. However, Retired Members are currently excluded from all of UNISON’s conferences except the Retired Members’ Conference and the National Delegates' Conference where they are not allowed to vote on motions.

The Retired Members’ Conference is only allowed to debate and pass motions which solely or predominantly relate to retired or older peoples’ issues. They, therefore, cannot have a direct input to debates on general citizenship issues or on rule changes which may in part or wholly affect Retired Members’ activities.

In an organisation which strives towards equality and inclusion, this should not be allowed to continue. This Conference, therefore, undertakes to submit a motion to the next National Delegates Conference for the necessary rule changes to ensure that Retired Members are allowed to participate on an equal footing to other members at all of UNISON’s conferences.

***Scotland Region***

**Branch Retired Members’ Secretary**

Conference notes that:

1. Rule D7.5 does not describe the Branch Retired Members’ Secretary (BRMS), plainly, as a member of the Branch Committee, rather it says BRMS “may attend and speak at all (its) meetings ... as determined by the Branch Committee rules ...”; and,
2. This formulation is not used for any other member of the branch committee.

Conference is concerned that, read in isolation, this leaves unclear whether BRMS counts towards the quorum and has the same rights, duties etc. as other committee members and it leaves the impression the position may vary from branch to branch.

Conference is in favour of amending the rule to make the matter as clear here as it is in G4.1.1, which provide that the retired members’ secretary is an officer, and G2.1.4, which provides that officers are members of branch committee.

Conference also notes that G2.1.3 provides, additionally, for such representatives of the retired members’ section within the branch, as the branch may determine, to serve on the branch committee too.

Conference observes that the Retired Members’ Organisation may submit a total of two motions and/or amendments to rule to National Delegate Conference each year. It therefore agrees that, should this motion be carried and subject to the result of the ballot to select two motions and/or amendments to rule for National Delegate Conference 2020, to submit the following amendment to rule:

Rule D7.5

Delete the existing rule and substitute:

The Branch Retired Members’ Secretary is a General Branch Officer and a member of the branch committee, in addition to such representatives of the retired members section within the branch as the branch may determine, and may vote on any issue or matter other than one which concerns the pay and conditions of work of members of the Union in employment.

Conference instructs the Retired Members’ National Committee:

1. Should this motion be carried but the rule amendment not be selected in the ballot for submission to National Delegate Conference 2020, to ask the National Executive Council (NEC) to submit a similar amendment to rule and to urge branch retired members’ sections and regional retired members' committees to make the same request of their branch or region.
2. Should the rule amendment be carried at National Delegate Conference, to ask the NEC to make a corresponding alteration to the first paragraph of section 11.3.1.1 of the Code of Good Branch Practice.

***West Midlands Region***

**Retired Members Rule review**

Conference notes that retired members have used their retired membership to set up and run social activities. However, with retired membership increasing, alongside increased political activism and participation it is time to increase the role retired members can play in their local branch.

Conference believes that retired members want to take an active role within their branch but feel restricted by the current rules. Retired members deserve recognition of the valuable role that they play within a branch.

Conference therefore recommends that retired members should have a say on who is elected to branch officer positions in line with other branch members.

Conference calls upon the National Retired Members' Committee to:

1. Investigate how Rule 2.6 can be updated to prevent the alienation of retired members from the democratic process of their branches.
2. Seek the views of retired members from across the regions and nations.
3. Seek rule changes to support the right of retired members to vote for branch officers at National Delegate Conference.

***East Riding Of Yorkshire***

**The Role of Retired Members in the Branch**

Conference recognises the ever-changing fragmented work environment and new models of delivering public services. The changes mean that branch structures need to be fit for purpose and that resources are deployed fairly and efficiently.

The organising model is undoubtedly the best way to run our branches. However, servicing individual members is still important.

Many branches have multiple employers the majority of which do not recognise trades unions.

With cuts to facility time in the core employers, servicing members in the Community, Voluntary and Private sector can cause problems. UNISON has a duty of care to its activists and many are reaching breaking point.

This conference believes that retired members can play a bigger role in supporting branches by assisting with representation in those workplaces where there is no trade union recognition agreement.

As the rules stand retired members are unable to represent members. We believe that this rule whilst relevant at the time is now in need of reviewing.

Many activists have taken early retirement and remain Employment Relations Act 1999 (ERA) accredited but are unable to put those skills to good use in the branch.

Therefore, conference calls on the National Executive Council to bring forward an appropriate rule change to the 2020 National Delegate Conference which would facilitate retired members representing members.

***Bolton Metro***

**Statement not a motion**

**Retired Members Finances**

Conference notes that most retired members have paid their subscriptions for some years before retiring and that there is a distinct imbalance between branches of the amount of funding that each Retired Members' group receives. Retired membership is increasing and with the increase in numbers there is an opportunity for branches to engage with retired members to move forward campaigns and activities. Conference would like any upcoming UNISON review to take into consideration the retired members' contribution to branches from volunteering in the branch to activism out in the community and to apportion a minimum amount of funding to support such activities.

***East Riding Of Yorkshire***

**Personal Wills & Registration**

Conference recognises that either not creating a Will or being unable to locate a Will causes untold distress and potential financial loss for family members and other beneficiaries.

Conference recognises that the cost of Will writing and Will registration services can be prohibitive for many people and is certainly one cause of people failing to update their wills on a regular basis.

Conference believes that Government has an important role to play in establishing a universal and cost effective service/database that encourages all citizens to write, and regularly update, personal wills that are then logged in a central register.

***Solihull***