

Newsletter for the Community and Voluntary Organisations Branch

UNISON Community Conference March 2019



Jamie Murray a Steward in Westminster Society relays his experience as a first time delegate;

On Friday the New Delegate Workshop, left me better-oriented but no less shattered than before. I saw Rebecca Long-Bailey, and was glad I had. With an exhaustive command of detail and an endearing passion for the finer points of Labour's industrial strategy, I could see why she is hotly tipped for greater things by luminaries such as John McDonnell. It was fantastic to see the solidarity for our strikers at the Alternative Futures Group, who have had their sleep-in payments slashed by a whopping £15.

On Saturday morning I faced a tough choice between workshops. UNISON Social Care Strategy certainly seemed relevant to my role, but so did The Violence at Work Charter Campaign. I chose violence at work. The workshop was adeptly chaired by Gavin Edwards, and we shared our experiences; I will certainly be taking the charter back to HR. Conference proper went relatively smoothly. All motions were passed barring a single LGBT+ motion that was controversially ruled out of order by Standing Order Committee despite our resolute support. Emilyn's speech in support of the "Bargaining for good Mental Health policies in Community workplaces" motion was a roaring success, in that people literally roared like a pride of lions.

I advise any other conference virgins considering attending to jump in; the water's lovely!*

*[This is an edited version due to space, you can read the full report here.](#)

GET INVOLVED. GET ACTIVE

UNISON is organising in the community and voluntary sector to improve terms, conditions and pay for our members.

Elected workplace representatives (also known as Stewards) are at the heart of this;

If you are interested in becoming a Steward then Branch and Region staff are able to provide you support and development and we can be contacted via email; info@unisoncvob.org.uk

[To find out more about how you can get involved click here.](#)

Violence at Work – UNISON seeks guarantees from employers

UNISON is approaching the country's largest voluntary and community organisations and requesting them to sign up to the UNISON Violence at Work Charter. Employers signing the charter are committing to provide safeguards and structures designed to protect their staff from suffering violence at work, and for providing sufficient support for staff suffering from such incidents.

The Branch is seeking to work locally in London on this issue. So if you are interested in organising around the issue of violence at work and/or are interested in UNISON approaching your employer about signing up to the charter then please contact the branch via info@unisoncvob.org.uk

UNISON - One wage for all ages Campaign Launched

Tessa Ngwiringwiri remembers her first job after leaving college. "It was a one-to-one job," she says. "So you go into a person's house and then you do support with them. Making a cup of tea or whatever they need at the time.

"And I was getting paid ... I'd say I was getting paid £4.50 for an hour to £5, but someone alongside me who was 26 would be getting £7 or £8 an hour.

"And you think: 'I'm doing the same work'. So the only difference there is that in essence, you're younger. Which for me doesn't make sense. At the time, it didn't and up till now it doesn't make sense. That glaring difference in minimum wage rates was why Tessa joined her colleagues to help launch [UNISONS #OneWageAnyAge](#) campaign to abolish the discriminatory age bands as well as celebrate the 20th birthday of the minimum wage.

UNISON CVO Branch

UNISON Women's Conference Feb 2019



This year there were two delegates from CVOB attending the National Women's Conference. **Becky Ridgwell**, a Steward in Refugee Council, gives a summary of the highlights for her as a first time delegate.

Below is a reduced version. [We highly recommend you read the full version here.](#)

It was my first time to attend a Unison Conference. I felt very well-looked after as a newbie and felt much gratitude at being given this opportunity to get more involved with the work of our union which I passionately support from a grass-roots level of being a work place rep.

It was a packed agenda with around 40 motions to be discussed and voted on which seemed a lot to get through.

But the debates were very rich and well outlined so every motion was brought to life with passion from fellow delegates. Motions on period poverty, WASPI women, transphobia, universal childcare, black women in senior positions in the workplace and domestic violence were all discussed and passed. All motions that were passed will go on to the National Delegates Conference.

The conference was a time to meet other delegates and celebrate our achievements as a union as well as pass motions for the future. The union has 1 million women members and this is still growing. 18,000 new members joined during the Growvember event last year – which equalled the biggest recruitment within in Unison during any month for 25 years. As a workplace rep who held a Growvember event I felt proud to be part of this.

To sum up: attending Unison's National Women's Conference this year in Bournemouth was truly inspiring and a great way to be initiated into the inner workings and democracy of our union. It's not often that we as activists get to spend quality time with like-minded activists who do the same supportive but often stressful work for our members, let alone spend time in a hall with several hundred amazing, inspiring left-wing women.

Sleep-in rate update

The Supreme Court has decided to grant permission for an appeal in the UNISON/Mencap/ sleep-in shifts case.

[The press release can be found here.](#)

Update Your Details!

UNISON is organising in the community and voluntary sector to improve terms, conditions and pay for our members.

In order to represent our members as effectively as possible we need your up to date contact details e.g. Email address, home address, mobile number and most important your Employer!

Many members fail to update their details when for example they move house or change employer. This means missing out on important communication relevant to you. [The Easiest way is to update them here.](#)

Farewell to a long time activist in the Community and Voluntary Organisations Branch.

RIP Jean-Anne Thompson!

It is with much sadness that we inform you of the passing of Jean- Anne Thompson, a longstanding member and activist in our branch. She was a member of UNISON since 1988 and was involved in our branch for a very long time, firstly as a Branch Secretary from June 2001 until September 2002, then as a Branch Treasurer from February 2004 to July 2015.

She was also involved in regional committees, namely, Regional Black Members Committee and the Community Service Group Committee (CSG). Jean-Anne was one of the key founding members of the region's CSG Committee.

Jean Anne often represented our branch at UNISON conferences, she was very articulate, very supportive and encouraging to new delegates.

Jean-Anne dedicated her time to supporting our branch for many years for which we are truly grateful. She will be sadly missed .

[Some kind words from those who knew Jean-Anne can be found here.](#)