

**UNISON Retired Members' Conference
2023**

Conference agenda and guide

3rd / 4th October 2023

Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC)



Contents

	Page No
Timetable	5-6
Meetings for self-organised groups (formerly caucus meetings)	7
Discussion Groups (delegates only)	7
Panel Debate (delegates and visitors)	7
Final Agenda	8
Motions and Amendments admitted to the agenda (list)	8 - 10
Motions and Amendments ruled out of order (list)	11 - 12
Motions and Amendments (text)	13 - 43
Motions and Amendments ruled out of order (text)	44 - 57
Report of National Retired Members' Committee including actions arising from 2018 Retired Members' Conference	58
Standing Orders for the Conduct of National Retired Members' Conferences	82
Conference venue	86
Venue information	89
Access and facilitation	91
Safety and security	92
Covid measures	92
Emergency evacuation procedure	92
Conference Seating Plan	93
Venue Floor Plans	94
Monitoring for Proportionality and Fair Representation	97

Timetable

Tuesday 3 rd October		
11am – 5.30pm	Conference desk open	Moffatt, Level -2
11am – 5pm	Exhibition open	Lennox 1, Level -2
11am – 5pm	Delegate catering area open	
11am – 5.15pm	Cloakroom open	Level -1 cloakroom
11am – 11.15am	Tellers' meeting	Lammermuir 2, Level -2
11.30am – 4pm	Meet and greet table	Moffatt
11.45am – 5pm	Card vote collection desk open	Lennox 1
12pm – 12.30pm	Meeting for LGBT+ Members	Lowther, Level -1
12.30pm – 1pm	Meeting for Black Members	Lammermuir 2
1pm - 4pm	Standing Orders Committee	Lammermuir 1
1pm – 1.30pm	Meeting for Disabled Members	Lammermuir 2
1.30pm – 2pm	Meeting for Women Members	Lennox 2&3, Level -2
2.15pm – 3.45pm	<u>Panel debate</u> Cost of living and pensioner poverty	Lennox 2&3
	<u>Discussion group 1</u> Branch communication	Carrick 2&3, Level 1
	<u>Discussion group</u> Organising and development	Lammermuir 2
	<u>Discussion group 3</u> Winter heating crisis	Lowther
	<u>Discussion group 4</u> Pensions	Menteith, Level -1
3pm onwards	Ballot papers available from the conference desk	Moffatt
4pm – 5pm Regional meetings	Cymru/Wales	Ochil, Level 1
	Greater London	Lennox 2&3
	Northern	Menteith
	Southeast	Carrick 2&3
	Southwest	Lammermuir 2
5pm – 6pm Regional meetings	West Midlands	Lowther
	Eastern	Menteith
	East Midlands	Carrick 2&3
	Northern Ireland	Ochil
	Northwest	Lowther
	Scotland	Lennox 2&3
Yorkshire & Humberside	Lammermuir 2	

Wednesday 4th October		
8.30am – 5.30pm 8.30am – 4pm	Conference desk open Card vote collection point open	Moffatt
8:30am – 4pm	Standing Orders Committee	Lammermuir 1
8.30am – 4.30pm	Cloakroom open	Level -1 cloakroom
9am – 4pm	Exhibition open Delegates cash catering open	Lennox 1
9am – 9.20am	New delegates briefing	Lennox 2&3
9.30am – 12.30pm	First conference session	Lennox 2&3
2pm – 4pm	Second conference session	Lennox 2&3

Meetings for self organised groups (caucus meetings)

These meetings are informal meetings open to retired members who identify themselves as belonging to the following groups: women members, Black members, disabled members and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender plus members. There is a specific meeting for each group.

Due to the informal nature of these meetings there will be no staff involvement and members attending are free to identify the issues of mutual interest they wish to discuss in a confidential environment. However, it would be advisable for each meeting to agree a person to facilitate debate by ensuring that everyone, who wishes to, has a chance to participate in discussions.

At each meeting there will be an election to select the two retired member delegates to attend the relevant self-organised group conference. Nominations were sought prior to conference.

Each meeting should also appoint a reporter to produce a report for consideration by the National Retired Members' Committee and inclusion in the Annual Report.

Discussions Group (delegates only)

Discussion Groups will be held on Tuesday 4 October from 2.15pm to 3.45pm. **Delegates can attend a discussion group of their choice at the Edinburgh Conference Centre .**

Discussion group choices are as follows:

1. Branch Communication – Ex NEC member, now retired , Kate Ramsden , will explain how retired members can communicate in the branch, region and National. Kate will share her experiences from her own branch perspective .
2. Organising and Development – National Retired Committee Members , Andrew Coburn will outline how retired members can identify issues to organise around and develop campaigns.
3. Winter Heating Crisis – an opportunity to discuss escalating energy costs and fuel poverty and how to get support /Assistance
4. Pensions update – UNISON's National Pensions Officer Glyn Jenkins /Gloria Mills will provide an update of current state pension provision and the WASPI campaign

Please note that for visitors and those delegates not attending a workshop there will also be a panel debate from 2.15pm to 3.45pm in the main hall. The theme of the panel debate will be Cost of Living Crisis and Pensioner Poverty.

Social Event

TBC

Final Agenda

Conference Motions and Amendments

Following are the motions and amendments approved for the 2019 Retired Members' Conference. Motions and amendments ruled out of order are also included.

Motions and amendments admitted to the agenda

AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS ADMITTED TO THE AGENDA

ASO1	Amendment to SO	Islington
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MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS ADMITTED TO THE AGENDA

No.	Title	Submitting Body
1	UNISON retired members just want to have funds!	Hampshire
2	Public Ownership of Energy Utilities	Northwest Region
	2.1 Amendment	Hampshire
3	Renationalize Royal Mail	Northwest Region
	3.1 Amendment	Scotland Region
4	Stop Rise in State Pension Age	Birmingham
	4.1 Amendment	Scotland
5	Support Campaign for Pain-free Hysteroscopies	Birmingham
6	Maximizing Support for Retired Members	Southwest Region
	6.1 Amendment	City of Wolverhampton
	6.2 Amendment	West Midlands Region

	6.3 Amendment	Knowsley
	6.5 Amendment	Scotland Region
	6.6 Amendment	Islington
7	Scrap Tax on Pension withdrawals	Southwest Region
	7.1 Amendment	Scotland Region
8	Parking Problems for Pensioners	Southwest Region
9	GP and Pharmacy Services	Eastern Region
	9.1 Amendment	City of Wolverhampton
10	Bank Branch Closures	Eastern Region
	10.1 Amendment	Scotland Region
11	Year of Black Workers	West Midlands Region
12	Declining Bus Services and Impact on Pensioners	NRMC
13	Housing Older people and the CoL crisis	NRMC
	13.1 Amendment	Haringey
	13.2 Amendment	Haringey
14	New vs Old State Pension	NRMC
	14.1 Amendment	West Midlands Region
	14.2 Amendment	Hampshire
15	Transport by Train	NRMC
16	State Retirement and Triple Lock	West Midlands Community Branch
	16.2 Amendment	West Midlands Region
	16.3 Amendment	Greater London Region
17	Dirty Money	Yorkshire & Humberside Region
18	Britain's railway ticket offices - closures	Yorkshire & Humberside Region
	18.1 Amendment	Knowsley

	14.1 Amendment	Scotland Region
19	Justice for the Windrush generation	Islington
20	Time for a Quadruple Lock	Islington
21	Tackling Pensioner Poverty	Northern Ireland Region
22	National Regional and Local Transport	Wakefield LG
23	Amendment to Rule Option 1	Islington
	23.2 Amendment	NRMC
24	Let's Make Care Work	Greater London

AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS RULED OUT OF ORDER

Conflicts with an existing rule

Amendment to SO 3.1	Scotland Region
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MOTIONS RULED OUT OF ORDER

Beyond Remit of Conference:

Democracy denied?	Hampshire
Social Care Crisis – For a National Care Service	Camden
Communicating with Retired members	Northwest Region
Support the Ethical Care Charter	Northwest Region
Social Care Crisis – For a National Care Service	Camden
Living Pension	Eastern Region
Voter ID	Eastern Region
Pensioner Poverty - Rise in Excess Deaths	NRMC
Retired Members an underused resource	Scotland Region
Climate Emergency	Scotland Region
A living pension with dignity	Scotland Further Education
AI – Blessing or Danger?	Hampshire

Could place the union in legal jeopardy (not printed)

An indulgence for NDC SOC	Islington
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AMENDMENTS RULED OUT OF ORDER

Introduces substantial new subject matter:

20.1 Amendment	City Of Wolverhampton
23.1 Amendment	Hampshire

Negative amendment:

2.2 Amendment	Haringey
3.2 Amendment	Haringey
15.1 Amendment	Haringey
24.1 Amendment	West Midlands Region
24.2 Amendment	Islington

Received twice:

6.4 Amendment	Knowsley
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Not sufficiently clear:

8.1 Amendment	City Of Wolverhampton
16.1 Amendment	City Of Wolverhampton

Beyond the remit of Conference :

	12.1 Amendment	Knowsley
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Motions and amendments – Full text

Amendment to Standing Orders

ASO01

AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS

In Standing Order number 8, motions and amendments insert a new section *.1 to read as follows:

“8.1 Motions and amendments may be submitted to Conference by the following bodies:

- Branch Retired Members' groups
- Regional Retired Members' groups
- National Retired members' Committee
- Retired Members' Women's' caucus
- Retired Members' Black Members' caucus
- Retired Members' Disabled Members' caucus
- Retired Members' Lesbian, Gay, bisexual and Transgender Plus (LGBT+) caucus

Caucus motions and amendments shall only be on matters primarily affecting the members of that particular caucus.”

and renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly.

Islington Local Government Retired Members Group

Islington UNISON (M)

Motions

Motion 01

UNISON RETIRED MEMBERS JUST WANT TO HAVE FUNDS!

Yes, we acknowledge that some pensioners are millionaires and, yes, we acknowledge that some Government Ministers are millionaires or multi-millionaires. Whereas some pensioners, including our UNISON retired members, are living in abject poverty, we have yet to find one Minister living in abject poverty. When your life is full of luxury, it may be difficult to understand that there are those who cannot afford to keep warm or eat.

The Government pledge to honour the triple lock when raising the state pension meant that in April 2023 the increase was raised by the inflation level of 10.1%. Unfortunately, for some retired members on lower incomes this increase has meant that they now have to pay tax. The amount of income which retired members need has increased substantially during the last year due to the rising cost of living, food prices and energy costs increasing. Sadly, the amount of income that they can keep before being taxed has not changed.

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

1. urgently campaign on making the Government aware of this situation.
2. report progress on a regular basis in UNISON publications and at all the UNISON National Retired Members Committee meetings for onward circulation to Regions and Branches.
3. report back to the 2024 UNISON National Retired Members Conference any progress achieved in increasing awareness.

Hampshire (L)

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF ENERGY UTILITIES

Conference believes:

1. Retired members have been particularly hard hit by the cost-of-living crisis and in particular the massive increases in energy bills since April 2021 that has hit millions of people.
2. Retired members who are at home during the day have faced the impossible juggling act of trying to keep themselves warm and still have enough money for other day to day living costs.
3. It has been especially galling to face such massive increases in heating costs at the same time as watching the top five energy companies pay over \$130 billion in dividends to shareholders in 2022.
4. Not only has the privatised UK energy industry been a disaster for retired members, the so-called "competitive market" has meant the excellent opportunity to replace harmful carbon-based generating ability with clean renewable energy has been squandered. Obtuse rules imposed to try and create the impression of an energy market has meant any benefits of the cheap renewable energy which has been rolled out has failed to be translated into cheap prices for customers.
5. The massive opposition to high energy prices and the overwhelming popular support for public ownership of utilities is a vindication of the position our union has consistently adopted of support for public ownership of utilities.
6. As we approach a 2024 General Election it is essential that we win a commitment that the next government will end this disastrous experiment of privatised energy and instead bring this essential public service back into public ownership.
7. The research already commissioned by UNISON says the benefits which a publicly owned Energy industry would bring in terms of:
 - I. Tackling the gross underinvestment in new generation capacity and infrastructure. A nationally co-ordinated plan can drive the move to clean energy without the need to bribe private industry.
 - II. Introducing measures to tackle and eliminate the scandal of fuel poverty.
 - III. Ending the drive for profit which leads to excessive bonuses for senior executives, attacks on the employment contracts of ordinary employees and an ever-increasing cost to the consumer.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members Committee to liaise with the NEC, Labour Link, and other relevant organisations:

- a. To use appropriate resources and channels to support the promotion of the policy of bringing the Energy Industry back into public ownership with the aim that the next government has this as one of its key commitments.
- b. Use current and supporting information and research in support of this aim.

North West Region

Amendment 2.1

After "5. The massive opposition to high energy prices and the overwhelming popular support for public ownership of utilities is a vindication of the position our union has consistently adopted of support for public ownership of utilities."

Add:

"6. Utility regulators need reminding that their primary role is to act in consumers' interests. Their past record overseeing the mass collapse of energy providers shows that there is an urgent need for a reform of their role."

After "A. To use appropriate resources and channels"

Add: "including information provided by Unison Retired Members Sections requested by the National Retired Members' Committee"

Hampshire

Motion 03

RENATIONALISE THE ROYAL MAIL

The Royal Mail has a long and proud history. It was founded in the Tudor period in 1516 when Henry VIII established a "Master of the Posts".

The Uniform Penny Post was established in 1840 and effectively the system continued to operate successfully until, 2013 when the decision was taken to privatise the Royal Mail and float it on the stock exchange.

The situation has deteriorated recently with Royal Mail failing to meet its delivery targets. The problem occurs because of a combination of factors, including competition from other companies. However, one area where the Royal Mail clearly has a great difficulty compared with its competitors is in the requirement for it to provide a universal delivery service for a standard fee from wherever to wherever in the United Kingdom. Since the development of electronic means of communication the use of the postal service has been falling steadily.

This clearly gives a great incentive for Royal Mail to seek to reduce or even try to obtain permission to withdraw the letter service.

A major use of letter post is by older people, many of whom do not use electronic means of communication. It is also the case that many hospital appointments and government communications are via the letter system, which would disproportionately disadvantage older people.

Retired Members are particularly reliant on the postal services and are concerned at the recent direction of these services

Conference calls on the National Retired Members Committee to liaise with the NEC, Labour Link, and other relevant organisations:

1. To use appropriate resources and channels to support the promotion of the policy of bringing the Royal Mail back into public ownership with the aim that the next government has this as one of its key commitments.
2. Use current and supporting information and research in support of this aim.

North West Region

Amendment 3.1

In paragraph 7, Insert after `Labour Link`

The Scottish Pensioners Forum,

Scotland Region

Motion 04

STOP RISE IN STATE PENSION AGE

Conference notes the widespread opposition to the plan by President Macron to increase the State Retirement Age in France from 62 to 64 may well have been a factor in the decision by the UK Government to delay making a decision on the rise in the State Pension Age to 68, with reports that ministers were considering bringing forward this increase to 2035, affecting people who are 54 and under today.

Conference further notes that successive government increases in the UK State Pension Age has left women born on or after April 6th 1950 -April 5th 1960 significantly worse off.

Conference believes that it is the expectation that as we come to the end of our working lives we can look forward to a new and reinvigorated life through our retirement years, as a fundamental bedrock of a society that is committed to looking after its young and older workers and those who have already retired. State Retirement Age is an Intergenerational issue.

Successive governments, in planning for an increase in the state pension age to 68, have argued that the increase is justified because of the improvement in life expectancy for at least 30 years. As the TUC, in their submission to the Second State Pension Review, point out “the significant slowdown in longevity makes it impossible to continue with the timetable for increasing the state pension age to 68” adding “There are also wide and growing differences in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas and many people in low paying and manually intensive jobs are already facing difficulties working until State Retirement Age.”

Conference calls upon the UNISON National Retired Members Committee to

1. Fully support the National Pensioners Convention campaign “68 is Too Late”.
2. Fully support the TUC demand that the government do not implement the planned increase in the State Retirement Age to 67 between 2026/27.
3. Campaign for future decisions by this or any incoming government on the State Pension Age in the UK to be based on recommendations by an independent Pensions Commission including representatives from trade unions and pensioners’ organisations such as AGE UK and the National Pensioners Convention.
4. Support the WASPI campaign for an immediate one-off compensation payment to those women affected by increases in the UK State Pension Age, with the most going to women who were given the shortest notice of the longest increase in their state pension age.

Birmingham UNISON Branch

Amendment 4.1

In (3) insert after `AGE UK`

The Scottish Pensioners Forum

Scotland Region

Motion 05

SUPPORT CAMPAIGN FOR PAIN-FREE HYSTEROSCOPIES

This conference notes the campaign by the Campaign Against Painful Hysteroscopy (CAPH) to end the barbaric practice Hysteroscopies being carried out in the NHS with inadequate or no offer of pain relief.

As the CAPH point out, unlike NHS Colonoscopy or Gastroscopy procedures, women undergoing Hysteroscopy are NOT offered a safely monitored conscious sedation. The NHS procedure is performed in Outpatients whilst the patient is awake – women with a closed or narrowed cervix (i.e. post-menopausal women and those having gone through a non-vaginal childbirth) are not informed that the procedure can be excruciatingly painful: patients are instructed to take over-the-counter medicines before the procedure, no stronger medication is recommended and only seldom given. There is no separate appointment for a pre-operative assessment.

Conference notes that the British Association of Anaesthetists have recorded that between 2019 – 2020, 71,000 Hysteroscopies were carried out on the NHS, disproportionately affecting older women who are more prone to needing internal examination due to age.

Conference is concerned that NHS Hospital Trusts are currently financially incentivised through the Best Practice Tariff to perform at least 70% of Hysteroscopies in Outpatients rather than under general anaesthetic. This means that patients are not always given a CHOICE between an outpatient hysteroscopy and a general anaesthetic.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council, Labour Link, the National Pensioners Convention, Scottish Pensioners Forum, Age UK and other relevant and appropriate organisations to mount a campaign, and work with the Women's Self-Organised Group and UNISON branches to promote that campaign, to urge that:

1. All NHS Hysteroscopists have advanced training in pain medicine.
2. All Hysteroscopy patients receive full written information before the procedure, listing the risks and benefits of a local anaesthetic, so that they can make a personal choice.
3. All Hysteroscopy services are adequately funded so that BEFORE their procedures patients may choose no anaesthesia/ local anaesthesia/ safely monitored conscious sedation/ epidural/ general anaesthetic.
4. The 'Best Practice Tariff financial incentive', which rewards NHS Trusts who perform a high percentage of hysteroscopies in outpatients without a trained anaesthetist is abolished.

Birmingham UNISON Branch

Motion 06

MAXIMISING THE SUPPORT OF RETIRED MEMBERS

Conference notes that, as well as campaigning on issues that relate directly to retired members, we have the potential and a responsibility to support the campaigns of working members. This is not new but is now more important than ever in the current period of intense struggle against a government and employers who are intent on destroying the livelihood, rights and voice of working people.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to work with the National Executive Committee, regions and branches to:

1. ensure that retired members are encouraged and enabled to give maximum support to working members, and
2. identify and remove any unnecessary barriers to their doing so.

South West Region

Amendment 6.1

At the end of the motion add a paragraph

Conference is concerned that certain phrases in UNISON rules and the Code of Good Branch Practice may be subject to unduly restrictive application in some branches and this may be such a barrier. It instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to raise with the NEC the need to avoid any doubt, conflict or dispute concerning retired members' taking part in branches. Examples include:

A. Rule D7.5 uses the phrase "may attend and speak ... and may vote on (certain matters)" to describe, uniquely, the Branch Retired Members' Secretary's participation at branch committee. The code, at paragraph 11.3.14 only says "attend" (not speak or vote) and paragraph 11.3.1.1 restricts participation to the committee's "normal" meetings whereas rule D7.5 has "all meetings"; and,

B. While the branch retired members' secretary's status as a branch officer and therefore membership of the branch committee is covered in rules G4.1.1 and G2.1.4, rule G2.1.3 leaves the retired members' section's representation on branch committee to be determined by the branch, and core branch rules are silent on any representation except the branch retired members' secretary.

City of Wolverhampton Local Government

Amendment 6.2

Add new second and third paragraphs to the motion:

Conference notes that paragraph 8.1 of the Code of Good Branch Practice '(obliges) branches and regional organisers ... to carry out, jointly, an (annual) assessment of branch organisation and performance using a standard template of questions ... to strengthen the branch and to assess what support it may need from the region'.

Conference believes this process could be adapted to include how to encourage and enable retired members to contribute to the work of the branch.

Conference recalls motion 38, Joint Branch Assessments (JBAs), submitted to the 2019 Retired Members' Conference which stated that, in Scotland, it is a standard practice to involve the branch retired members' secretary in the JBA and there is relevant training. The motion commended this practice and urged its extension to other regions be considered. The motion was not reached for debate and consequently referred to the National Retired Members' Committee. Conference continues to look forward to the committee's report.

In the final paragraph of the motion, at the end of sub-paragraph (2) add:

including further consideration of extending Scottish practice on JBAs to other regions

West Midlands Region

Amendment 6.3

In first paragraph, after "struggle" insert ", involving many UNISON members in Industrial Action,".

In second paragraph, after "Executive" delete "Committee" and insert "Council"

Amendment 6.5

Insert after (2) a new point 3

(3) This Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members Committee to call on the NEC to carry out a review of the Rules as they affect retired members, consulting widely with all stakeholders. The aim of the review should be twofold;

? consider the possibility of extending the Branch roles and functions retired members could carry out, and

? consider ways in which retired members' access to the decision-making processes of the Union on general social issues can be facilitated.

Scotland Region

Amendment 6.6

Insert a new second paragraph to read:

“Conference recognises the importance of feedback from branch committees to branch retired members groups regarding issues facing working members. Yet Unison Rules and the Code of Good branch Practice do not comprehensively define:

- a. Retired Members representation on a branch committee and
- b. What matters retired members representatives can either speak on or vote on., and
- c. What action retired members can or cannot take in support of working members involved in disputes at local, regional or national level.”

And, at the end of action point 2 after “barriers to doing so” insert:

“, including conducting surveys of all branches and regions to:

- I. Ascertain what representation retired members have on branch committees under each branch’s rules,
- II. ask all Branch Retired Members secretaries and regional retired members groups for details of any retired members involvement in issues or campaigns affecting working members since January 2020, and
- III. ask branch and regional retired members groups to identify barriers to retired members participating in the campaigns of working members.

and report back to National Retired Members’ Conference 2024

Islington UNISON

Motion 07

SCRAP TAX ON PENSION WITHDRAWALS FOR CARE PURPOSES

Conference notes that proposals to limit the erosion of personal estates to pay for care in older age has never progressed as hoped, leaving many with little to pass on to their next of kin.

But this hostile backdrop to managing declining years does not stop there. For those with the means to tap into their pension pot to pay for care costs, a heavy tax burden awaits!

Currently, the first 25% of a Defined Contribution (money purchase) pension pot withdrawal is tax free. The other 75% is taxable at the same rate as income tax so, current tax rules discourage savers from using pensions to fund care. This situation might instead bring forward taking out an equity release product or where capital assets are over £23,250 the forced sale of the house to pay for care costs.

What form could the remedy take that would securely ringfence care funding? An INA (Immediate Needs Annuity) is an insurance product that can be bought by self-funders who are set to receive long term care. In exchange for a lump sum payment, such as deriving from a cashed in pension, to an insurance company, the buyer is guaranteed to receive regular payments for the care that they need, for the rest of their life. However, if someone dies soon after taking out the plan the money that they invested in the INA will be lost, but it may have avoided the forced sale of their dwelling.

Pension pots could provide assistance to people to give them the care they need in later life, prolong their independence and delay any prospective transition to residential care.

If people could access their pension pots tax free - to pay for care, this could both promote higher levels of retirement saving and make it easier for people to pay for their own care if they need it. Moreover, this should also reduce the likelihood of people needing means-tested support from the state.'

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council, Labour Link, the National Pensioners Convention, Age UK and other relevant organisations; and encourage local UNISON branches, regions and Trades Union Councils to call on HM Treasury to scrap tax on pension withdrawals where the funds are to be used for care related purposes.

South West Region

Amendment 7.1

In last paragraph insert after `AGE UK`

The Scottish Pensioners Forum,

Scotland Region

Motion 08

PARKING PROBLEMS FOR PENSIONERS

This conference deplores the increasing use of cashless parking machines in public car parks, at on-street parking meters, at shopping centres and other facilities which discriminate against pensioners.

Payments to these machines can only be made by using a variety of different methods including debit or credit cards, contactless cards, smart phone payments and payments by apps. This is allegedly to prevent vandalism and theft as well as being environmentally more friendly.

They are not friendly for many retired people who do not have the technology such as smart phones and do not understand how to use these parking machines, many of which vary greatly depending on the provider. A large number of pensioners still rely on the use of cash and some do not have bank accounts or credit cards.

These machines allegedly make payments easier and faster, but not for those who are older and infirm who suffer from a variety of illnesses associated with ageing including loss of mobility and poor sight.

The impact of these is that many pensioners are unable to go shopping, visit town centres, attend doctor and hospital appointments or socialise. It is at the very least inconvenient but at worst ageist and discriminatory and contributes to greater isolation and loneliness.

Set this against the companies who provide these so-called services on behalf of local authorities, hospitals and other amenities who make vast profits at our expense.

Some members have said they are afraid to park where they are unable to use cash and others have incurred substantial fines.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council, Labour Link, the National Pensioners Convention, Scottish Pensioners Forum, Age UK, the Trades Union Congress, the Scottish Trades Union Congress and other relevant organisations; and encourage local UNISON branches, regions and Trades Union Councils to:

1. Mount a campaign for the retention of cash payment machines in all car parks used by the public and reinstate such machines where they have been removed.
2. Raise awareness with government and local authorities of the difficulties encountered by pensioners in using these machines.

South West Region

Motion 09**GP AND PHARMACY SERVICES**

Conference notes with concern the Government's pressure for people to consult pharmacists in the first instance rather than their GP surgery. This is the result of its continuing underfunding of the NHS and, in particular, general practice surgeries, with a large deficit of fully trained GPs. This is at a time when pharmacies across all four nations are either closing due to the pressures of the cost of living crisis, or moving into large supermarkets where there is not always space for a separate consulting room. This is currently happening within NHS England but may well become an adopted practice within the other nations of the UK.

Whilst Conference recognises the ability and help pharmacists can offer, this inevitably can only be at a certain level and is no substitute for proper medical appointments. When people cannot get to see their GP and are not confident with advice given by pharmacists, this will only lead to greater pressure on A&E Departments, the very thing Government says it is trying to avoid by promoting pharmacist appointments.

This is especially concerning for older people who are more likely to have complex medical needs, as they may be offered incorrect or insufficient advice from pharmacists especially as they do not have access to all a person's medical records unlike GPs.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members Committee to:

1. work with the NPC and TUC Pensioner organisations to lobby the Government to properly fund GP surgeries and pharmacy services.
2. alert those in Scotland, Wales and N Ireland to this development and to organise with relevant Older People Organisations to resist it
3. encourage regions and branches to work locally with relevant organisations to resist this development and campaign for GP services to be much more available to all.

Eastern Region

Amendment 9.1

In the third paragraph (beginning "This is especially ...") delete 'they may be offered incorrect or insufficient advice from' and delete "especially as they".

City of Wolverhampton Local Government

Motion 10

BANK BRANCH CLOSURES

Conference notes with increasing concern the continuing process of bank branch closures. In addition, Conference notes that there are increasing numbers of Post Office closures throughout the UK causing hardship to affected communities.

For older people, this is a disaster. It is not just the lack of access to accounts and the availability of cash that is of concern. It is also the fact that many bank transactions which involve, for example the death of a partner, executor duties or work concerning some aspects of Power of Attorney cannot be done "online" or by telephone but must be done within a branch. These duties are much more likely to be carried out by older people who are increasingly being penalised in this work either by lack of "online" skills or simply by the inability to access bank branches.

Conference takes the view that government intervention is required to create a regulatory framework for banks which requires them to offer the full range of banking services within a network of branches that provides easy access, particularly to older people who are constrained either by lack of online skills or poor transport networks. We are aware that in parts of the 4 Nations banking hubs are being set up but if this is to be the way forward they need to be much more widely available.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members Committee

1. to work within the NPC and TUC Pensioner organisations within the 4 nations of the UK to work up a detailed regulatory proposal to bring to government and all opposition parties in the UK Parliament and to governing and opposition parties in the devolved nations.
2. to consult with regions and branches on any proposals to ensure a united position within UNISON
3. Once a proposal has been agreed, set up a regional and branch campaign strategy to ensure that all parliamentary representatives in all parliaments of the UK are aware of and so far as is possible, support the campaign
4. to seek to ensure, through regions and branches, that local support from Local Authorities and organisations representing older people for such a campaign is achieved.
5. to campaign directly to the UK government for an end to Post Office branch closures.

Eastern Region

Amendment 10.1

In 1, insert after UK

,including the Scottish Pensioners Forum,

Scotland Region

Motion 11

YEAR OF BLACK WORKERS – SECURING ITS LEGACY IN THE RETIRED MEMBERS' ORGANISATION

Conference notes that 2023 has been the Year of Black Workers and its focus has been 'Establishing legacy to generate change'. This year is not, itself, the change we seek. It is the opportunity to generate change.

Black workers often find themselves in low-paid, insecure work with poor terms and conditions. Besides immediate effects, this has consequences in old age. The ethnicity pension gap is the cumulative effect of a lifetime of discrimination in employment. Pensioner poverty is disproportionately concentrated among Black pensioners. Despite the Westminster government denying that institutional racism exists in our society, we know it does.

With UNISON having an estimated 185,000 Black members, there are likely to be at least 20,000 retired Black members. It is imperative that we build upon our long history of achievements in tackling inequities in our society by taking concrete action to enable Black members, including retired Black members, to take the next step in our journey towards justice.

UNISON is far more than just another trade union; UNISON is an organisation that seeks to improve the lives of its members and wider society by challenging the status quo and seeking to generate change. With this being so, conference calls upon the Retired Members' National Committee to:

1. Work with the National Black Members' Committee and other Self-Organised Groups to understand the number of Black members in the Retired Members' Organisation and work to encourage those who do not have their ethnicity recorded in their membership data to update this;
2. Work with the National Black Members' Committee and other Self-Organised Groups to analyse and interpret the data captured from point (1) and to create and implement a strategic plan to work towards ensuring that Black members are represented proportionately within the structures of the Retired Members' Organisation at branch, regional and national level;
3. Work with the National Black Members' Committee to review the Retired Members' Organisation's current arrangements to identify and take up equality issues, challenge discrimination, seek to ensure that its structures reflect its whole membership and to develop an action plan to support Black members to become active within the Retired Members' Organisation;

4. Work with the National Black Members' Committee to capture ethnicity pension gap data and to develop a strategy to reduce and eradicate it; and,

5. Work with the National Black Members' Committee and UNISON's Learning and Organising Service to develop a training and development plan to ensure all activists in the Retired Members' Organisation receive training in 'Defining Black' and other relevant UNISON race equality training.

By taking these steps, conference believes, the Retired Members' Organisation will contribute to UNISON working towards its mission to 'establish legacy to generate change'. Doing so will also help the Retired Members' Organisation to meet the needs of UNISON's retired Black members and improve our ability to lead the way towards the more equitable and just society we all want, need and deserve.

West Midlands Region

Motion 12

DECLINING BUS SERVICES AND IMPACT ON PENSIONERS

This conference deplores the continuing decline in local bus services throughout the UK. Not only have services been substantially cut but those services that have been retained are often unreliable, unpredictable and infrequent.

Buses are an essential part of the local, regional and national economies, playing a vital role in the transport system, especially for pensioners who rely on journeys by bus for shopping, going to the library, having access to the bank and post office, seeing the doctor, dentist or pharmacist, meeting friends and socialising. Reduced bus services have led to greater loneliness, isolation and a deterioration in mental and physical health of pensioners unable to access the vital services they need. This doesn't just affect pensioners, but also many essential staff in the NHS and Care Sectors who are unable to get to work because of bus service cuts.

The Tory Government made false promises to improve transport connectivity, which has not happened. The Tories promised to "level up across the country" with "beautiful, British-built buses that are cleaner, greener, quieter, safer and more frequent". The Tories 'Bus Back Better' strategy for England hasn't worked. The Campaign for Better Transport has concluded that 23 per cent of bus services in England, amounting to 2,800 services, have in fact been cut since its launch in 2021.

The fault began with the Thatcher Government's Transport Act 1985 which deregulated local bus services throughout Great Britain outside of London. Margaret Thatcher predicted that privatising bus transport would result in lower fares, new services, and more passengers, while removing any potential future liability on the taxpayer.

Deregulation has not improved services but made travel by bus even more difficult and at greater cost to the economy and the environment by increasing journeys by car and taxi. Fares have risen by more than any measure of inflation, services are fewer, and many bus companies are owned by distant conglomerates.

Retired members living in rural areas and small villages in the countryside were first to be hardest hit by reduced bus services, yet today even in towns and cities there have been significant cuts to routes. Due in part to insufficient trained drivers to maintain timetables because of low wages, long hours and poor working conditions. Lack of affordable accommodation in towns and bigger cities has caused drivers to live further away from depots, leading to longer working days, more health problems and less value from their earnings. This has led to an exodus of drivers to substantially better paid work driving lorries and other HGV transport. Furthermore, many bus operators call on local government subsidies to make any profit. Yet Government austerity policies introduced in 2010 have cut local government funding which started the massive decline in bus services. For 2023, the biggest bus support cuts have been from County authorities in Kent and Hertfordshire.

Conference notes with concern that in an ageing population the bus transport system is remains broken and cannot meet the needs of our retired members.

Conference also notes that in the Republic of Ireland, our neighbours have proposed a programme of bus improvements to deliver to at least 70% of the population a minimum service of three bus round trips daily.

It therefore calls on the National Retired Members Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council, Labour Link, the National Pensioners Convention, Scottish Pensioners Forum, Age UK, the Trades Union Congress, the Scottish Trades Union Congress and other relevant organisations to:

1. Campaign for a substantial increase in central government funding to local authorities to reverse the decline in bus services and enable bus operators to pay higher wages, improve working conditions and reduce fares.
2. Campaign to bring bus services back into municipal ownership.
3. Demand a bus service that meets the needs of pensioners and provides a cleaner environment. Encouraging older people to use buses.
4. Call upon UNISON branches and regions to support the national campaign It further urges them to mount local campaigns to achieve greater awareness of the impact of declining bus services on their own community.
5. Campaign for better bus services and encourage retired members in branches and regions to take part in campaigns to get pensioners back using bus services.

National Retired Members' Committee

Motion 13**HOUSING, OLDER PEOPLE AND THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS**

There are almost 11 million people aged 65 and over in the UK which represents nearly 20% of the total population. Yet the government continues to ignore the plight of many pensioners and to place the interests of developers and the private sector housing providers before the housing needs of older people. Many pensioners facing debt because of mortgages and rents that have doubled combined with high energy costs.

The situation for pensioners in the rented sector is bleak with a severe lack of social housing available to rent and private landlords selling-up because of increased mortgage rates or charging higher rents in many cases for substandard and poorly maintained buildings. These are a health hazard resulting in additional and unnecessary costs to the NHS from cold related illnesses and falls. Right to buy has substantially reduced the availability of social housing and will continue to do so in the future.

There are fewer specialist sheltered / supported homes available, existing housing stock is poorly insulated and fails to meet the needs of an ageing population. Many pensioners face poverty, insecurity and an uncertain future in sub-standard private rented accommodation.

Current research suggests that increasingly older people are stepping off the property ladder and choosing to rent in the hope that it will give greater flexibility. For others there is no choice and the range of property types together with the quality and standard of accommodation is likely to be limited depending on financial circumstances. Many pensioners who are “house rich, cash poor” have needed to free up their assets in the cost-of-living crisis to cover living costs. Others have never been able to afford to buy a home.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council, Labour Link, the National Pensioners Convention, Scottish Pensioners Forum, Age UK, the Trades Union Congress, the Scottish Trades Union Congress and other relevant organisations to:

1. Mount a campaign to urge local authorities, housing associations and the Government to make a genuine commitment to building more accessible, secure and appropriate housing for older people.
- 2, Encourage them to renovate, insulate and future proof existing housing stock including, introducing energy efficient savings equipment e.g. solar panel
3. End the right to buy and re-introduction of rent controls
4. Call upon UNISON branches and regions to assist in the campaign.

National Retired Members' Committee

Amendment 13.1

Paragraph 3 - insert "especially within Social Housing" between "supported homes" and "available".

Haringey

Amendment 13.2

Paragraph 5 beginning "Conference therefore etc."

Add a new point 4 - "Campaign to remove the present restriction on the level of LHA (Local Housing Allowance) and for future increases to be inflation-linked".

Renumber present point 4 to 5

Motion 14**NEW VERSUS OLD STATE PENSION**

This conference notes that whilst the retention of the Triple Lock for the year beginning April 2023 must be applauded, in no small part to our own campaigning, we need to be wary of what the future holds. Conference must not be complacent and we will need to keep fighting for its retention in the future.

However, the Triple Lock is no answer to the low state pension on which many rely in the UK, including many of our own low paid members who have been unable to afford to make contributions to occupational pensions.

Conference needs to be aware that there is a further injustice for pensioners, the growing difference between the old and new state pensions. The old state pension rose to a maximum of £156.20 per week or £8,122 per year in April and the new flat rate state pension for those born after 1950 increase to £203.85 per week or £10,600 per year. This difference of nearly £2,500 per annum will widen as years pass.

Many low paid members have been unable to afford to make contributions to occupational pensions and have been forced to rely on the state pension when they retired. The new flat rate state pension for those born after 1950 is still inadequate but those born in the preceding years will continue to be severely disadvantaged under the current two-tier system.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members Committee to:

1. Liaise with the National Executive Council, Labour Link, the National Pensioners Convention, Scottish Pensioners Forum, Age UK, the Trades Union Congress, the Scottish Trades Union Congress and other relevant organisations to press the Government to raise the level of the old state pension to the equivalent level as the new state pension to prevent this disparity.
2. Continue to campaign with the above for the continued retention of the Triple Lock.
3. Raise awareness of the issue amongst retired members and encourage them to lobby their MPs on the need for parity between the two state pensions and the continued retention of the Triple Lock, through regions and branches.

National Retired Members' Committee

Amendment 14.1

In the final paragraph, add a new sub-paragraph:

4. Continue to campaign in pursuit of the objective in the resolution, Poverty for Older People, of last year's retired members' conference (Motion 13 as amended) for the gradual transfer of all pensioners, beginning with the oldest and those eligible for Pension Credit, to the full-rate New State Pension irrespective of National Insurance contribution record.

West Midlands Region

Amendment 14.2

After "3. Raise awareness of the issue amongst retired members"

Add "keeping them informed about the campaign details in communications to branches and regions."

Hampshire (L

Motion 15

TRANSPORT BY TRAIN

Conference notes with concern how badly served pensioners are by rail services and that matters have gone from bad to worse since privatisation. We are faced with cancellations; overcrowded trains; inadequate staffing at stations, on platforms and on trains; inaccessible platforms; closure of ticket offices; and lack of toilets and refreshment facilities on trains.

The government has been forced to take some rail companies, whose services were especially poor, back into public ownership.

Profits made by privatised companies have been paid to shareholders or to overseas rail companies, some of which are in their public ownership. We are in effect subsidising rail travel in Europe and beyond and providing dividends to shareholders.

Transport by train is an essential public service for many pensioners and lack of services affects older people disproportionately. Pensioners have been amongst the hardest hit because in many instances they have been unable to get assistance in making travel plans; have had problems buying tickets online or using ticket machines; and have been deterred by the high cost of rail fares even with a Railcard. Operators need to be reminded that they owe a duty of care towards vulnerable passengers and without adequate staffing levels passenger safety has been or will be compromised.

Whilst research by Age UK suggests that travel by car is the preferred form of transport for older people, this is not sustainable. The high cost of electric cars will be a deterrent for those pensioners who cannot afford the cost. There are many pensioners who do not have access to their own car, are unable to drive and cannot afford taxi fares.

We must fight to preserve and enhance existing train routes together with an accessible and affordable transport system that is safe and secure but also convenient.

Conference therefore calls on the National Retired Members Committee to liaise with the National Executive Council, Labour Link, the National Pensioners Convention, Scottish Pensioners Forum, Age UK, the Trades Union Congress, the Scottish Trades Union Congress and other relevant organisations to:

1. Campaign for a properly funded, affordable and accessible rail service. A rail transport system that places staffing and service user needs before profits.
2. Campaign for retention of station booking offices, station staff and guards on trains together with improved toilet and refreshment facilities on trains.
3. Campaign for all existing routes to be retained and previously closed stations and routes to be reopened.

4. Campaign for investment in reliable modern rolling stock to ensure it meets current and future demands. A rail service that meets the needs of pensioners and provides a cleaner environment.
5. End rail franchises and bring back the national rail network into public ownership.
6. Call upon UNISON branches and regions to support the national campaign.

National Retired Members' Committee

Motion 16**STATE RETIREMENT PENSION AND THE TRIPLE LOCK**

State retirement pension and the Triple Lock

Retired Members Conferences have frequently carried motions relating to maintaining the Triple Lock on State retirement Pensions (SRP).

The triple lock has been a core commitment of every government budget since 2010, when it was announced by the Coalition Government made up of the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats. It was a response to the fact that the real value of the state pension had fallen, and it looked to guarantee that this vital state benefit would continue to rise every year.

The 'triple lock' refers to the idea that the state pension rises in line with the highest of these three measures every year:

1. Average earnings
2. Prices, as measured by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI). (measured in the year from September every year)
3. 2.5 per cent

Whilst the annual rise is applied to the basic state pension as well as the new state pension (for people retiring after 2016) it doesn't cover the additional elements (Graduated Pension, SERPS or that element based on deferring state pension) that many state pensioners enjoy through their National Insurance payment record.

The government re-installed the Triple Lock for pensions for the 2023-2024 and the basic state pension, additional pension and Graduated Contribution and each rose in excess of 10% (although not equally). This, however has not been typical in the past 10 years. For example for the pension year 2021-2022 these same three elements rose by 2.50%, 0.47% and 0.55%. This year's increase across the board is not typical and consequentially this conference calls on UNISON's National Retired Committee to:

- a. campaign for all elements of the State Retirement Pension to be subject to Triple Lock increases
- b. Bring this anomaly to the attention of the National Pensioners Convention and for them to amend (if required) their campaign material to reflect the historic differentials in pension increases
- c. Ensure that our representatives on Labour Link draw the Labour Party's attention to this issue so that the Party includes reference to it in its continual support for the Triple Lock mechanism.

West Midlands Community Branch

Amendment 16.2

At the end of the fourth paragraph (beginning 'Whilst the annual ...') add 'nor does it apply to either element of Pension Credit'.

In the final paragraph in sub-paragraph (a) after 'Pension' add 'and both elements of Pension Credit'.

West Midlands Region

Amendment 16.3

In action point b, after "National Pensioners Convention" insert "through the members of the National Retired Members Committee who sit on the National Pensioners Convention Executive Committee"

Greater London Region

Motion 17**DIRTY MONEY**

Conference is only too aware of the high street bank closures we hear of on a daily basis. The desperate drive for a cashless society by the banks and in part by Government would lead anyone to think cash was dirty money which needs to be withdrawn from society as quickly as possible.

It is not true to say, 'with the rise in online banking and the speed and convenience that it brings, the presence of physical bank branches has become less important', tell that to the over 5 million of older or vulnerable people who struggle to gain access to a bank to go about their daily business.

It is encouraging to note that the relentless closure of high street banks was debated in parliament on Tuesday 28 February 2023. Alex Davies-Jones, Pontypridd Labour MP, highlighted the devastating impact this was having in our communities. This was acknowledged and accepted, in the same debate, by the government minister - Andrew Griffith.

In the late 1980s, over 20,000 bank branches were open across the UK. Today, just 5,000 bank branches remain, a 75% decrease since 1980!

A report by Which? shows 397 branches have closed since 2015, leaving 395.

Major high street banks point to reduced visits and increased use of online and mobile banking when justifying closures.

But a regional division of Age UK says hundreds of older people face difficulties as a result.

About 40% of over-65s do not manage their money online, according to Age UK Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

With the older and vulnerable being abandoned by the bank companies they are now forced to travel unacceptable distances to their next nearest branch. A round trip of 40 miles is not uncommon. If they rely on public transport, which is continually being eroded, then a trip to the bank becomes a 'Mission Impossible'.

Conference will agree, many older people do not use the internet regularly or may live in parts of Britain which do not have reliable enough broadband connection, this means online banking is not a real option. Also, the Government's Policy Paper, 'Digital Inclusion Strategy' acknowledges that over half of those aged 65+ do not have basic online skills.

As the cost-of-living crisis continues cash usage has increased, not decreased, budgeting with cash has and will continue to work for the majority of older people.

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) who is the financial regulatory body in the UK which operates independently of Government, but is however financed by the financial

services industry, set out the expectations if a bank is proposing a closure but they lack the regulatory power or inclination to step in to prevent it happening.

It is not fair that the Government hides behind statements like, 'to close a branch is a commercial issue for banks and building societies and the Government does not intervene in these decisions.'

The government fails to see it is a community issue which affects us all especially the older and vulnerable. The government does have the power and right to intervene in closures and it should.

Therefore, this conference asks the National Retired Members Committee to:

1. Raise Retired Members concerns with UNISON National Executive Committee and welcome any support from other sections of UNISON especially our Young Members section.
2. to campaign alongside organisations such as, National Pensioner Convention (NPC) and Trade Union Congress (TUC) and other sympathetic groups to stop high street bank closures, as a high percentage of retired members do not have access to digital equipment or do not have adequate IT skills to access digital (online) banking,
3. To review the FCA document on 'Branch and ATM closures or conversions; good practice and areas for improvement', and put forward any recommendations they feel appropriate to challenge the current wording and introduce the concept of communities and not just customers.
4. Make contact with the government minister responsible for the FCA or the High Street with a view that they create Powers to intervene when banks have no sound business case for closure.

Yorkshire - Humberside Region

Motion 18

BRITAIN'S RAILWAY TICKET OFFICES SCHEDULED FOR CLOSURE

Almost 1,000 ticket offices are set to close across the country with the loss of thousands of jobs and creating accessibility problems for different types of travellers, especially for older people and persons with disabilities not using smart phones or computers, without ticket offices and on station support a huge swathe of passengers could be excluded from the railway altogether.

The Rail Industry is carrying out a consultation in August and is scheduled to start the process of closing offices from October.

As an example, when travelling using a ticket purchased on Trainline for a specific train operating company, and the train is cancelled with a need to rebook on a different company, this is where the ticket office is important as staff have access to trains and timetables and can advise which new train will be required and how to obtain a refund. When booking at a Ticket office, staff advise on train times best fare option and actually print a ticket with a QR code for the train ticket inspector. Smart phones with a ticket rely on the phone being charged and being readily accessible for inspection this does not always happen, or the person has the wrong type of ticket.

Action is necessary to support the Rail Union in trying to stop these Ticket office closures which will dramatically effect older persons.

Therefore, conference calls on the Government to stop the closure of Ticket offices which will have detrimental effect on older persons

Therefore, this conference asks the National Retired Members Committee to:

1. Raise our concerns with UNISON National Executive Committee and welcome support from other sections of UNISON.
2. To campaign alongside organizations such as, National Pensioners Convention NPC and Trade Union Congress {TUC} and other sympathetic groups who realise that a very high number of UNISON Retired Members do not have access to relevant IT to do business without train station ticket office staff. This campaign is to stop the closure of booking offices.

Yorkshire - Humberside Region

Amendment 18.1

In numbered paragraph 2, insert after "(TUC)", "RMT, ASLEF and TSSA"

Knowsley

Amendment 18.2

In point 2, insert after NPC
,the Scottish Pensioners Forum,
Scotland Region

Motion 19**JUSTICE FOR THE WINDRUSH GENERATION**

Justice for the Windrush Generation

Conference is extremely concerned at the continuing detriment suffered by retired members (or their heirs) who migrated to the United Kingdom in the 1950's and 1960s, mostly from the Caribbean, who comprise the "Windrush Generation named after the ship, Empire Windrush which sailed from Jamaica to the UK exactly seventy five years ago.

The discrimination people of the Windrush Generation suffered through harassment and wrongful deportation by the Home Office was comprehensively detailed by the independent review Wendy Williams in he "Windrush Lessons Learned " review in March 2020. That report was accepted by the then Home Secretary who promised "unequivocal support" for all of the report's recommendations.

Earlier this year, Home Secretary Suella Braverman, arbitrarily decided that the Home Office could disregard three of the report's recommendations. These are:

1. Reconciliation events with those affected by the scandal
2. The appointment of a Migrants' Commissioner., and
3. The appointment of an Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration

Conference believes that, by abandoning these commitments, the government has fundamentally undermined the first principle of the Lessons Learned review which emphasised the need for sincerity in any apology.

Conference applauds UNISON's continuing campaign to reverse this decision of the Home Office and the calling out of the shockingly slow progress made by that office in compensating victims of their injustice, addressing historic wrongs and changing their own culture which has treated so many people wrongly. Even the Compensation Scheme cannot be accessed without the victims facing further scrutiny, heavy evidential demands, applications placed into a bureaucratic limbo, and even when addressed, treated with scepticism. Too many of the Windrush Generation feel that this is nit restorative justice, just more of the same....

Conference calls on the National Retired members Committee to:

- a. Campaign for recommendations in Wendy Williams Lessons Learned review to be implemented in full
- b. Work with the National Executive Council and other appropriate bodies within UNISON to publicise the continuing discrimination against the Windrush Generation and seek full and proper restorative justice for those wrongly harmed by the Home Office over the past 75 years.

Islington Local Government Retired Members Group

Islington UNISON

Motion 20

TIME FOR A QUADRUPLE LOCK

Conference recognises the excellent work UNISON has done to protect the triple lock on pensions over the years despite repeated attempts by the to avoid it.

The triple lock is defined as being guarantee that the state pension will increase annually by 2.5% or the rate of wage increases or inflation whichever is the greater of the three is the greater. Conference notes that the government measures inflation by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as opposed to the Retail Price index(RPI), the latter being the index unions and pensioner groups consider most suited to ordinary life.

However, whilst the increases provided by the triple lock are welcome, they are further undermined by there being no complementary increase in tax thresholds for pensioners.

Conference believes this erodes the fundamental basis of the triple lock, and wishes another criterion to be added to ensure that pension increases are not clawed back by disproportionate tax thresholds.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to:

1. Develop a campaign for a quadruple lock on pensions which would see tax thresholds for pensioners rising in proportion to the increase awarded by the triple lock
2. Work with the National Executive Council, the National Pensioners Convention, the Scottish pensioners Forum, Age UK and other appropriate bodies to seek to ensure the full value of increases in state pensions under the triple lock are properly passed on to pensioners.

Islington Local Government Retired Members Group

Islington UNISON

Motion 21

TACKLING PENSIONER POVERTY

Conference notes with real concern the ongoing cost of living crisis, which has impacted significantly on the costs of food and energy particularly. Conference notes that for older people on fixed, low incomes, rising costs place them under great financial pressure.

Conference notes that increasing numbers of pensioners in Northern Ireland are living in poverty, with 16% of pensioners in Northern Ireland living in relative poverty. Conference believes that no older person should live in poverty and regrets that an Anti-Poverty strategy for Northern Ireland has yet to be brought forward.

Conference acknowledges the efforts of our activists and retired members in Northern Ireland in supporting the ICTU 'Workers Demand Better' campaign calling for action to be taken to address the cost of living crisis both by the UK government and devolved government in Northern Ireland.

Conferences therefore calls on the National Retired Members Committee, working with the Northern Ireland Region, to support ongoing efforts to tackle pensioner poverty in Northern Ireland.

UNISON Northern Ireland

Motion 22

NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL TRANSPORT:

Given the current disarray in the provision of Public Transport, with cutbacks, cancellations etc. the model of privatised services has shown itself to be totally unsuited to the needs of the populace (particularly the needs of the older population).

We therefore commit ourselves to a different model of Public Transport (eg, buses, trains etc.), one which should be organised and maintained by "Regional Transport Partnerships" comprising Local Councils, County Councils, and regional bodies. Such Regional Partnerships would be ideally placed to effectively plan and provide for local integrated networks.

We would ask the National Retired Members Committee to campaign with the appropriate organisations to achieve a regional model of public transport.

Wakefield Local Government

Motion 23

AMENDMENT TO RULE OPTION 1

Conference wishes the following to be considered as one of the choices for the two motions and/or amendments to Rule to be submitted by the Retired Members' Organisation to National Delegate Conference 2024 in accordance with Rule D.1.10.4:

“Rule D – Structure of the union at national level.

In Rule D.2 – National Executive Council

In D,2.1, insert “two retired members’ seats” between “young members seats” and “and two disabled members’ seats”.

and

Insert new Rule between existing D.2.5 and D.2.6 to read:

‘D 2.6 Retired Members’ Seats

There will be an additional two representative, at least one of which must be a woman, for Retired Members elected from a national constituency of retired members in all regions.

No member shall be a candidate for election to the Retired Members’ seats unless she/he.

1.is a retired member when the period of office starts as set out in Rule D.2.7.1

2.has received two nominations from any branch or regional retired members’ groups or the National Retired Members’ Committee.

Retired Members’ representatives shall be entitled to vote on any issue not relating to the pay and conditions of members in employment in accordance with the provisions of Rule C.2.6.3

A Retired Members’ representative who returns to paid employment (as defined in Rule C.2.6.2) will cease to be a representative upon taking up such employment.’

And renumber subsequent sections of Rule D.2 accordingly.”

Islington UNISON

Amendment 23.2

1. In the text of the proposed new rule D2.6,

1. in the first paragraph delete “representative” and substitute “representatives”.

2. in the second paragraph in sub-paragraph (2) delete “branch or regional retired members' groups” and substitute “branch retired members' section or Regional Retired Members' Committee”.

National Retired Members Organisation

Motion 24**LET'S MAKE CARE WORK – A NATIONAL CARE SERVICE FOR ENGLAND**

Conference welcomes UNISON's new campaign "Let's Make Care Work" which is campaigning for a National Care Service in England.

Plans for a National Care Service for England were first presented 13 years ago by the last Labour government shortly before its election defeat. Since then, adult social care and support has gone downhill fast and there is an ever-increasing adult social care emergency. Even the well-intentioned principles of wellbeing, personalisation and control contained in the Care Act 2014 has not been translated into practice. Funding cuts have left councils struggling to pay enough to secure safe and suitable care, with nothing left over to invest in new facilities.

Conference recognises that older people are directly affected by this crisis in adult social care, whether as users of, or carers within, the care service, or are aware they may need to access care in the future, with all the cost implications that will have on assets, savings and pensions.

On 8th June 2023, UNISON and the Fabian Society launched "Support Guaranteed", envisaging a long-term solution to the crisis and setting out ten principles which should underpin a new National Care Service including:

1. Nationally consistent provision, with an end to postcode lotteries in support and care
2. Services for everyone with support needs regardless of their means, and affordable to all.
3. Services rooted in local communities and networks of support, delivered by properly resourced accountable local authorities
4. Clear legal entitlements with support to help people access their rights

Support that is integrated with housing, the NHS, DWP and other help whenever necessary

Choice and control for individuals and their families to lead the life they want in the home they want.

Conference notes this plan is only for England and that different models of adult social care provision is being pursued in the devolved administrations and congratulates UNISON on its opposition to the Scottish Government's National Care Services (Scotland) Bill, which would leave profiteering at the heart of care in Scotland.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members' Committee to:

- a. Support the campaign for a National Care Service in England

- b. Publicise the campaign through regional and branch retired members groups
- c. Work with the National Executive Council and other organisations such as the National Pensioners Convention, Age UK and other relevant groups to co-ordinate campaigning for a National Care Service in England
- d. Liaise with UNISON Labour Link to lobby for a commitment to a National Care Service in England to be included in the Labour manifesto at the next general election.

AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDERS RULED OUT OF ORDER

Conflicts with an existing rule

AMENDMENT TO STANDING ORDER 3.1

SPEAKING

Add new sentence at end:

A branch delegate from the same Region may move a Regional motion or amendment if appointed by their Regional Retired Members Committee

Scotland Region

MOTIONS RULED OUT OF ORDER

Beyond Remit of Conference:

DEMOCRACY DENIED?

To claim that retired members are properly represented on the National Executive Council would be disingenuous. We are even denied the right to vote in the election of those who would serve on the Council.

Why is this? In part the cause is political manoeuvring, also tradition and an element of indifference by some that a substantial portion of UNISON's membership is denied democratic representation.

The solution is for a rule change to be passed at the National Delegates Conference, allowing two retired members to be voted for and thus serve on the NEC on the same terms as other Council members. The Hampshire branch has in the past tried to introduce such a rule change at the NDC, without success.

Conference instructs the National Retired Members Committee to lead a campaign to make the NEC and our wider membership aware of the retired members' call for the same democratic representation on the NEC enjoyed by UNISON's working membership.

Hampshire

THE SOCIAL CARE CRISIS - FOR A NATIONAL CARE SERVICE

This Retired Members' Conference notes that:

1. The current Government presides over a continuing and worsening crisis in a largely privatised social care sector
2. The Covid-19 pandemic claimed the lives of thousands of older people in care homes, highlighting the impact of chronic underfunding and the detrimental effects of a profit-driven model on the quality of care provided
3. Severe staff shortages across both the care home and domiciliary elements of the sector, with some 165,000 posts unfilled and vacancy rates running between 10% and 12% by last year (2022)
4. Private equity firms now control nearly 13% of all bed capacity in for profit homes or some 55,000 beds
5. A report to House of Commons committee in August 2022 suggested that the numbers in need of social care provision were likely to rise from around 3.5 million to 5.2 million in 2038.

This Conference believes that:

- a. There is an urgent need to address both chronic underfunding of the sector and to reverse the damaging consequences for the workforce and those reliant on services of rampant privatisation
- b. The pay, terms and conditions of the social care workforce profoundly affect the quality of care
- c. The profit motive should be removed from the provision of social care
- d. The ongoing crisis demands the creation of a National Care Service, based on the founding principles of the National Health Service (publicly-funded, free at the point of need) and fully integrated with the NHS.

This Conference resolves to:

- I. Call on the National Retired Members' Committee to actively contribute to the wider union's campaign for a National Care Service
- II. Support the demand through UNISON's Labour Link on a future Labour government to legislate for the creation of a National Care Service as outlined at point 4 above
- III. Support the introduction of transitional measures to ensure the real living wage is the minimum hourly rate, abolish the use of "zero hour" contracts and guaranteed home visit times of at least half an hour.

Camden UNISON

COMMUNICATING WITH RETIRED MEMBERS

Retired Members have been witnesses to the transformation of everyday life through the development of information technology, which unfortunately UNISON as an organisation has failed to adopt to support good organisation and communication with its members.

Retired Members Officers face barriers in establishing and maintaining communication with Retired Members, due to the lack of a robust membership system. Other organisations with less resources enable officers to keep in communication with members with systems that allow directed communication with identified groups i.e. women, young members, retired members etc, in ways that meet the requirements of GDPR. The current system for identifying and approving access to the membership data base could be developed to encompass other branch officers. There are also systems that identify individual members who do not have an email address and for whom an address label can be printed.

In addition, the current workloads on Branch Secretaries hinders good communication with members. UNISON needs to develop systems that supports good communication with members without placing additional workloads on Branch Secretaries especially for branches that does not have full time secondment. Recently there has been recognition by the wider organisation that Retired Members can support working members, and it is hoped that such supportive activities by Retired Members will further be expanded.

This Conference instructs the National Retired Members Committee to:

1. Collect evidence and suggestions from Regional Retired Members Committees about how an improved communication system would benefit the wider organisation.
2. Approach the National Executive Council via the General Secretary to request information about current and/or future plans for the development of a system that will meet current and future needs.
3. Develop a system to enable National Officers, Regional Committee Officers and Branch Officers, including Retired Members Officers, to email, and for those members without an email address to post communications.

Report back on progress to the 2024 National Retired Members Conference.

North West Region

SUPPORT THE ETHICAL CARE CHARTER

From the results of their survey of care workers, UNISON developed the Ethical Care Charter with the aim of encouraging local authorities to improve provision in the care sector.

The way in which care homes were treated during the recent pandemic shows how little they are valued by government. It is certainly an area which is rightly called the 'Cinderella service'. The area is not helped by the reduced provision of local authority run care homes meaning that private providers have a great deal of influence on the sector.

Since its inception, the Charter has had limited success. Although some local authorities have signed up to its sentiments, there are many which have not. Even where the Charter has been accepted in principle, its practical application has been sadly lacking.

Conference asks Retired members to raise it locally and support their local branch in raising the status of the Charter and ensuring that its principles are acted upon to the benefit of both providers and users.

Northwest Region

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This Conference believes that:

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- I. Call on the National Retired Members' Committee to actively contribute to the wider union's campaign for a National Care Service
- II. Support the demand through UNISON's Labour Link on a future Labour government to legislate for the creation of a National Care Service as outlined at point 4 above
- III. Support the introduction of transitional measures to ensure the real living wage is the minimum hourly rate, abolish the use of "zero hour" contracts and guaranteed home visit times of at least half an hour, and
- IV. Submit this motion, as suitably amended, to the 2024 National Delegate Conference.

LIVING PENSION

Conference notes the work done by Silver Voices, the on line organisation for older people, on the creation of a new state pension policy. This calls for the state pension to be aligned with 50% of UK average earnings, which would achieve a pension, at current figures, of £320 per week. This would have the effect of making obsolete the Pension Credit system which is applicable to a minority of those receiving the state pension and, even so has a poor take up rate, saving the Treasury an estimated £2bn per annum. Also, this would scrap the need for the Triple Lock as pensions would be aligned to average wages.

Conference therefore resolves to

1. Call upon the National Retired Members Committee to pursue this policy in conjunction with all pensioner organisations within the 4 nations of the UK
2. make direct representation, subject to NEC authorisation, to the DWP with the intention of persuading them to put this policy into practice
3. ensure, via Labour Link, that the Labour Party is aware of and understands the policy and is persuaded to adopt it
4. make representation to all other opposition parties and those represented within the devolved parliaments to try to ensure their support for this policy
5. Encourage Regional and Branch Retired Members Committees to pursue this policy with a view to gaining support for it at regional and local level.

Conference further instructs the National Retired Members Committee to report back on progress on this issue to the 2024 Conference.

Eastern Region

VOTER ID

Conference notes that politicians from across the political spectrum, from Jacob Rees Mogg to Angela Eagle and Angela Rayner, have reported that the need to provide photographic ID at the Local Elections in May of this year has deterred older people from being able to vote. There is evidence of people being turned away from polling stations because of insufficient ID and further, of people simply not turning up because they thought they did not have the right identification.

Although this legislation was created with the clear intention of deterring younger people to vote, its effect has at least been felt equally by older people, many of whom do not have passports, driving licences or bus passes. They also have a tradition of going to the polling station in person rather than applying for postal votes.

Mr Rees Mogg has gone so far as to describe this legislation as “gerrymandering” and, in that it has the effect of deterring many older people from voting, it is difficult to argue with that analysis.

Conference therefore instructs the National Retired Members Committee to combine with the NPC, the TUC and all representative organisations for older people within the 4 nations of the UK in calling upon the Government to repeal this legislation prior to elections in 2024.

It also calls upon regions and branches to campaign with Local Authorities to achieve the same end.

Eastern Region

PENSIONER POVERTY WILL LEAD TO AN ALARMING RISE IN EXCESS DEATHS

Conference notes that since the hike in gas and electricity costs from the 1st April this year, pensioners in today's society are being faced with a future of poverty due to the worst cost of living crisis in the history of the UK. The Government's Energy Support Scheme came to an end from April leaving households having to find an extra £66 per month to cover their gas and electricity. Pensioners are becoming more dependant on foodbanks as the cost of food and electricity becomes ever more costly and unaffordable. Its not what our pensioners worked all their life to look forward too when they retire.

This is a worrying time for millions of our pensioners who are barely managing across the UK and is going to leave them £682 plus per year worse off as a result of the increases. The impact this will have on the mental health of pensioners will lead to older people giving up on life and taking their own lives as a result. Excess deaths are set to rise at an alarming rate over the next few years, with many thousands making choices whether they can afford to heat or eat or just giving up. This government has let our pensioners and the older population down and we are not prepared to tolerate being treated like second class citizens and been given sticking plasters in place of real help.

Conference agrees that its time now for real change in government that will treat our pensioners and the electorate with fairness and dignity instead of misleading and neglecting the population who voted them into power in the first instance.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members to work with the National Retired Members Committee to lead a campaign to:

1. Ensure that Improved facilities be put in place to tackle pensioner poverty and ensure older people are treated with the dignity and respect that they deserve.
2. Bring back the Free 75+ TV Licence for our older people who in many cases are living on their own and depend on the TV to access what is happening in the outside world. This will help tackle loneliness and isolation especially in rural areas.

National Retired Members' Committee

RETIRED MEMBERS, AN UNDER-USED RESOURCE?

This Conference notes that the public services in which UNISON organises have been decimated by years of cuts and austerity. As a result, many experienced, duly accredited, activists have left work due to voluntary early retirement or redundancy. Many of those activists would normally have remained in employment until closer to normal retirement age.

Many experienced activists remain committed to the trade union on reaching their intended retirement age and would be prepared to remain in activity. There are opportunities at present for willing retired members to help with clerical or administrative tasks and with recruitment.

The UNISON Rulebook however places restrictions on retired members. They may not hold office other than as Retired Members' Officer or as Labour Link Officer. They may not give advice to members nor can they represent members or negotiate with the Employer on behalf of the Union.

While there may be good reasons for restrictions on retired members' involvement in the pay terms and conditions of working members, there are many other functions that retired members could carry out that would not conflict with this principle.

Further, many other retired former UNISON members also want to remain involved in their trade union. They however want to be able to have an effect on the trade union and other issues that they are still passionate about despite no longer being in employment.

This Conference therefore calls on the NEC to carry out a review of the Rules as they affect retired members, consulting widely with all stakeholders. The aim of the review should be twofold;

1. consider the possibility of extending the Branch roles and functions retired members could carry out, and
2. consider ways in which retired members' access to the decision-making processes of the Union on general social issues can be facilitated.
3. Present a report with recommendations to National Delegate Conference

Scotland Region

THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

The climate emergency is, arguably, the most pressing problem facing humanity. UNISON, at national, regional and branch level has supported and been active in the campaign/s on this issue. Our union, at all levels, fully accepts that this is a trade union issue. The Scottish Region, and branches were extremely active during the recent COP 26 Conference in Glasgow, Oct/Nov 2021. Our region was represented at COP 27 and will be at COP 28 this year.

Closer to home, and immediately, climate change has become a trade union issue. In June 2023 the leader of the GMB took issue with his counterpart in the Labour Party when the latter stated his intention to stop drilling for oil in the North Sea on day one of a future Labour Government. The GMB general secretary pointed out that the "green" replacement jobs for his members would not be in place in time for such a move.

The climate emergency is a present, and growing, issue for our, and other trade unions!

It has also been established that older people suffer disproportionately from climate change. They now generally have a longer life expectancy and extreme heat puts a stress on anybody's body, but if you are old and/or frail it can be harder. In addition, certain medications older people take, for blood pressure or cholesterol, reduce the body's ability to thermo-regulate. The risk of heatstroke, which is potentially fatal, increases because older adults may be less mobile and thus less able to reach cooler locations in a heatwave. They may also be socially isolated and less able to seek help. Impaired cognitive function may also make it harder for the elderly to find solutions. The air pollution often associated with heatwaves intensifies the problems.

The Chicago heatwave of July 1995, for instance, caused 514 heat-related deaths; 72% of the fatalities were over 65. (US Environmental Protection Agency 1996)

Half of the deaths during Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans in August 2005 were aged 75 or over. fatalities in this age group numbered 380. (Social Science Research Council, 2006)

In Bangladesh 11,300 elderly people were adversely affected by the serious climate related flooding in 2003. (Help Age 2004)

When Hurricane Sandy hit New York in 2012, almost half of those who died were over 65. (Independent. 12th June 2019)

Any particular episode of extreme weather may be linked only loosely to climate change. But the overall relationship is clear: aside from heatwaves, climate change will bring other kinds of extreme weather and disasters. Elderly people will be disproportionately affected. Mortality is always higher among older people in such situations as they can't get out of harm's way quickly enough.

NHS boards throughout the UK have emphasised that older members of the population will be disproportionately adversely affected by increasing abnormality of weather conditions.

It also has to be remembered that there is a moral argument that older citizens of western capitalist countries have been benefiting from nature/fossil fuel extraction to the detriment of future generations.

There is little doubt that the climate emergency is an older persons' issue!

Conference notes that:

1. The Earth's temperature has already risen by 1 degree above pre-industrial levels. The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report in 1990 warned that we only have 12 years to keep global warming to a maximum of 1.5degrees. Carbon emissions need to be cut by 45% by 2030, and reach zero carbon by 2050 in order to avoid a dangerous tipping point.
2. The tremendous impact of the school students strikes in shifting government complacency over climate change forcing the Government to amend the 2008 Climate Change act.
3. The role played by UNISON, both nationally and locally, in the global action on 20th September 2019. Many branches, including Dundee City, provided organisational, admin and equipment support to the school students involved. The action involved millions of students and workers worldwide.

Conference Believes:

- a. Climate change is an older person's and trade union issue.
- b. That the future of our planet is at risk if we don't organise now to force governments to cut emissions in line with the IPCC report and to cut out fossil fuels as soon as possible and,
- c. replacing these with renewable energy projects including carbon capture
- d. That we must keep the pressure up. The school students have led the way but the trade union movement as a whole must continue its involvement to ensure that they don't fight alone.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members Committee:

- i. To support any further calls for a climate action similar to that of school students on 20 September 2019.
- ii. To support motions at TUC Congress and/or UNISON National Delegate Conference calling for action on the climate emergency.
- iii. To campaign for and encourage retired members to support and become involved in climate change initiatives by UNISON at branch, regional and national level.

Scotland Region

A LIVING PENSION, LIVING WITH DIGNITY

Our elderly, who have contributed so much to this country and continue to play an important role in looking after grandchildren and contributing to charitable work receive one of the lowest State Pensions in Europe.

This is both intolerable and unnecessary since the UK is the fifth richest country in the world.

With the cost of living increasing, inflation increasing, the cost of food continuing to increase, electricity and gas bills doubling, pensioners health and wellbeing is under enormous threat.

Action has to be taken:

This conference calls on UNISON to campaign to reinstate the triple lock on state pensions as the first phase of addressing this issue.

To progressively increase the state pension to the mid-payment level of other European countries and thereafter maintain the state pension at least at the level of the fifth richest European country's payment.

UNISON Scotland Further Education

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE - A BLESSING OR A DANGER?

Artificial intelligence has been in the process of development for a number of years. It is increasingly making its presence felt in both society and the workplace.

It has been predicted that AI will lead to changes in the workplace and society so significant that 'they will exceed those of the industrial revolution'.

Several of those leading the field in the UK and USA have expressed concerns at the speed of developments which currently are subject to little control. It has been suggested in the future that people could be paid not to work.

Undoubtedly many good things will result from the advance of AI. However, it seems likely that every aspect of our lives is likely to face significant change, not necessarily to our advantage or welfare. The consequences for UNISON retired members could potentially be grossly confusing and maybe devastating.

Conference calls on the National Retired Members Committee to work with the National Executive Council:

To closely monitor the inevitable progress of AI and to formulate action plans and policies now, to meet this developing science and its probable effects on our retired and working members in both the wider society and the workplace.

Hampshire

Could place the union in legal jeopardy:

AN INDULGENCE FOR THE NATIONAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE'S STANDING
ORDERS COMMITTEE

Not Printed.

AMENDMENTS RULED OUT OF ORDER

Introduces substantial new subject matter:

Amendment 20.1

In the fourth paragraph, delete 'disproportionate' and substitute 'failure to raise income'.

In the final paragraph, in sub-paragraph (1), delete all after 'see' and substitute:

'the threshold for the standard rate of income tax (with due alteration respecting Scotland) rise, each year, by at least as much as the increase in the full-rate New State Pension'

City of Wolverhampton Local Government

Amendment 23.1

Remove: "Retired Members' representatives shall be entitled to vote on any issue not relating to the pay and conditions of members in employment in accordance with the provisions of Rule C.2.6.3"

Replace with: "Retired Members representatives in common with other elected members should vote on all issues with no exception."

Hampshire (L)

Negative amendment:

Amendment 2.2

Point 6 - delete "end this disastrous ...into public ownership", add "ensure effective control (in favour of the public) by the Energy regulator".

Point A - delete "with the aim...key commitments", add "but accept that effective control (in favour of the public) by the Energy regulator is acceptable in the short-term".

Haringey UNISON Local Government

Amendment 3.2

Paragraph 7 - point 1 delete "to support...key commitments", insert "to promote a policy of stronger regulation of Royal Mail in the public interest".

Haringey UNISON Local Government

Amendment 15.1

Point 3 - delete "and previously closed stations and routes to be reopened".

Point 5 - insert "gradually" between "bring back" and "the national".

Haringey UNISON Local Government (M)

Amendment 24.1

Add a new fifth paragraph (following 'home they want.')

However, conference is alarmed by the references at (2) above to "means" and to "affordability" and in the un-numbered fifth point to "DWP". Conference confirms its support for a social care service free of charge to users. It instructs the Retired Members' National Committee to seek clarification from the National Executive Council on UNISON's position on charges and to ensure its own campaigning is in line with this position.

West Midlands Region

Amendment 24.1

In the fourth paragraph, in action point 4, after "access their rights" re-number the statements beginning "Support that is integrated" and "Choice and control" as action points 5 and 6 respectively

and

Insert a new fifth paragraph (following "home they want") to read:

"Conference however is alarmed by the references to "means" and "affordability" in sub paragraph 2 above and "DWP" in sub paragraph 5. Conference confirms its support for a social care service free at the point of charge to users. Conference notes that this is the position taken by the National Disabled Members' Committee in their Motion 17 – Developing UNISON's vision of a National Care Service, published in the Preliminary agenda for National Disabled Members' Conference 2023 at the end of July. Therefore, Conference instructs the National Retired Members' Committee to seek clarification from the National Executive Council on UNISON's position on charges."

and

In the last paragraph, after sub-paragraph b, insert a new sub paragraph to read:

“c. Liaise and work with the National Disabled Members' Committee to ensure there is a consistent approach across UNISON when campaigning for a National Care Service”

and re-designate subsequent sub-paragraphs accordingly.

Islington UNISON

Received twice:

Amendment 6.4

In first paragraph, after “struggle” insert “, involving many UNISON members in Industrial Action,”.

In second paragraph, after “Executive” delete “Committee” and insert “Council”

Knowsley

Not sufficiently clear:

Amendment 8.1

In the final paragraph add the following sub-paragraph:

3. Seek support for campaigns from UNISON branches and other unions which organise the workers who collect the parking charges and support those workers' right to a safe system of work.

City of Wolverhampton Local Government

Amendment 16.1

At the end of the fourth paragraph (beginning 'Whilst the annual ...') add 'nor to either element of Pension Credit'.

In the final paragraph in sub-paragraph (a) after 'Pension' add 'and both elements of Pension Credit'.

West Midlands Region

Beyond the Remit of Conference

Amendment 12.1

Add new numbered paragraph 3:

"As an interim measure extend local franchising of bus services, as is done in Greater Manchester, to appropriate local bodies."

Renumber the remaining paragraphs

Knowsley

Annual Report 2023

RETIRED MEMBERS' ANNUAL REPORT 2023

The National Retired Members' Committee Annual Report has now been published. Questions on the Annual Report must be submitted using the Online Conference System (OCS) by Wednesday 13 September 2023.

The report is a summary of the work of the National Retired Members' Committee since last year's Conference.

The Retired Members' Standing Orders Committee agreed to adopt the procedures agreed for National Delegate Conference with regard to the submission of questions on the Annual Report. The Standing Orders Committee believes that this process enables Conference to deal with the Annual Report effectively and efficiently and leaves more time for motions to be discussed.

Under this procedure questions on the Annual Report are now invited and will be responded to in advance of Conference. The only questions that may be put orally to the National Retired Members' Committee at Conference will be supplementary to the questions submitted under this process. It would be preferred if any supplementary questions could be submitted by Wednesday 25 September so that any additional information requested can be sought prior to the start of Conference.

The timetable for submission of questions on the Annual Report is as follows:

Wednesday 13 September 2023	Deadline for questions to be submitted through the Online Conference System (OCS).
Wednesday 20 September 2023	Deadline for responses to be submitted onto the Online Conference System (OCS).
Wednesday 27 September 2023	Preferred date for supplementary questions to be submitted through the Online Conference System (OCS).
Wednesday 4 October 2023	Platform response to supplementary questions.

General information on accessing the Online Conference System (OCS) was distributed in the Retired Members' Conference Bulletin, which is available on the UNISON website.

To submit a question on the annual report through the OCS, follow the instructions below

- Sign onto Online Conference System (OCS)
- Select National Retired Members' Conference
- Select 'Agenda'
- Select 'Annual Report Questions'
- Select question type from drop down box
- Select 'create a new question'
- Follow instructions which will give you a form to complete
- Complete form – remembering to fill in all mandatory fields
- You can copy and paste your question into the text box or type the text in
- If you want to do this in stages you can select the save choice and come back into OCS later to finish
- When you are happy with your question, select 'Submit'

If you encounter any problems, please seek assistance from your regional OCS contact (details in the Conference Bulletin) or Josie Irwin j.irwin@unison.co.uk

MESSAGE FROM ROSIE MACGREGOR - CHAIRPERSON, UNISON NATIONAL RETIRED MEMBERS' COMMITTEE

Introduction

I began an eighth year as Chair of UNISON's National Retired Members' Committee in January. We represent nearly 170,000 retired members of UNISON.

In June UNISON celebrated its 30th birthday since the merger of NUPE, NALGO and COHSE. We've come a long way since then and are now the largest trade union in the UK with more than 1,253 million members of which 75% are women and nearly 170,000 retired members.

I've enjoyed attending several conferences during the last year including the National Delegate Conference in June 2023, our National Women's Conference in February 2023 and the National Pensioners Special Delegate Conference and Annual Convention in June 2023.

It has been good after Covid to return to meeting face-to-face although we must recognise that not everyone is comfortable attending large meetings or travelling on public transport, and we know that we must still be wary of Covid.

As if the pandemic wasn't bad enough, we have been faced with rapid rises in the cost of living. It has as a result been a difficult year for many of our retired members because of high inflation. We have all had to make sacrifices not least falling living standards and the high cost of fuel and food. The price of even the most basic items has increased significantly and the high cost of travel means that most people have had to make major changes in the way they live.

The retention of the Triple Lock this year did increase pension income but the State Pension still remains inadequate and fails to deliver a decent standard of living, especially for those who do not have an occupational pension – mainly women and those who were low paid. Not only is our pension the worst in Europe but future generations are expected to pay more and work harder and longer to achieve less. Everyone should have a right to a state pension that is well above the poverty line and provides dignity in retirement.

Who could have imagined, in what many regard as a relatively stable country, that we would have three different Prime Ministers in the space of one year. One unable to differentiate between fact and fiction, another whose competence to carry out the role was questionable from the start, and a third who does at least have some small trace of integrity. The Tory choices of Home Secretaries with entrenched views on migration has been equally unsatisfactory. There is a failure to understand that we need migrant workers to provide essential services and boost the economy.

We can only guess at the long-term impact will be of Covid, the high cost of living or what the future holds with wars raging in so many different parts of the world. We need stability but at present it seems far out of our grasp. The war in Ukraine has been devastating and the brutal Russian invasion cannot be justified but it has united people from around the world in condemning the aggression, sending aid and offering homes to Ukrainian migrants.

Human rights violations by right-wing governments, oppressive regimes and religious extremists across the world have led to detentions without trial, torture and executions creating an atmosphere of fear. Increasingly restrictions have been placed on freedom of expression and on the freedoms and choices of women, not least in Iran, and more so in Afghanistan since the Taliban returned to power. All this exacerbated by the effects of drought, poverty, climate change and natural disasters. Women's rights around the world including in the USA are threatened by extremism and right-wing politics. Even in the UK the government has introduced laws to prevent peaceful protest and stripped the rights of those seeking asylum. UNISON continues to oppose the annexation of Palestinian land by the government of Israel.

The local election results in May should have sent a message to our current government and to voters that there was a need for change. We will all be watching the results of the next General Election with concern and expectation.

I'm always proud of what UNISON has to offer its retired members, despite the criticism that we don't always do enough. We do listen to you and our workplan for the current year includes implementation of the Motions carried at our Retired Members Conference in 2022.

The new Interactive e-newsletter for Retired Members has been well received with some very positive comments from several retired members.

The National Retired Members Committee is currently progressing Motions carried at our last conference as well as considering effective communications with retired members. We have also set up a working group with the aim of reviewing how we do things and how we can make improvements to do things better.

Delegations from Retired Members attended the National Delegate Conference, where we made our voices heard by speaking in a variety of different debates affecting retired members as well as supporting young members who are the future of our union. Our representatives also attended the Self Organised Group Conferences. Reports are attached at the end of this report.

POLICIES

THE RISING COST OF LIVING

The Tory government promised it would stabilise the economy, yet the level of household debt currently exceeds 2 trillion pounds and is rising. Too many of our retired members are finding themselves in financial difficulties. Those with mortgages and other loans will be hard pressed to repay them without suffering even greater hardship as the Bank of England raises interest rates to the highest levels seen in two decades.

The high cost of food and energy is causing problems for us all but those retired members who still have mortgages and those living in rented accommodation are being especially hard hit. There are threats that the cost of gas, electricity and water will rise again this winter.

UNISON's There for You, our Welfare Fund, can help those retired members who are in financial difficulties and there is money saving advice on energy efficiency and debt.

NATIONAL CARE SERVICE

The UNISON campaign for a national care service is welcomed and something that UNISON Retired Members fully support. Many vulnerable people and their relatives have been getting a poor deal since councils in England began commissioning social care from private companies. These too often place profit before providing adequate care and exploit a workforce paid poverty wages whilst working long hours without proper training.

The obvious solution is a properly funded national care service that will provide quality care to all those who need it and has national terms and conditions of service for those who deliver that care. We must campaign for a society where care workers are treated fairly and our elderly and disabled can live with dignity.

It is absurd when there are increasing difficulties in recruitment and retention of care workers that many over-stretched and demoralized staff are forced into leaving their jobs to get better pay filling shelves or working at the checkout in supermarkets.

It is a scandal that our government fails to ensure sufficient funding for NHS and Social Care and chooses to ignore the plight of those in need of care and those hard-pressed care workers endeavouring to deliver it.

We must applaud those care workers who have fought hard, including taking strike action, to achieve improvements in their terms and conditions. Such as those in Liverpool who secured the Foundation Living Wage for all those care workers in the private sector commissioned by Liverpool Council.

NHS

The NHS celebrated its 75th birthday on 5 July but there really wasn't much to celebrate. Nye Bevan's core principles that healthcare should meet the needs of everyone, free at the point of delivery, regardless of means, has been severely eroded. We continue to challenge the underfunding of the NHS and the continued ethos of privatisation at all costs by the current government. There is no doubt that privatisation of public services putting profit before people simply doesn't work and nowhere has this been better demonstrated than within the NHS.

We have highlighted the health inequalities and disparity of life expectancy in the most deprived areas and continue to campaign for no return to austerity, for proper investment in our public services including public health and for services to be brought back in-house.

We have significant concerns over the Health and Social Care Act which introduced Integrated Care Systems to replace clinical commissioning groups in 42 areas of England. UNISON is campaigning to prevent any unwanted consequences of this legislation including our concerns that contracts could be handed out without proper scrutiny. Something of which we were only too aware from the knee-jerk reaction by the government to the pandemic. The British Medical Association has raised concerns that staff shortages

across the NHS and Social Care providers will limit any chance of improvements to health that might have resulted from this legislation. There simply aren't enough staff and the workforce is in crisis.

UNISON is campaigning to bring back outsourced cleaning and catering staff back in-house and has been successful in the North Middlesex University Hospital and Barts Health NHS Trust in London.

AN INDEPENDENT OLDER COMMISSIONER FOR ENGLAND

We established policy at our last National Retired Members Conference calling for an independent Commissioner for Older People. Someone with official powers to speak up for and promote the rights of older people as well as influence government policy to meet our long-term needs and aspirations. Surely we deserve it and we are working with the National Pensioners Convention and other organisations to persuade the government of the necessity.

RETIREMENT AGE

The government may have delayed proposals to increase state pension age to 68 but we can't be complacent as it remains a serious threat. A cynical proposal to save money. The government idea of linking pension age to average life expectancy doesn't make sense because average life expectancy varies depending on where you live. A variation of up to 20 years between the poorest and most affluent areas. Many will die before being able to draw their pension because instead of life expectancy increasing it is now in decline. Perhaps that's the government plan!

How realistic is it to expect everyone to continue to work when they are in their late 60s with the same ability or enthusiasm as their younger colleagues especially those who are in demanding physical jobs.

Our working members today are the pensioners of tomorrow. We all deserve a long and happy retirement.

ANTI-TRADE UNION LEGISLATION

The government's continued attacks on trade unions and restrictive legislation have made undertaking industrial action even more difficult. We must defend the right to strike. Many retired members have joined working members in protesting against the government's new anti-strike legislation.

Through its campaigns and commitment, UNISON has undertaken strike action and secured improvements to pay and conditions for many working members including those whose jobs are essential to the well-being of older people. Showing our solidarity is one of the key areas where retired members can remain active by assisting in campaigning, attending rallies and visiting picket lines.

MIGRANT WORKERS

We have always challenged extremist views on immigration. We must not forget that the NHS and Social Care rely on migrant workers. The government proposals to limit immigration overall are having a disastrous impact on service delivery. We lack sufficient workers in the UK to carry out the tasks previously carried out by migrant workers. This has placed increased pressure on the NHS and social care services as well as on food production, hospitality, building trades and manufacturing. UNISON has provided advice and support to those threatened with deportation or gaining settled status.

The Home Office proposals to eradicate what it considers to be illegal migration by asylum seekers are costly, ill-judged and cruel. They clearly breach the most basic human rights. Forced repatriation, relocation to countries such as Rwanda or migrants by detained in inappropriate locations including offshore barges or redundant army camps without access to work, shops or social activities simply won't work. The proposals will allegedly cost more than £6 billion over 2 years. The aim apparently is to deter those that government ministers regard as economic migrants from entering the country. These refugees have undertaken desperate journeys, have been abused and victimised by smuggling gangs, to get to a country they thought would welcome them. The absurdity of it all is that some of these refugees are the very people with the skills we need in our workforce.

THE WINDRUSH GENERATION

22 June marked the 75th anniversary of the arrival of HMS Empire Windrush at Tilbury Docks in London. The Windrush Generation made an outstanding contribution to our country, not least within the NHS that was created in the same year. Apart from experiencing racism and discrimination on arrival the Home Office repaid them in 2017 by suggesting that some were illegal immigrants despite them having lived and worked here legally for many years. Some lost their homes and livelihoods, and some were deported because they Home Office had destroyed their records which made it hard for anyone to prove they had arrived here legally. The Government subsequently apologised and established the Windrush Compensation Scheme but many are still awaiting **compensation.**

YEAR OF THE BLACK WORKER 2023

UNISON has designated 2023 as the Year of Black Workers during which it has celebrated achievements in black workers rights, highlighted the changes that are still required and the need to challenge racism. It is a cause for concern that we aren't attracting more retired black members to take an active role in our retired members organisation.

HOUSING

Everyone deserves a decent home and housing remains a campaigning priority for UNISON.

There is insufficient specialist housing available to meet the needs of an ageing population, fewer affordable homes, hardly any social housing. We are facing the worst housing crisis for generations made worse by the rapid rise in interest rates affecting mortgage repayments. The severe lack of social housing and high mortgage costs mean that private

landlords can charge high rents, sometimes for inadequate, unsafe and poorly maintained buildings.

Rent arrears and evictions are rising at an alarming rate with many pensioners struggling to pay the rent. Many pensioners encountering poverty, insecurity and an uncertain future. The current downturn in the over-inflated housing market might be considered a good thing by some but falling house prices are now leading to fears of negative equity and repossessions.

Six years on from the Grenfell Tower fire tragedy which exposed the massive failures in safety in high rise residential buildings very little is being done to rectify the type of defects that were identified at Grenfell.

RECRUITMENT

Whilst UNISON is the UK's biggest union, we must not be complacent. It is important that we recruit new members. The number of retired members is only increasing by a small number at the present time. We need to encourage more working members to join us on retirement if we are to continue to be an effective campaigning organisation.

NATIONAL PENSIONER CONVENTION (NPC)

The 2023 Annual Convention was held in Blackpool over two days in June and preceded by a one-day Special Delegate Conference which agreed a new constitution to take that organisation forward to meet the many challenges we face at the present time. I am currently President of the NPC and UNISON is well represented by retired member activists on its various committees and working parties where we make our voices heard and work together on shared campaigning issues.

UNISON's Head of Social Care, Gavin Edwards, was one of the keynote speakers at the Convention and he spoke persuasively about our current campaign for a National Care Service. The National Pensioners Convention has its own similar campaign for a national care service.

We also heard from the Digital Poverty Alliance and Age UK who can assist those who are excluded from the internet because they cannot afford broadband or a computer and don't have the skills or ability to access the digital world. Digital inclusion is essential if older people and those with disabilities are not marginalised in a society that excludes those who are unable to access health care and other essential services, make payments, shop on-line and complete forms to claim benefits.

PENSIONERS' ORGANISATION

The National Committee continues to work with the National Pensioners Convention (NPC), Scottish Pensioners Forum and Age UK in campaigning on behalf of older people. I continue to represent UNISON on a number of NPC committees, Linda Richards from South East Region is Deputy General Secretary of NPC, and Martin Gallagher from Northern Ireland represents us on its Health and Social Care Working Party. Graham Wilkin from Northern Region represents us at Age UK.

TUC PENSIONERS COMMITTEE

The Committee meets twice a year at Congress House with catch-up meetings using a virtual platform more regularly. The committee provides a useful dialogue between the different trade unions, our various campaigns and to share information. We have also received regular updates on TUC policy. It is important that we continue to make sure our voice is heard on the TUC Pensioners Committee and raise the issues that matter.

COMMUNICATIONS

The National Committee continues to work to improve communications with retired members. An electronic newsletter for UNISON retired members has replaced the Interactive Newsletter discontinued in 2011. I think many of our retired members will be reassured that we now have a publication dedicated to our retired membership. Whilst it will only be possible to publish it in an online format and twice yearly, I hope it will prove worthwhile in providing relevant information about the key issues affecting UNISON retired members as well as updates on our campaigns.

We continue to look at ways of improving communications but often we have to rely on hard pressed and overworked Branch Secretaries to forward information.

We must ensure that our achievements are reported in UNISON publications at national, regional and branch level. We know we still have much to offer our union by assisting in campaigns and we must be given a voice.

CONFERENCES

Linda Richards and I represented the National Retired Members Organisation at the National Delegate Conference in June together with retired member representatives from each of the UNISON regions.

Linda Richards and I represented the National Retired Members Organisation at the Women's Self-Organised Group Conference in February.

Carol Sewell and Parmodh Sharma represented the National Retired Members Organisation at the Black Members Conference in January.

Kevin John Perkins and Janne Cassidy represented the National Retired Members Organisation at the LGBT+ Conference in November.

PRIORITIES

Our priorities as ever are to campaign for the things that are vital to us as pensioners, not just for ourselves but for future pensioners.

This is why it is so important during our annual Retired Members Conference that we reconsider our policy priorities for next year.

We have the opportunity as our conference ends to take forward two motions to National

Delegate Conference 2024 that we consider most important to us as retired members.

I don't want to influence delegates but would ask that consideration is given to the Motions that contain issues likely to be prioritised as important to both working and retired members as these will be more likely to be heard at next year's National Delegate Conference.

THANKS

I would like to record my thanks to members of the National Committee for their support and contributions during the last year.

The National Committee would like to thank the retired member activists in branches and regions for their hard work in pursuit of the interests of our retired membership.

Finally, a very special thanks to our previous National Officer Colin Derrig who retired during the year; Josie Irwin, Head of the Equality Unit and Gloria Orosungunleka from the Equality Unit and all those members of staff who have worked on retired members issues to ensure that our policy decisions are taken forward and that our conference runs smoothly.

Rosie MacGregor 2023

REPORT OF NATIONAL RETIRED MEMBERS' COMMITTEE

During the last year representation on the National Retired Members' Committee (NRM) consisted of the twelve members from the regions as follows :

Rosie McGreggor (Southwest- Chairperson), Andrew Coburn (Eastern), Sandy Jones (Yorkshire & Humberside), David Humphreys (West Midlands), Barbara Fulton (Scotland), Martin Gallagher (Northern Ireland), Nick Read (East Midlands), Irene Humphreys (Cymru/Wales), Richard Mann (Greater London), Linda Richards (South Eastern), Michelle Le Marinel (North West) and Graham Wilkins (Northern).

The NEC on the National Retired Members Committee were represented by Edwin Jeffries(Deputy Chairperson) , Maureen Le Marinel and Diana Leach

Sheila Crosby(Yorkshire & Humberside) , Val Graham(East Midlands) Maureen Vass(Northwest) and Stuart Etheridge (West Midlands) who stepped down earlier in the year. Substitute Nick Read(East Midlands) and Roger Bannister (North West)

A big thank you to the present and past committee members and the NEC members mentioned above for all their hard work and contributions to the National Retired Members Committee.

In addition to the two NRMC delegates (Rosie MacGregor and Linda Richards , 11 regions out of the 11 out of the 12 regions were represented at National Delegate Conference held this year in Liverpool as follows:

Andrew Coburn (Eastern), Sheena Gordon (East Midlands), Greater London(Mary) Rose Reynolds (Northern Ireland) Roger Bannister (North West) Barbara Fulton (Scotland) Sue Pitter (South East) Elizabeth Payne – Ahmadi (South West) Stuart Etheridge (West Midlands), Kevin Swift(Yorkshire & Humberside)

The involvement of our delegation sends a message to other parts of the union, that retired members are part of UNISON. Retired members participated as per usual in a number, of debates, which included speaking to support the issues of concern to their working comrades.

During the past year the Retired Members Organisation continued to work successfully with the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) who are expedient campaigning partners.

RETIRED MEMBERSHIP FIGURES

The Retired members has been growing year on year from 166653 in 2022 to 167892 this year.

UNISON'S LGBT+ CONFERENCE – 18-20 NOVEMBER - REPORT OF RETIRED MEMBERS' REPRESENTATIVES The delegates representing the Retired Members ' Organisation were Kevin Perkins (Islington Local Government) Janne Cassidy

UNISON DISABLED MEMBERS' CONFERENCE, 29-31 OCTOBER 2022- REPORT OF RETIRED MEMBERS' REPRESENTATIVES

The delegates representing the Retired Members' Organisation were Rose Jackson and Howard Beck.

The Disabled Members conference took place in Brighton. I attended on behalf of the Retired Members Organisation and the Deaf Caucus.

It was brilliant, conference and everything went smoothly. The conference delegates debated motions which will form the right policies to make sure workplaces treat workers fairly in terms of providing services for disabled members in the workplace and retired members access to local public services.

There were Caucus meetings as follows: Black, LGBT+ , Women and Deaf. The debates were on serious issues effecting the rights of disabled people in the UK. There is a huge problem in this country with which we need to fight against the cuts and for the rights of disabled people to make sure they are treated fairly and to make sure that the impact of the cost of living , low employment of disabled people and the cuts in services in local communities are stopped and things are improved within local communities and workplaces for our members and for society has a whole.

UNISON RETIRED MEMBERS 18 OCTOBER CONFERENCE 2022 – NOTES OF LGBT+ CAUCUS /NETWORK MEETING

National Retired Members' Conference - LGBT+ members caucus/network

Meeting 18th October 2022 Telford International Centre

- Meeting agreed Stuart Etheridge (West Midlands) as Chair and Kevin Perkins (Greater London) to produce the report of the meeting to national Retired Members' Committee.
- Meeting noted that Jan Cassidy (Havering) and Kevin Perkins (Islington) would be the Retired Members' representatives to the National LGBT+ Conference in November 2022.
- Meeting paused to mark the passing of Sue Salzedo, long-time LGBT+ activist and advocate for this caucus at the end of last year. She will be missed.
- Chair asked if anyone had any comments on the arrangements for the meeting. From the ensuing conversation, the following points arose:
 - It was felt that the layout of the room for the meeting (top table & rows of chairs facing it) was too formal. Members would like future meetings to be held in the round where it would be easier to see speakers faces.
 - It was felt that only allowing 30 minutes for the meeting was hardly a commitment to Self-Organised Groups (SOGs) inclusivity as it limited opportunities to present ideas and develop arguments.
 - Longer time was needed between caucus meetings. The timetable did not allow for the possibility of a meeting overrunning, nor did it consider access needs of members with mobility issues moving from one caucus venue to another.
- Motions on the Agenda. Bob Deacon (Wolverhampton) highlighted motions 16 (Equality Liaison Committee) and 17 (Retired Members at Self Organised Group Conferences – Six Years On). It was noted that in the Annual Report there was nothing about LGBT+ equality or any other equality issues. The two motions would assist in rectifying this deficit.

- Motions not admitted to the Agenda. Discussions centred around the West Midlands' motion "Trans Equality in Retirement – Louder and Prouder" (printed on pages 57/8 of the final agenda).

It was explained that the Standing Orders Committee (SOC) reasoning appeared to be that Trans Equality is an issue for all parts of the trade union movement and that trans people are not treated any differently in retirement. Quite how and by what evidence SOC had come to the latter conclusion had not been imparted to the submitters of the motion...

The meeting noted that West Midlands continues to appeal this decision and it was agreed that should SOC remain unmoved caucus members should move reference back of the relevant section of the SOC report.

- The meeting was also concerned that there appears to be no mechanism within Standing Orders whereby a caucus can make its feelings on a matter known. Whilst the Trans Equality motion itself was the property of the proposer (West Midlands), the caucus felt that, as a Self-Organised Group, we had a legitimate interest in this issue and that we wished to voice the caucus' concerns to SOC.
- The meeting further noted that under current arrangements for National Retired Members' Conference – and unlike other UNISON conferences – there is no provision for any SOG caucus to submit motions or amendments in their name. Members decided to explore ideas for overcoming what was seen as an Equalities Gap within the National Retired Members' Organisation.
- The meeting felt strongly that SOC cannot define what issues should (or should not) be important to SOGs.
- Rainbow lanyards and Trans Equality badges were distributed to members to strengthen the visibility of the caucus at Conference
- Noted that the final agenda for LGBT+ Conference was due to be published on 21st October.
- Trans Ally training is being rolled out across UNISON regions. The meeting trusted that retired members would be included in this programme.
- Members exchanged information on agencies/groups they knew of which supported older LGBT+ people and their ageing needs. Organisation referenced included Age UK Opening Doors and Safer Ageing. Members to investigate the possibilities of inviting organisations to have stall at conferences/events.
- Members felt strongly that SOGs and Equalities groups need to be visible to each other rather than think in silos. Members felt that the National Retired Members Committee should take action to ensure an Equalities/Diversity table at future conferences prominently located and staffed.

UNISON NATIONAL BLACK MEMBERS CONFERENCE, 20-22 JANUARY 2023 – REPORT OF THE RETIRED MEMBERS REPRESENTATIVES

The Retired Members Organisation was represented by Carol Sewell and Parmodh Sharma

Reflections of Unison Black Members' Conference by Parmodh Sharma, Retired Members Delegate.

The Unison Black Members' Conference 2023 was held between 20-22 January 2023 at Edinburgh International Centre to discuss share and hopefully send the message to remind those in position of influence that enough is enough, and that racism and racist discriminatory practices are not accepted. My first impression of the conference agenda was that it was a very full busy agenda for a well, run and organised conference highlighting/campaigning on issues impacting Black members of staff in their everyday lives. I had attended a Black Members' conference some 20 plus years previously which had left an utterly disappointing experience for me as valuable platform time was being scoundrel by minority of black members to disrupt the proceedings to the point that our delegation left the conference before the end!

The conference 2023 was encouraging and refreshing. The agenda tackled wide range of issues that impact members in their everyday lives.

The Conference topics debated included: Mental health and Young members; Impact of Cost of Living; Opposing Nationality Bill; a motion called for black staff to be treated with Dignity and Courtesy by addressing individuals by their correct names. There were other motions of interest to include wider membership. There also was contributions by well-known people of knowledge and interest in Black affairs this injected real energy and dynamism to the proceedings.

Recognizing that one of UNISON's main aims is to ensure equality of treatment and fair representation for all members and to work towards the elimination of discriminatory practices based on race, gender, sexuality, gender identity, disability, age or creed. Various motions from the committee and membership addressed areas of everyday concern. It was good to observe good participation from the floor.

This year is UNISON's Year of Black Workers so that unfair treatment can be challenged on the on-going and timely basis to achieve equality of treatment.

I attended Black caucus meeting and shared matters of common concern.

UNISON NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE , 16-18 FEBURARY 2023 - REPORT OF RETIRED MEMBERS REPRESENTATIVES

The Retired Members' Organisation was represented by Rosie MacGregor and Linda Richards (National Retired members Committee)

Women's Conference was held in Bournemouth from Thursday afternoon to Saturday lunchtime. Comprising four conference sessions, service group, regional and caucus meetings plus seminars, hustings, and fringe meetings.

It was especially good to meet several retired members attending the conference as visitors.

There were 39 Motions on the agenda of which 14 were grouped debates relating to the Cost of Living Crisis and 2 were composited, the first on Domestic Abuse and the second on Defend the Right to Choose. 5 Emergency Motions were submitted but these were ruled out of order as not competent or failing to meet the criteria for a genuine emergency.

There were three women guest speakers - UNISON President Andrea Egan who spoke of a broken UK society, Christina McAnea, General Secretary who said that women in the trade union movement had broken down barriers and changed women's lives and Bridget Phillipson MP Shadow Secretary of State for Education who said that the current government failed to understand that children and families need to be at the heart of government policies.

Debates centered on a number of key issues affecting women including increasing participation by lower paid women in our union, the cost of living crisis, fair and fast compensation for WASPI women, the gender pay and pension gap, work life balance, sexual harassment, domestic abuse, young women's mental health, the menopause and perimenopause, and the importance of women becoming health and safety reps.

There were many excellent debates and the speakers were knowledgeable and supportive of each other, especially when women told their personal stories of adversity and abuse.

Rosie MacGregor spoke in two debates, the first on Women and the Cost of Living Crisis speaking of the impact on women pensioners. Subsequently speaking on the Gender Pay Gap she stated that the income for women pensioners is disproportionate to that of men, almost half by some estimates due to the disparity in earnings and that many of our low paid members have to rely on the meagre state pension when they retire. She asked conference not to forget about our retired women members. Rosie attended the Health and Safety Workshop

A bucket collection raised £592.93p for There for You, our welfare fund.

UNISON NATIONAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE, 13-16 June 2023

UNISON's National Delegate Conference was held in Liverpool in June. The National Retired Members delegates were Rosie MacGregor and Linda Richards from the National Retired members Committee plus representatives from each of the 12 regions.

It was a welcome return to Liverpool for our conference. We are in Brighton next year.

There were as ever lively debates with some passionate speeches and a few that were contentious including one that went to a card vote. There was a long list of Fringe events. There were some good policy decisions and overall, it was an interesting and worthwhile conference.

The National Retired Members delegates were Rosie MacGregor and Linda Richards from the NRMC plus Retired Member representatives from each of the UNISON regions. Our retired member delegates spoke in many of the debates and made our voices clearly heard on a diverse range of subjects and managed to influence decision in at least one debate.

We stood at the start of conference on the Tuesday morning in a mark of respect for all those members and activists who had died during the preceding year.

Our **UNISON President Andrea Egan** opened conference saying she was "very proud to offer you a warm welcome here to the North West, the biggest of our union's regions". She went on to say she was proud to be leading a union fighting to end in-work poverty and fighting for dignity. Andrea continued by speaking of the injustice of racism and inequality as well as the need to stand in solidarity with international trades unions. Closer to home she spoke of harm caused by the cost-of-living crisis and 13 years of Tory austerity. Her chosen Presidential charity is Endeavour based in her hometown of Bolton that provides support for domestic abuse survivors.

The Annual Report was carried with ease and we heard that our finances are in relatively good shape.

After the President's speech on Day One **Motion 5 "Increasing participation of Lower Paid Women in Our Union"** was carried without opposition.

The keynote speaker that afternoon was Professor Lynn Sudbury-Riley from Covid Bereaved Families for Justice spoke of the impact of her own father's bereavement and the importance of the Inquiry and why it is necessary to understand the implications of so called "Partygate". **Motion 13 "A Health and Safety Response to a National Crisis of**

Stress and its Effects on Public Service Workers” followed with moving speeches about the huge impact of Covid on our members and the need to acknowledge the mental and physical toll.

The first of our Retired Member representatives to speak was Roger Bannister, North West Region on **Motion 22 “Tackling Health Inequalities and Closing the Life Expectancy Gap”**. Roger spoke effectively about the links to social deprivation and that the low state retirement pension putting older people at risk of discrimination. It was carried as amended by 22.1.

The remaining Motions heard on the first day were all carried. **Motion 1** as amended by 1.1 **“Organising to Win – Building Workplace Power through Participation”**; **Motion 4 “Equality is UNISON Business”** as amended by Motion 4.1 and 4.2 moved by Rosie MacGregor saying that a negative narrative surrounds older people. We suffer from ageist jokes, are barred from certain activities because we are told we are too old, ageist attitudes pitch young against old, attacks are made on our pension entitlements, we sometimes feel invisible and we may no longer feel valued; and **Motion 17 “Defend the Right to Strike”**.

The first Motion on Wednesday **Composite A “Social Care Crisis – The Urgent Need for Reform and Increased Investment”** included our own Motion 29 on this subject. It was moved by Rosie MacGregor stating that it remains a scandal that in one of the richest countries in the world politicians fail to provide proper funding and ignore the plight of those in need of care and those who deliver it.

This was followed by **Motion 28 “A Vision for a National Care Service”** in which Kevin Swift the Retired Member representative from Yorks and Humberside spoke with feeling and the motion was carried unanimously. **Motion 27 “Radical Change in Social Care in Wales Can Influence the Whole of the UK”** was then carried.

Our **General Secretary Christina McAnea** gave an inspirational and very personal speech to close conference on Wednesday morning. She opened by stating “What a year we’ve had” and went on to list our achievements and spoke of the commitment of those who have attended picket lines, rallies and campaigns across the country often braving freezing weather to stand up for our rights to fair pay and conditions. She received several standing ovations for a heartfelt speech.

The first controversial debate was on Wednesday afternoon **Composite D “Industrial Action Ballots”**. It was clearly lost but not without a good debate and some rancour but **Motion 79 “Taking Effective Action within the Straightjacket of Anti-Union Laws”** was then carried. The issue being the difference between the urgency of the latter and the potential delays in a need to gather evidence in the former.

Motion 8 “Harassment – It’s Not Part of the Job” as amended by 8.1 was carried easily that same afternoon. Rosie MacGregor spoke in the debate in support of Young Members stating that it is shocking in supposedly more enlightened workplaces that sexual harassment, bullying, racism and violence, which should have been banished to history, are still happening in the 21st century.

Sheena Gordon Retired Member representative from East Midlands referred to her “boys”, her son and his male partner, of whom she was immensely proud in the debate on **Motion 57 “Make 2024 the Year of LGBT+ Workers”**.

On Thursday morning we considered International Issues and at the opening of conference we received a video message from **Turkish Trade Union Leader Gonul Erden** who was only recently released from prison in Turkey. She said that her “main strength comes from solidarity from comrades like you.” This was followed by an impassioned speech from **Rosa Pavanelli, General Secretary Public Services International** calling for global solidarity to defeat the rise in “far right populism” which was met with a standing ovation.

Liz Payne-Ahmadi, Retired Member representative from South-west region spoke with passion in both the two following debates. Both motions were carried **Motion 69 “Defending and Improving Women’s Rights Internationally”**; and **Motion 72 “We Need to Talk About Palestine”**.

Thursday afternoon is always Rule Changes when the decision whether to support or otherwise can depend simply on one word. There were fewer amendments to rules to consider this year, but it was not entirely straight forward.

Regrettably our proposed rule change Rule D National Executive Council had been ruled out of order by Standing Orders Committee. We appealed the decision but without success. See our reasons for the appeal:

National Retired Members Committee (NRMC) consider that the Standing Orders Committee is wrong in their belief that this proposed rule amendment conflicts with Schedule C for the following reasons:

- 1. Schedule C specifies the powers of the NEC to set the schedule for elections i.e. the timescales, process for inviting nominations, format for election addresses etc. Schedule C does not address representation on the NEC.*
- 2. This amendment (to rule D) seeks a change to representation on the NEC to include retired members. It does not seek to change any aspect of the election process (dealt with by Schedule C). The amendment therefore does not conflict with Schedule C.*
- 3. Rule D 2.5 sets out the representation for young members seats. Ruling out this amendment from NRMC, which seeks similar representation for retired members, is inconsistent and discriminatory.*
- 4. SOC’s decision discriminates against retired members, it is treating retired members unfavourably in comparison with the self-organised groups and young members, even though age is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.*

Rule Amendments carried:

2 – Rule D Young Member's Seat

Rosie MacGregor spoke supporting this rule change to increase the age limit from 27 to 30 years for young membership in line with TUC and most other unions.

5 – Rule G Branch Meetings

7 – Rule G Branch Officers

8 – Rule G Branch Secretary

Rule Amendments lost:

1 - Rule C Honorary Life Members

Both Rosie MacGregor and Roger Bannister spoke against this rule change on the grounds that the wording was confused, and the intention was unclear. It was lost overwhelmingly.

3 - Rule D Service Groups

There was time for several motions following the Rule Change debates.

Motion 84 as amended by 84.1 "Effective Use of Our Union's Resources to Build our Industrial Action Fund and Capacity to Deliver Effective Industrial Action"

proved the most controversial and resulted in a Card Vote because of the implications of the transfer of excess funds from branches to boost the national Industrial Action Fund. The result was 488,528 For and 498,199 Against.

Linda Richards spoke with feeling on **Motion 44 "Crisis in the NHS and Social Care"** which was carried unanimously.

Kevin Swift spoke on **Motion 45 as amended by 45.1 "Integrated Care Systems"** about major concerns we have about this government legislation and lack of scrutiny.

The final day arrived all too quickly with many important motions unheard. Some of our retired representatives were keen to speak but had not because the question was put before they had the opportunity.

Rosena Allin-Khan, Shadow Minister for Mental Health gave an inspirational speech on Friday morning. She spoke of her experiences of working in St Georges Hospital,

Tooting during the pandemic and of the crisis in mental health, inequality and the true scale of Tory mismanagement. Our workers are a force for good and that is why the trade union movement is so vital.

There was a standing ovation when **Dr Neville Lawrence**, father of Stephen, was presented with Honorary Life Membership. He spoke of the support he had received from the trade union movement in the battle for justice for the murder of his son.

We then debated **Motion 78 “The Northern Ireland Peace Process 25 Years On”** which was clearly carried. Tina Roche the retired member representative from Northern Region spoke on **Motion 20 “Cost of Living”** saying that the threat of poverty is as real today as ever with rapidly rising debt and the future for many insecure. This and the following motions **Motion 38 “Private Renters Deserve the Right to a Secure, Decent and Affordable Home”** and **Motion 53 as amended by 53.1 “Ethnicity Pay Gap”**.

Roger Bannister gave a well-considered speech as part of **Composite C “Defend Our Right to Vote – Voter ID is Suppression”** stating that voter ID is a conscious effort to disenfranchise working class voters. Composite C was carried.

We moved on to **Re-Prioritised Motions** on Friday afternoon but there were no further speakers on behalf of retired members. **Motion 54 “2023 Year of the Black Worker”**, **Motion 52 as amended by 52.1 “Cost of Living Crisis and Black Workers”**, **Motion 25 “Defend Abortion Rights”** and **Motion 56 “Securing the Legacy of the Year of Disabled Workers”** were all carried. Everything else on the re-prioritised list was referred to the new NEC.

The **President Andrea Egan** who had chaired conference so well was given an incredible send off. Even John McDonnell MP came!

On the Fringe

Our representatives attended numerous different Fringe Meetings and Rosie and Linda and others attended the International Rally on Tuesday evening and Rosie and others attended the Labour Link Fringe Meeting where Angela Rayner was the principal speaker.

Conclusion

Our retired members showed that we remain a strong force within our union. Unafraid to stand up and make our voices heard and influence the union. After all we have the skills and knowledge gained when we were working members.

Our thanks to all our delegation.

ACTIONS TAKEN ON MOTIONS CARRIED AT THE 2022 UNISON NATIONAL RETIRED MEMBERS' CONFERENCE

COMPOSITE A - COMPOSITE A. OLDER PEOPLE AND THE

GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO THE ENERGY AND COST OF LIVING CRISIS

The Composite has been referred to the NEC's Policy Development and Campaigns Committee

MOTION 1 OUR NHS. PRIVATISATION BY STEALTH

The National Retired Members Committee (NRMC) is working with Labour Link, NEC, NPC and the Health Service Group Executive to campaign for comprehensive health care for older people.

MOTION 2 THE BUS PASS IN ENGLAND

The issues contained in the motion have been raised with UNISON's Transport Service Group. NRMC will participate in a bus campaign with the National Pensioners Convention 1-8 October 2023

MOTION 4 THE UK STATE PENSION

See Motion 11 for action

MOTION 6 HEAT OR EAT?

Issues discussed in this motion have been raised with the TUC and the NRMC is involved in ongoing campaigning on the cost of living.

MOTION 7 THREAT TO FREE PRESCRIPTIONS

The Government has confirmed that those aged 60 and over in England will continue to have access to free prescriptions despite a 2021 consultation that recommended raising the free prescription threshold to meet the state pension age at 66.

Pharmacy minister Neil O'Brian said " cost-of-living pressures informed the government's decision to keep the prescription exemption where it is".

MOTION 8 WIDESPREAD DISRUPTION OF HEALTHCARE DURING THE PANDEMIC

This motion has been referred to the NEC's Policy Development and Campaigns Committee.

MOTION 9 THE COST -OF LIVING RISE AND ITS IMPACT ON OLDER

PEOPLE

NRMC discussed this motion with the Energy Service Group and were advised UNISON Energy Group, have been arguing for a public ownership approach to energy retail for a few years now, and this is the Service Group policy.

The view is that the most effective way in which an energy supplier could address fuel poverty and ensure consumer costs are affordable is by increasing investment in energy efficiency. The Retired Members Committee will continue work with the energy group to support any campaigns and push for the investment in energy efficiency.

MOTION 10 CARD ONLY TRANSACTIONS AND ACCESS TO CASH

NRMC is campaigning with NPC on this matter.

MOTION 11 TRIPLE LOCK

Due to the triple lock being reinstated this year no further work was carried out but the NRMC will continue to work with NPC to campaign to legislate to ensure that the inflation determinant in future is RPI rather than CPI.

MOTION 12 FREE TV LICENCE FOR THE OVER 75 -YEAR- OLDS

The Motion was referred to the PDCC as specified in the motion. The Government has not accepted statutory responsibility for the continued provision of free TV licences to all over – 75s.

MOTION 13 POVERTY FOR OLDER PEOPLE

The Motion has been referred to the NEC's Policy Development and Campaigns Committee.

MOTION 14 THE URGENT NEED FOR REFORM AND INCREASE INVESTMENT IN SOCIAL CARE

The National Retired Members Committee(NRMC) submitted a motion to the 2023 UNISON National Delegate Conference to campaign for improvements to social care for older people.

MOTION 15 SCORES ON THE DOORS

This motion has been actioned with the results of the ballot being published on the retired members' section of the website.

MOTION 16 EQUALITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

The lack of representation of retired members on the Equality Liaison Committee has been raised. Discussion continues.

MOTION 17 RETIRED MEMBERS AT SELF-ORGANSIED

CONFERENCE – SIX YEARS ON

Discussion on whether, or not submission rights to SOG conferences would require a rule change continues.

MOTION 18 MORE CONSISTENT SUPPORT FOR RETIRED ACTIVITY

The National Retired Members Committee(NRMC) working group conducted a survey on support for the retired membership. Results are being analysed and NRMC will consider a report of findings.

MOTION 19 NOW IS THE TIME – A COMMISSIONER FOR

OLDER PEOPLE

UNISON supports the National Pensioners Convention (NPC) working with Age UK, the Centre for Ageing Better and Independent Age in their campaign for England to have an Older People Commissioner and UNISON retired members attended a Parliamentary event along with other unions, campaign groups MPs and Peers to find out more about the campaign.

MOTION 20 CAMPAIGN COMMUNICATION

The first electronic newsletter for retired members in UNISON was published and launched in June . The Newsletter will be one of the means of communicating with retired members.

The newsletter will be published three to four times a year.

The National Officer is reviewing and updating the Retired Members section of the website and will include Retired Members Campaigns.

The Older People Charter is in the process of being updated with a working group set up at updating changes to the charter and other publications.

MOTION 21 PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The National Pensioner Convention (NPC) held a public transport conference which was attended in June by many, UNISON Retired members. Petitions from the RMT were circulated to UNISON members to stop the closure of ticket offices around the country. The Retired Members will continue to work with UNISON WET Service Group and the National Pensioners Convention on their current campaigns. The NPC agreed to launch a national Better Buses campaign and to seek support from local, regional ,and national organisations.

The Retired Members Committee will be supporting and will work closely to assist with the campaign action week which they are working towards launching a week of action from 1-8 October.

MOTION 24 WE MAY BE GONE, BUT DON'T LET US BE FORGOTTEN – U MAGAZINE, LACK OF COVERAGE OF RETIRED MEMBERS ISSUES

The issue was raised with communications and Retired Members Committee were informed that the print version of U-Mag was discontinued due to an NEC decision at the end of last year. The last issue went out in February. See also Motion 20.

MOTION 26 OLDER PEOPLE SHOULD'T HAVE TO CHOOSE WHETHER TO HEAT OR EAT

The National Retired Members Committee is promoting the Northern Ireland campaign and sharing developments with other regions.

MOTION 27 RULE D- STRUCTURE OF THE UNION AT NATIONAL LEVEL

The Retired Members Organisation submitted the Rule amendment contained in motion which was considered for National Delegate Conference business .

MOTION 29 RETIRED MEMBERS' REPRESENTATION ON THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

This motion was submitted to the 2023 National Delegate Conference and was ruled out of order.

MOTION 30 SOCIAL CARE

UNISON launched it campaign Let's make care work – together we can make care work earlier this year. It includes a petition asking all MPs to introduce a national care service. Retired members across all regions are engaged with this campaign.

UNISON joined the Fabian Society to launch the first ever roadmap to a national care service at an event in Westminster in June 2023.

MOTION 31 INTERGRATED CARE SYSTEMS

The National Retired Members Committee is liaising/ and working with the National Pensioners Convention and will work with Labour Link to stop any consequences of the changes to the Government's new Health and Care Act which has introduced integrated Care Systems (ICS) into the 42 areas of England.

STANDING ORDERS FOR THE CONDUCT OF UNISON RETIRED MEMBERS' CONFERENCES (as amended at 2022 Conference)

1. COMPOSITION OF STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

1.1 The Standing Orders Committee shall consist of one retired member from each UNISON region.

2. FUNCTIONS OF STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

2.1 The members of the Standing Orders Committee shall hold office from the time of their election onto the Standing Orders Committee until the end of the next Retired Members' Conference.

2.2 At its first meeting after it takes office, the Committee shall elect a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson from amongst its members.

2.3 The functions of the Committee shall, subject to these Standing Orders, be to:

2.3.1 Ensure that the Union's Rules and Standing Orders relating to the business of Conferences are observed, and notify the Chairperson of Conference of any violation that may be brought to the Committee's notice

2.3.2 Draw up the preliminary agenda and final agenda of Conference business, and the proposed hours of business, to be circulated in accordance with the timetable stated in Rule D.1.9 of the National Rules

2.3.3 Determine the order in which the business of Conference shall be conducted, subject to the approval of Conference

2.3.4 Consider all motions and amendments submitted for consideration by Conference and, for the purpose of enabling Conference to transact its business effectively the Committee shall:

- 1) Decide whether such motions and amendments have been submitted in accordance with the Rules
- 2) Group together motions and amendments relating to the same subject, decide the order in which they should be considered and whether they should be debated and voted on separately or debated together and voted on sequentially
- 3) Prepare and revise, in consultation with the movers of motions and amendments, composite motions in terms which in the opinion of the Committee best express the subject of such motions and amendments
- 4) Refer to the body within the Union a motion or amendment which in the opinion of the Committee should properly be considered there; the mover shall be informed of the reason for so doing
- 5) Have power to do all such other things as may be necessary to give effect to these Standing Orders.
- 6) Issue guidelines from time to time in order to assist with the smooth running of Conference. Such guidelines shall be consistent with these Standing Orders

2.4 Any decisions of the Committee which are to be reported to Conference shall be announced by the Chairperson of the Committee and shall be subject to ratification by Conference. Page 11 of 17

3. SPEAKING

3.1 Those empowered to speak shall be delegates appointed by branches or representatives appointed by regions, members of the National Committee and those members of UNISON staff so appointed by the National Committee, plus the Chairperson of the Standing Orders Committee. Any member of a regional Retired Members' Committee attending the conference as a regional or branch delegate may be appointed by their regional Retired Members' Committee to move a motion or amendment submitted by that regional Retired Members' Committee. A regional delegate may move a motion or amendment submitted by a Branch within that Region if the Branch concerned is unable to be present at the Conference.

3.2 Members of the National Committee may speak from the platform to Committee policy on any motion or amendment on the Conference agenda, at any time during debate, as agreed by the Chairperson of Conference and the National Committee.

3.3 Apart from the elected delegates and those persons who have the right to speak at the Conference under Standing Order 3.1, no other person shall speak except by permission of the Standing Orders Committee.

4. LIMIT OF SPEECHES

4.1 The mover of a motion or an amendment shall speak for not more than five minutes and each succeeding speaker for not more than three minutes, except where the Standing Orders Committee have decided otherwise.

4.2 No person shall speak more than once on a question, except that the mover of the original motion may exercise a right of reply for not more than three minutes, introducing no new material.

5. VOTING

5.1 The method of voting shall be by show of hands of the delegates appointed by branches and present at Conference. A card vote may be called by the President or, immediately after the result of the show of hands has been declared, by at least ten per cent of the delegates registered at the Conference.

5.2 In the event of a card vote being called or demanded, the vote shall be taken immediately after it has been demanded, but no business shall be suspended, pending the declaration of the result of the vote except that which in the President's opinion may be directly affected by the result.

6. TELLERS

Conference shall appoint delegates to act as tellers for the duration of the Conference.

7. PROCEDURE

7.1 Any questions of procedure or order raised during the Conference shall be decided by the Chairperson of Conference whose ruling shall be final and binding.

7.2 Upon the Chairperson of Conference rising during a Conference session, any person then addressing Conference shall resume her/his seat and no other person shall rise to speak until the Chairperson of Conference authorises proceedings to continue. Page **12** of **17**

7.3 The Chairperson of Conference may call attention to continued irrelevance, tedious repetition, unbecoming language, or any breach of order on the part of a member and may direct such a member to discontinue her or his speech.

7.4 The Chairperson of Conference shall have power to call any person to order who is causing a disturbance in any session of Conference and if that person refuses to obey the Chairperson of Conference, she/he shall be named by the Chairperson of

Conference, shall forthwith leave the Conference Hall, and shall take no further part in the proceedings of the Conference.

7.5 The following procedural motions may be moved at any time without previous notice on the agenda:

(i) that the question now be put, provided that:

(a) the Chairperson of Conference may advise Conference not to accept this motion if in her/his opinion the matter has not been sufficiently discussed;

(b) if this motion is carried, it shall take effect at once, subject only to any right of reply under these Standing Orders.

(ii) that the Conference proceed to the next business;

(iii) that the debate be adjourned;

No motion under (i), (ii) or (iii) above shall be moved by a person who has spoken on the motion or amendment in question.

7.6 Any person empowered to speak as in Standing Order 3.1 above may at any stage in the Conference raise a point of order if she/he considers that the business is not being conducted in accordance with the Union's Rules and the Standing Orders of this Conference.

7.7 Such a point of order must be raised as soon as the alleged breach occurs or at the earliest practicable moment thereafter.

7.8 The Chairperson of Conference's ruling on a point of order is final.

8. MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

8.1 Motions and amendments will normally be considered in the order in which they appear on the final agenda.

8.2 Other than items appearing on the Final Agenda, and those relating to procedure, the only motions allowed for debate shall be those submitted under the emergency procedure previously agreed by the Retired Members Conference Standing Orders Committee and which have been approved for debate by that Committee. Any such motions will be circulated at the commencement of Conference proceedings.

8.3 The Retired Members Conference Standing Orders Committee will decide before the Conference the place on the Final Agenda at which any emergency motions should be heard.

8.4 When an amendment to a motion is moved, no further amendment may be moved until the first one is disposed of. Page **13** of **17**

8.5 When an amendment is defeated, a further amendment may be moved to the original motion.

8.6 When an amendment to a motion is carried, the motion, as so amended, shall become the substantive motion, to which a further amendment may be moved.

8.7 Any person empowered to speak as in Standing Order 3.1 above shall not move more than one amendment to any one motion, nor shall the mover of a motion move any amendment to such motion.

9. WITHDRAWALS OF MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

9.1 A motion or amendment which appears on the Final Agenda may not be withdrawn without the consent of the Standing Orders Committee, whose decision shall be reported to Conference.

9.2 If a motion be withdrawn with the consent of the Standing Orders Committee, any amendment to that motion will fall.

10. REFERENCE OF OUTSTANDING ITEMS

10.1 If, at the end of the Conference the business of conference has not been concluded, all outstanding motions and amendments shall stand referred to the National Retired Members' Committee. The National Retired Members' Committee in turn shall report back to the appropriate Branch or submitting body its decisions on these matters. All such motions and amendments shall be responded to at least one month before the deadline for submission of motions and amendments to Standing Orders to the following year's Conference.

10.2 In the event of conference being held virtually, or some delegates participating virtually, should any motion or amendment fail to be moved by a delegate participating virtually due to technical issues, such motion or amendment shall not fall but stand to be referred to the National Retired Members' Committee under the provisions of Standing Order 10.1

11. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

11.1 Any one or more of these Standing Orders may be suspended by a resolution of Conference in relation to a specific item of business properly before the Conference and to the proceedings thereon at the Conference, provided that at least two-thirds of the delegates present and voting shall vote for the resolution.

12. AMENDMENT OF STANDING ORDERS

12.1 These standing orders may be amended by a resolution passed at a retired members' conference by a two-thirds majority of those delegates voting in favour or, in the case of a card vote, at least two thirds of the votes cast.

12.2 A motion to amend these standing orders shall be voted on by a retired members' conference only where notice of the motion is included in the agenda circulated to delegates in advance.

Conference venue

Edinburgh International Conference Centre (EICC)
The Exchange
150 Morrison Street
Edinburgh
EH3 8EE

Tel: 0131 300 3000
Web: www.eicc.co.uk

How to get there

Travelling to Edinburgh by Plane

The EICC is in the heart of the city within 6 miles of Edinburgh International Airport. www.edinburghairport.com.

From Edinburgh Airport by Taxi

Airport taxis are located outside the terminal building. It costs approximately £15 for a taxi to the city centre and takes 20 minutes.

From Edinburgh Airport by Tram

Edinburgh Trams run between the Airport and central Edinburgh. The closest tram stop to the EICC is Haymarket Station. www.edinburghtrams.com

From Edinburgh Airport by Bus

The Airlink 100 operate a bus service between Edinburgh Airport and the city centre. Haymarket Station is a 5-minute walk from the EICC. The N22 bus also departs from outside the Airport entrance and runs through the night. www.flybybus.com.

By Train

Edinburgh has two railway stations:

Waverley Station is the main railway station and has direct routes from cities across the country. The station is approximately 1.3 miles from EICC.

Haymarket Station is a stop for many commuters and some UK train routes and is approximately 0.4 miles from EICC.
www.nationalrail.co.uk

By Bus

Edinburgh's main bus terminal is located at St Andrews Square. There are bus connections from across the UK. www.nationalexpress.com or www.citylink.co.uk.

For information on local bus services throughout Edinburgh visit www.lothianbuses.com

By Tram

Edinburgh Trams run between the Airport and York Place every 8-10 minutes Monday to Saturday and every 12-15 minutes on a Sunday.

Discounted Tram Travel

UNISON has organised 20% off tram tickets for all attendees to Conference.


Buy any ticket from <https://www.edinburghticket.co.uk/> and use code **UNISON20** at the checkout.


Flying into Edinburgh Airport?



Airport Tickets		Adult		Child (Age 5-15)		Family (up to 2 adults and 3 children)	
	Single A single journey to/from Edinburgh Airport	£6.00	£4.80	£3.00	£2.40	-	
	Open Return Open return journey to/from Edinburgh Airport	£8.50	£6.80	£4.50	£3.60	£22.50	£18.00
	3 Day Multi-Day Airport Return + Unlimited travel for 3 pre-selected days	£14.50	£11.60	£7.00	£5.60	£41.00	£32.80
	4 Day Multi-Day Airport Return + Unlimited travel for 4 pre-selected days	£17.50	£14.00	£8.50	£6.80	£47.00	£37.60
	5 Day Multi-Day Airport Return + Unlimited travel for 5 pre-selected days	£20.50	£16.40	£10.00	£8.00	£53.00	£42.40

Arriving by train into Waverley or Haymarket?



<i>City Tickets</i>		Adult		Child <small>(Age 5-15)</small>		Family <small>(up to 2 adults and 2 children)</small>	
	3 Day Multi-Day Unlimited City Zone travel for 3 pre-selected days	£9.00	£7.20	£5.00	£4.00	£20.00	£16.00
	4 Day Multi-Day Unlimited City Zone travel for 4 pre-selected days	£11.00	£8.80	£6.00	£4.80	£26.00	£20.80
	5 Day Multi-Day Unlimited City Zone travel for 5 pre-selected days	£13.00	£10.40	£7.00	£5.60	£32.00	£25.60

Walk to EICC from Haymarket Station

When exiting Haymarket Station head right (east), towards the pedestrian crossing. Walk straight up Morrison Street for a few minutes and you will find the EICC on the left-hand side.

By Road

The EICC is right in the centre of Edinburgh. The main entrance is 150 Morrison Street. For directions visit www.multimap.com and input EH3 8EE for the destination postcode.

Car parking

There are many car parks within close walking distance to the EICC. For further information, please visit www.yourparkingspace.co.uk or National Car Parks in central Edinburgh, <https://www.ncp.co.uk/>

Taxis

There are several licensed taxi companies operating in Edinburgh. The nearest taxi ranks to the venue are Haymarket station or from the Sheraton on Lothian Road. One taxi company is Capital taxi, <https://www.capitalcarsscotland.co.uk/> or 0131 777 7777.

Venue information

Conference desk – Moffatt, Level -2

The conference desk is responsible for all administration and organisational matters. Attendees do not need to register on arrival. The desk opening times are:-

Tuesday 11am – 5.30pm

Wednesday 8.30am – 5.30pm

Conference exhibition – Lennox 1, Level -2

The exhibition area includes exhibitors and displays publicising UNISON and other services. The exhibition will be open:-

Tuesday 11am – 5pm

Wednesday 8.30am – 4pm

Conference hall – Lennox 2&3, Level -2

The conference hall is laid out with seating for delegates in the main body of the hall, a platform and rostrum at the front and seating for visitors in a separate area at the back of the hall. A seating plan will be available at conference.

Standing orders committee – Lammermuir 1, Level -2

The Standing Orders Committee (SOC) will be available throughout conference. Delegates wishing to see the committee should see the SOC steward outside the SOC room.

Cloakroom – Cloakroom Level -1

There will be a free cloakroom service on Level -1. Cloakroom opening times are:-

Tuesday 11am – 5.15pm

Wednesday 8.30am – 4.30pm

Meeting rooms

Discussion groups and meetings will take place in Lammermuir 2, Level -2; Lowther and Menteith, rooms, Level -1 and Carrick 2&3 and Ochil rooms, level 1.

Catering

There will be a delegate catering area in Lennox 1 on Level -2.

Charging Lockers

Charging Lockers are available to charge your mobile devices. If you would like to use these, keys are available from the conference desk.

Multi faith prayer room

The multi faith prayer room is a shared space for prayer and quiet contemplation and is available for all delegates and visitors to use on request. Please contact the conference desk for further details.

First aid

If you require first aid assistance please go to the conference desk or speak to a member of the EICC staff or a UNISON steward.

Wi-fi

Free wi-fi is available throughout the centre. Delegates need to select the wi-fi network and then use the password:

Network: delegate

Password: haymarket (password is key sensitive)

Credential photographs

If you require a photograph for your credentials, you can upload this via our online conference system (OCS) and let us know and we can have your badge waiting for you at the conference desk. If you require help to do this, you can email, conferences@unison.co.uk or telephone 0207 121 5123. Otherwise, please come to the conference desk.

Card vote collection desk – Lennox 1, Level -2

This is where you collect your card votes, preferably before conference begins. Only one person from your branch should collect your card votes. Please note if a card vote is called and you have not already collected your card votes, you will not be able to collect them until after the count.

The card vote desk will be open:-

Tuesday 11.45am – 5pm

Wednesday 8.30am – 4pm

Access and Facilitation

UNISON recognises the importance of making conference as accessible as possible. All delegates have had the opportunity to register for provision of services to make conference accessible to them. Questions about access and facilitation should be addressed to the UNISON conference desk.

Accessibility summary for Edinburgh International Conference Centre

The EICC's two main entrances, the Strathblane and the Lennox, both have automated sliding doors which are operated by a push button from the outside and by sensor from the inside. During an event these doors are manned with security who can help if required

Navigating the venue

An effective concierge service, as well as prominent signage and lighting, ensure smooth navigation of the venue. Despite the building's complexity and size, it is highly functional yet welcoming. A helpful team of staff is on-hand to assist with navigational and accessibility needs.

Lifts

All areas of the venue can be reached by lift. All lifts have spoken messages indicating which floor the lift is on and whether the doors are opening or closing. Additionally, all lifts have grab bars for delegates with impaired mobility.

Toilet Facilities

On each floor of the venue there are adapted toilets, with grab rails, emergency buttons, lowered mirrors, and fittings. Currently these toilets allow for either a left or a right lateral transfer, not both.

Assistance dogs are welcome.

Autism Aware

The EICC is committed to promoting equality and improving accessibility for everybody. We understand that for some people with autism spectrum conditions (ASC), sensory or additional needs, attending an event can be a daunting experience. Our aim is to be a leading international venue which is accessible to visitors with ASC. Working with The National Autistic Society, the EICC team has been equalities trained and is committed to following the company's ethos of being inclusive to all EICC visitors.

For more information, please visit their website,
<https://www.eicc.co.uk/visiting/disability-access/>

Safety and Security

Safety for everyone attending conference is a key priority for UNISON. We regularly review our safety and security procedures and have in place several security measures to make conference as safe and secure as possible. Whilst at conference, it is important to take precautions to minimise potential risks and safeguard yourself:

You will need to wear your credentials in the venue but remember to take them off when you leave.

Keep your belongings close and secure whilst in the venue and report any unattended bags to the centre security

No bags or paperwork should be left in the conference hall during breaks and any unattended items will be removed.

Familiarise yourself with the nearest fire exit, at the venue and your hotel. In the event of an emergency, please follow the venue's or hotel's instructions.

You can also register your emergency details on OCS via MyUNISON on the UNISON website.

Evacuation procedures

A pre-recorded message will be played before the start of conference each day, with a summary of the evacuation procedures detailed on a large screen. Please take time to familiarise yourself with this information.

Covid Measures

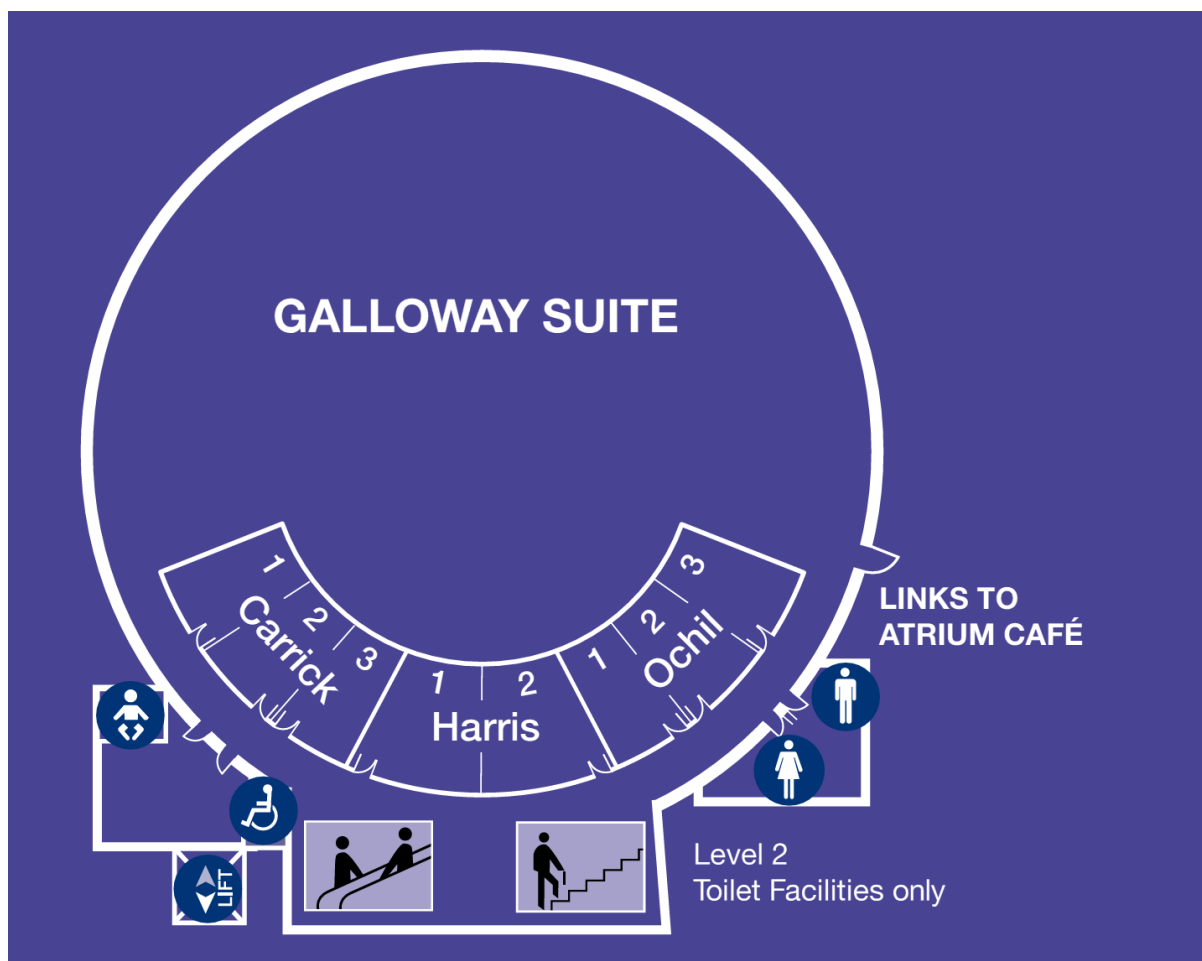
Please do not attend conference if you have Covid 19 or believe you may be infected with Covid 19. We would ask that you undertake your own health risk assessment and consider if due to personal vulnerabilities you should attend conference. Please practice good hygiene – wash your hands regularly and catch/cover coughs and sneezes.

Conference Seating Plan

Retired Members' Conference - Edinburgh 2023

								For								Against																
Eastern								Scotland								Cymru/Wales								Greater London								
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Level 1



Monitoring for Fair Representation and Proportionality

All delegates will be asked to complete an online form which enables the Conference to be monitored in order that UNISON can check on progress towards its objectives of fair representation and proportionality at all levels of the union. This exercise is conducted at all UNISON conferences and at regional level.

The form is available at: <http://s.alchemer.eu/s3/2023-NRMC>

Or by scanning the QR Code:



Please assist us by completing the online form before the end of conference.