



National
Water, Environment and
Transport Conference
2024 Bulletin

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Introduction

December 2023

Conference Team

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This bulletin contains the timetable and information for
2024 Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Conference

**Please note that both motions and delegations can only be submitted online.
 There are no paper forms.**

Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Conference 2024 will be held at Brighton Centre on Sunday 16th June 2023, commencing at 10:00am finishing at 5:00pm.

Brighton Centre
 Kings Rd,
 Brighton
 BN1 2GR

Tel: 01273 290131 Fax: 01273 779980

Website: www.brightoncentre.co.uk

Timetable

	Time	Date
Deadline for Submission of Motions	12pm	Tuesday, 27 February 2024
Publication of Preliminary Agenda		Saturday, 18 March 2023
Deadline for Submission of Delegates	12pm	Thursday, 21 March 2024
Deadline for crèche places	12pm	Thursday, 04 April 2024
Deadline for reasonable adjustment requests for access	4pm	Thursday, 04 April 2024
Deadline for Submission of Amendments	12pm	Tuesday, 23 April 2024
Publication of Final Agenda		Monday, 13 May 2024
Deadline for reasonable adjustment requests for travel	12pm	Thursday, 06 June 2024
Deadline for Emergency Motions	12pm	Monday, 10 June 2024
Deadline for submitting Change of Delegates online on the OCS	11.59pm	Wednesday, 12 June 2024

WET Conference Website

Use the link below to access UNISON WET conference website and download future documents regarding this conference under resources, such as Annual reports or Preliminary Agenda.

<https://www.unison.org.uk/events/2024-national-wet-conference/>

How to submit motions and delegations using UNISON's Online Conference System (OCS)

Which branch officers can use the OCS? Motions and delegations can be submitted at branch level by either the Branch Chair or Branch Secretary. The other will receive e-mail copies of the motion or delegation submission as soon as it is submitted. Branch employed staff are also able to enter motions but do not have authority to submit them on behalf of a branch.

At regional level, the regional secretary is authorised to submit the motion/delegation, with the regional convenors receiving an instant e-mail copy. This process is replicated at national level for national bodies and their relevant chairs and secretaries.

Which members can use the OCS? When a member is registered as a delegate to a conference, they will receive an e-mail informing them of this as long as their e-mail address is listed on the RMS. They can then also access the OCS to upload their photograph, to make online requests for services such as reasonable adjustments, crèche places and babysitting, which should be made by the deadline stated.

How will these people access the OCS? Users access the OCS via the UNISON website at www.unison.org.uk and clicking on 'My UNISON' - which is located at the top of the front page. Using your UNISON membership number and surname, register once and you will be issued with a password. For subsequent access, simply click on 'My UNISON' and then 'Sign-in now' and you will need your membership number and the password you were issued. Branch employed staff should call their regional contact.

What if the correct branch people have accessed 'My UNISON' but then cannot access the OCS? Key to accessing the OCS is ensuring that the data held on UNISON's membership system, the RMS, is correct. It records which members hold the key positions of Branch Secretary and Branch Chair. If this information is incorrect, or if it changes, the branch needs to ensure that the RMS records are updated immediately. Then the individual should call their regional contact.

What else needs to happen? It will help the system to function if these key branch people also have an e-mail address stored on their RMS records. Please contact your branch or regional RMS team urgently, to make this happen. Each delegate within a delegation should also have their date of birth stored on the RMS.

Delegates and Visitors to Conference: It is important that we collect e-mail addresses for those members wishing to participate in any way in the conference. The e-mail address can be any one that you have easy access to e.g. your personal e-mail, branch e-mail or that of a friend or relative.

- If you already have an e-mail address and access to the UNISON website, the quickest way to update your details is to go to the UNISON website and click 'My UNISON' – you will need your UNISON membership number.
- If you don't have an e-mail address or don't have access to the UNISON webpage, you can contact UNISON direct on 0800 0857 857 and provide them with the details of your preferred e-mail address to update your UNISON Membership records – you will need your UNISON membership number.
- Or, you can contact your local UNISON branch and provide them with the details of your preferred e-mail address to update your UNISON membership records – you will need your UNISON membership number.

OCS Regional Admin Key Contacts

If you have a 'My UNISON' registration issue call: **UNISON direct on 0800 0857 857**.
For any OCS issues, please contact your relevant regional contact. Listed below are the Conference contacts for each region, who can also assist with online conference registration:

Region	Contact	Tel	E-mail
Eastern	Yvonne Gilbey	01245 608901	y.gilbey@unison.co.uk
	Viv Wortley	01245 608915	v.wortley@unison.co.uk
East Midlands	Colleen Forrest	0115 847 5468	eastmidlandsadminteam@unison.co.uk
	Wendie Taylor	0115 847 5415	
	Jennifer Rimmer	0754 566 0750	
	Donna Franklin	0115 8475 5414	
	Admin team	0115 847 5435	
Greater London	Shelley Davey	0207 535 6648	glrconference@unison.co.uk
	Lorraine Tant		
	Cally Thompson		
Northern	Allison Jackson	0191 245 0805	a.jackson2@unison.co.uk
	Catherine Davison	0191 245 0830	c.davison@unison.co.uk
Northern Ireland	Elizabeth Robinson	02890 270190	e.robinson@unison.co.uk
North West	Kim Scott	0161 661 6777	k.scott@unison.co.uk
	Gillian Gorman	0161 661 6743	g.gorman@unison.co.uk
Scotland	Rosaleen Rodgers	0141 342 2816	r.rodgers@unison.co.uk
	Jean Fraser	0141 342 2880	j.fraser@unison.co.uk
South East	Elizabeth Britton	0796 147 5608	seconferences@unison.co.uk
	Bethany Martyn-Jones	0781 372 1902	
	Claire Harvey	0754 566 0341	
South West	Jenn Gollings	01823 285336	sw.events@unison.co.uk
	TJ Milburn	01392 442676	
	Carol Thyer	01823 285301	
Cymru/Wales	Beverley Powell	02920 729475	b.powell@unison.co.uk
West Midlands	Claire Kenny	0121 685 3174	c.kenny@unison.co.uk
	Kate Walker	0121 685 3164	k.walker@unison.co.uk
Yorkshire & Humberside	Laraine Senior	0113 2182333	l.senior@unison.co.uk
	Joanne Turnbull	0113 2182322	j.turnbull@unison.co.uk

Disenfranchised Branches

Branches are reminded that under Rule D.1.3.3.1 you will be disenfranchised from sending delegates to attend National Delegate Conference and Service Group Conferences for the remainder of the financial year following the year to which the financial return applies, if you did not submit your annual financial returns (Rule G.10.1) on OLBA (Online Branch Accounting system) by no later than **15 March each year**.

National and Regional Representation

The following bodies are eligible to send two delegates as long as they work in the water industry or Environment Agency or transport (at least one of whom should be female) who shall be entitled to speak but not vote:

- Regional Service Groups
- Private Contractors National Forum
- National Self-Organised Groups
- National Young Members' Forum
- National Sector Committees

Branch Representation

Each Water, Environment and Transport branch is entitled to **two delegates** for the first **250** members or part thereof, and **one additional delegate** for each additional **250** members or part thereof.

- i) In calculating the number of delegates a branch is entitled to send to the service group conference, the branch membership shall be based on members employed in the Water, Environment and Transport Service Group including employees of subsidiary/associate companies or organisations that have direct or indirect links with the main company or employing organisation.
- ii) All delegates must be employed in the Water, Environment and Transport Service Group including employees of subsidiary/associate companies or organisations that have direct or indirect links with the main company or employing organisation.
- iii) Where a branch has members covered by another service group, those members shall be discounted for the purpose of determining the size of the delegation and for the size of card votes.

Representation is based on membership details as at **30 September 2023**.

Fair Representation and Proportionality at the WET Conference

This will be applied in accordance with the Scheme of Branch Representation drawn up under Rule D.1.3, by the National Executive Council.

- 1) If the delegation only comprises one full delegate, then this delegate may be of any gender
- 2) The gender make up of the delegation must be based on the proportion of women members in branch, compared to members who are male or non-binary.
If a branch is unable to elect enough women delegates to meet proportionality, then the women's places on the delegation must remain unfilled. This is consistent with the approach to proportionality taken elsewhere in the union.
- 3) Branches with over 250 members must include one low paid woman member in the delegation.

- 4) Branches with over 500 members must include one young member in the delegation (i.e. Age 30 or under at end of conference).
- 5) Branches can send two people, in any gender combination, to share one of the delegate places. However:
 - a. If the entire delegation entitlement comprises of just the two sharers, then at least one must be female.
 - b. if they are sharing the low paid female seat, both sharers must be low paid females;
 - c. if they are sharing the young members' seat, both sharers must be young members.
i.e. sending one sharer to meet either the low paid or young member requirement is not sufficient.

When calculating proportionality, each sharer counts as one delegate.

- 7) Branches must include Black members in their delegation in proportion to the workforce profile of the employers covered by the branch.
- 8) Branches should endeavour to include disabled members and LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender plus) members in the delegation.
- 9) Overall, branches should also consider factors such as the balance between full time and part time workers, manual and non-manual workers, different occupations and skills.

It is appreciated that the size of the typical water environment and transport branch delegation may not be large enough to enable your branch to appoint a delegate in every category of membership envisaged by UNISON's national rules on proportionality and fair representation.

This may be especially the case in respect of low paid seats where many branches have achieved pay scales above the threshold. However the National Executive Council has confirmed that the principles of the national rules on proportionality and fair representation must be observed for all conference delegations. You may therefore want to make early contact with your Region to discuss your proposed delegation with a view to reaching agreement on its composition.

Transgender Members

UNISON applies strict rules on proportionality in branch conference delegations, to ensure proper representation of women. Members who are in the process of transitioning gender may not yet have changed their UNISON membership details. For example, a member may wish to attend Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Conference as a woman, but still be attending work as a man. Members will be registered for Water, Environment and Transport Service Group Conference as the gender in which they will attend the Conference, irrespective of their gender recorded on the RMS.

To ensure that branch delegations including transgender members are not rejected on grounds of proportionality, please contact the Conference Office on 020 7121 5123 with information on any online delegate submissions which include members attending conference in a different gender to that recorded on the RMS. Their confidentiality will be respected at conference.

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

Appeals

Any appeals concerning the composition of branch delegations shall be considered at regional level via a regional appeals panel convened by the regional secretary. Late delegate registrations will not be accepted. There will be no exceptions to this. The appeals mechanism in the regions is for the composition of delegations, not for late submissions. Regions have to apply the deadlines strictly.

Fitness to Attend Conference

Members who are off sick from work may have an illness/condition which means they can't perform some tasks but can perform others. They may have a fitness to work certificate which means they return to work with certain caveats – e.g. places limits on the types of tasks they can perform at work and duration.

So if a member is off sick from work and wants to attend the Water, Environment and Transport Conference they need to ask for a note from their GP indicating they are fit to attend the conference (travel/sitting for long periods). We also advise them to get a note from their employer agreeing to their attendance at conference, as this may be a different activity from those at work which they are not able to do.

Members should send a copy of the Fitness to Attend note to the UNISON Conference Office, in advance of the conference. This information will be treated with confidentiality.

Please help us to help the environment

We're doing our best to reduce the environmental impact of our conferences. This year, we are providing all delegates with the chance to opt out of being sent paper copies of our conference materials as part of the delegates' despatch. All these documents will be available online via the conference app, and on the UNISON website. You can then download them onto your laptop or tablet to view online while you are at conference. If you wish to opt out please indicate this on the 'Extras' screen options on the Online Conference System (OCS). This can only be done by the registered delegate themselves. If you do not opt out, you will be sent all documentation in hard copy form.

Reasonable Adjustments

UNISON aims to provide a fully accessible event to disabled members in accordance with our duties under the Equality Act. Requests for reasonable adjustments must be submitted by **4pm Thursday, 04 April 2024.**

For any reasonable adjustments required, please complete the request online by the stated deadline. This can only be done by the registered delegate themselves. Authorisation for personal assistance/facilitation is required from your Branch Secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

PLEASE NOTE that BSL Interpreters will only be available if requested in advance.

While we work within the context of the social model of disability this does not mean that UNISON can automatically provide all resources that are requested as adjustments. We have to consider the finite resources available both in terms of space and finances in order that we can balance our commitment to the social model with the resources available, and channel them to where they are needed most.

The process for managing requests that we adopted at 2016 National Delegate Conference has shown that with better information from members we can better address individual needs, allocate resources fairly, retain the ability to respond flexibly at conference and reduce the impact on other members.

Members requesting seating, tables, footrests, which impact on the space available on the floor of conference, will be asked what barriers they face that require this adjustment for their participation.

While not requesting detailed personal information, UNISON will require sufficient information in order to understand the barriers faced to get the right resources to the right people for this Conference. This will assist us in making adjustments that are meaningful and appropriate to the individual.

The union will determine the allocation of limited resources. If necessary, this may include reserving the right to seek additional information.

We will apply a necessary cut off point for requests, as close as possible to the conference while not impacting on the requirements to produce regional seating plans in good time for advance circulation. The deadline is **4pm Thursday, 04 April 2024**. We will retain a limited ability to respond to unexpected circumstances that affect a delegate at short notice prior to the conference.

Reasonable adjustment requests for travel should be made by **12pm Thursday, 06 June 2024**.

Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP)

If a delegate or visitor from your branch requires a PEEP for the conference, please ask them to indicate this with their online request.

Crèche and Babysitting

Please note that crèche provision is available **for delegates only** for children up to and including the age of 16 years. Arrangements have been made for Nipperbout, the company contracted to provide crèche facilities at all UNISON national conferences, to provide babysitting. Should you require this service please complete the online request by **12pm, Thursday, 04 April 2024**. This can only be done by the registered delegate themselves. Delegates are reminded that the cost for babysitting is borne by the branch so authorisation is required from your branch secretary that this expenditure will be approved.

Change of Delegate

Branches may change delegates up to the start of Conference. A member registering as a substitute branch delegate must have been eligible to represent the branch at the closing date for registration of delegates **12pm Thursday, 21 March 2024**. Any changes must be in accordance with the Scheme of Branch Representation.

After **11.59pm on Wednesday, 12 June 2024** no more delegate changes can be made on OCS. If a branch needs to make an emergency change to its delegation after this date then an Emergency Change of Delegate form will need to be completed.

This form will be available on the UNISON website from **Thursday, 13 June 2024** and will also be available from the conference desk.

Branches are reminded that changes to a delegation can only be made up to the start of a conference. There are no exceptions to this rule.

Travel Arrangements

Please consider the impact on the environment when making your decision on how to travel to Conference. Branches are asked to book all travel arrangements for Conference through Stewart Corporate Travel via email at unison@stewarttravelmanagement.com or call [0800 091 4272](tel:08000914272). **Travel can also be booked online using the Stewart Travel Online Portal at <https://www.gtp-marketplace.com/>**

Please advise Stewart Corporate Travel if your delegates have railcards.

Branches are reminded that:

- Travel costs for **Delegates and Sharer 1's only** will be funded from National Office.
- Travel costs for **Visitors and Sharer 2's** must be paid for by the branch. **This is in line with Rule D.I.6 on shared delegates.** *Please note that a booking fee is applicable – further details from Stewart Corporate Travel.*

Conference Travel should be booked by the cheapest possible means.

Driving is discouraged for conference unless delegates are travelling together or as a reasonable adjustment. Total reclaimable will be the cost of standard tickets or cost of car travel – whichever is the lesser.

The 250 mile / upgraded or 1st Class travel rule is not applicable for conference travel

All travel requests (including upgraded or 1st Class Travel) as a reasonable adjustment must be reviewed and authorised by the Head of Conferences.

Branches are responsible for funding their delegates' and visitors' attendance at conference. Subsistence should cover the cost of accommodation, meals, childcare, dependent care, and facilitation. We strongly recommend that branches pay the agreed national rates.

Reasonable adjustment requests for travel should be made by **12pm Thursday, 06 June 2024**

Accommodation

Booking accommodation – please book any accommodation required with a reputable provider with a generous cancellation policy. Please ensure that members have written confirmation of any booked and paid for accommodation

Branches are encouraged to arrange accommodation through Visit Brighton accommodation Booking Service. Using the Booking Service supports the work of our members in local government and ensures our continuing ability, as a not-for-profit organisation, to secure preferential rates for our conference venues. More details here:

Link: <https://book.passkey.com/go/UJune2024>

Email: delegates@visitbrighton.com

Phone: 01273 292626

Advice on Submission of Motions

Please refer to the advice from the Standing Orders Committee about the submission of motions, which can be downloaded here:

[WET and Energy SOC Guide to Branches](#) - for a different format email wet@unison.co.uk

The Preliminary Agenda will be published on **Monday, 18 March 2024**. The Final Agenda will be published online on **Monday, 13 May 2024**.

Prepaid Cards

Union Income Ltd have agreed to provide a corporate version of its prepaid card still with the UNISON branding. If your branch requires a prepaid card then this is the card that is the preferred option above others generally available. An application will normally take about 14 working days to turnaround and you can request an information pack and application form by contacting:

UNISON Prepaid Plus Customer Services, 39-51 Highgate Road. London NW5 1RT or e-mail customerservices@unisonprepaid.com.

Credit Cards

If your branch does not require a prepaid card the other option is a credit card from Unity Trust Bank called Unity Corporate MultiPay Card. It is more flexible and is linked to a branch current account. Details of the Corporate MultiPay card and information on how to apply are available from their website unity.co.uk/multipay. To help branches switch to this Unity Trust credit card, the bank has agreed to waive the one off administration fee of £50 for all current ALTO card customers who apply for a MultiPay card.

Data Protection

The information you provide via the OCS, in addition to your information held on UNISON's membership database, will be used for the organisation and administration of Conference. It may also be used for statistical purposes as this helps us plan future conferences. We will process your personal data in compliance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the EU General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR). You can find out more about how UNISON processes your personal data by going to unison.org.uk/privacy-policy or emailing dataprotection@unison.co.uk.