

How UNISON is run

Information for Community members





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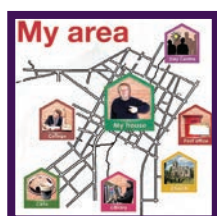
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About us

We are UNISON. We are a **trade union**.



A **trade union** is a group of people who stand up for workers **rights**.



Your **rights** are things you are allowed to do and how you should be treated.



We talk to organisations to try to make things better for workers.
Things like:

- more pay

and

- better workplaces





We mainly support people who work for public services and organisations.

This might be places like local councils, schools, colleges and health services.



Members

Workers who join UNISON are called **members**.

This booklet is for Community members. This means members who work for:



- big charities



- **housing associations.** This is an organisation that helps people with housing



- small charities



- **social care.** This is care and support people might get at home, in a care home or in the community

How we support members

If you join UNISON, you can get:



- advice and support at work



- free legal advice for you and your family



- support with money through our charity called **There for You**



- learning and training



We also give members good things like vouchers and offers.

We call these things **benefits**.



You can find more information about benefits on our website:

benefits.unison.org.uk

Being a UNISON Rep



If you want to be more involved, you can be a **representative**. We call this a **rep** for short.



A **rep** is someone who:

- speaks up for UNISON members



- supports and gives advice to workers



- supports workers at meetings and speaks up for their rights



- supports workers in their local UNISON meetings



There are different roles for reps in the workplace. These might include:



- **Workplace Reps.** A Workplace Rep does things like:

- talk to members about any problems they are having at work

and



- give members information about UNISON



- **Health and Safety Reps.** These make sure your workplace is a safe place to work



● UNISON Learning Reps.

A Learning Rep supports members to do courses and training to learn more skills at work



UNISON puts on lots of free training and events for members and reps.



You can look at all the different training here:
learning.unison.org.uk/events/

Being a UNISON steward



A UNISON steward can also be called a rep.

A **steward** is someone who also stands up for the rights of members they work with.



A steward can:

- speak out for a group of members



- talk to companies to try and reach agreements between bosses and workers



- get extra training and support



A steward also does extra things like:

- supports workers at UNISON meetings



- meets with union staff



- goes to big UNISON meetings and events



You can find out more information here:

www.unison.org.uk/get-involved/in-your-workplace/key-documents-tools-activists/



UNISON and your employer

Your **employer** is the company or person you work for.



Sometimes UNISON have an agreement with your employer to speak up for workers. This is called a **recognition agreement**.



This lets UNISON talk on behalf of members and make sure they get treated fairly.

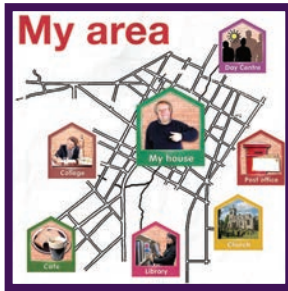


The agreement will say how UNISON can support you as a member.

This includes things like time off with pay to sort out work problems or getting the right training.

Your local UNISON branch

A group of UNISON members is called a **branch**. A branch could be made up of members who:



- work in the same area



- work for the same organisation
or



- work for similar types of organisations



There are 4 special branches for Community members. These are in the West Midlands, London, Northern Ireland and Wales.



To find your nearest branch, you can phone us at:

0800 0 857 857

Roles in a branch



A branch has people who do certain roles. Members **vote** for who they want to do these roles.

A **vote** gives members a say in the things we do.



The roles might include:

- a board of people who make sure the branch is doing a good job



- an officer who makes sure people are treated fairly



- an officer who makes sure the branch is safe and follows the law



- an officer who works with young members



- an officer who supports disabled members



- an officer who makes sure all staff and members get the right skills



You can find out more about branch roles on our website:

www.unison.org.uk/about/our-organisation/activists/branch-roles/



Your UNISON region

Each UNISON branch belongs to a **region**. A region is an area in the UK. UNISON has 12 regions.



Each region has a Head Office that supports the local branches.



Regions support branches to:

- get people to join UNISON
- stand up for members rights
- give members the right support and training





- try to make changes to make things better at work



Each region has its own **council**.

A council is a group of people from all local branches.



The council meets 3 or 4 times a year. They look at what is happening in the region and make decisions together.



The council has a big meeting every year. At the meeting they vote for who they want to have more senior roles.

Service groups



Each branch is also part of a **service group**. A service group is a group of workers who all work in the same type of service.

UNISON has **7 service groups** for people who work in:



- community services like a local charity or a housing association



- health services like hospitals and doctors



- energy services like electric and gas companies



- police and the law



- higher education. This means people who work in a college or university



- local government. This means your local council



- water, the environment and transport. The **environment** means the world we live in and the air we breathe



There is also a separate group for members who work for **private companies**.

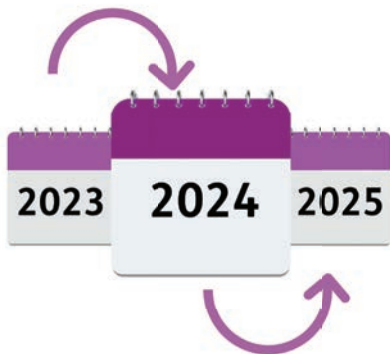
A **private company** is a business owned by a person or group of people.

Community service group conference



A **conference** is a big event where people come to share information. There are workshops and people give talks.

A conference usually lasts for 1 day or more.



There is a UNISON Community conference every year. This is for members of the Community service group.



Members from different branches come to talk about things they think are important.



The most important things people say at the conference go into a work plan for the next year.



The work plan is managed by a group called the **National Community Service Group Executive**. This is called **SGE** for short.



The **SGE** meets 4 times a year to make sure the jobs in the work plan are done.

National Sector Committees

There are 3 National Sector Committees for the Community service group. These are for:



- housing associations



- big charities



- small charities



Members are voted on to these committees by their local region.



The committees each meet 2 or more times a year.



Anyone can join these meetings online.

National Executive Council



This is called **NEC** for short.

The NEC is made up of a group of members. The group meets often to check the work of the union.



All UNISON members can vote to choose who they want to be on the NEC.



Christina McAnea is the leader of UNISON. UNISON members voted for Christina to have this role.

Equality in UNISON



It is really important that everyone is included in UNISON and treated fairly.



We need to make sure we include a good mix of people from all communities and of all ages and genders.

We have groups that give extra support to:



- Black members



- disabled members



- LGBT+ members



- members who are women



● young members



You can find out more about Equality in UNISON and how to get involved on our website:

www.unison.org.uk/about/what-we-do/fairness-equality/

How to contact us



For more information or if you have any questions, you can contact Haifa Rashed.

Haifa is an assistant national officer at UNISON.



You can email Haifa at:
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