



Health and safety issues have been paramount as we moved through the tricky Covid times.

Achieved the same Covid testing arrangements for child care staff as adult care staff and resident care officers to receive same testing rights as homecare staff.

Worked to produce individual RAs for support staff in schools, also worked to develop appropriate and effective Covid protocols

Developed an ongoing volunteer scheme with Celtic Leisure Staff

Track and Trace - Consulted staff on terms and conditions, involved with recruitment of staff and within the management of change.

Continued the extensive programme of training courses.

Developed new 'on line' training.

Specific training developed for School Support Staff

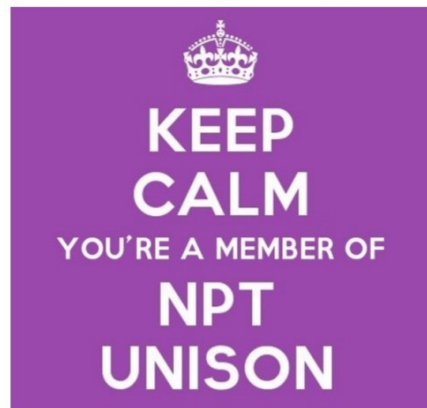
Training emphasised mindfulness and member well-being. Trauma signposting offered.

Helped protecting 100's of staff by facilitating the furlough pay scheme.

Involved with the selection of the new Chief Executive.

Here are some things that your branch has achieved in recent months

**We remain one of the largest branches in Wales – much of the work completed is used as examples of best practice by other branches.**



Continued to represent individual members on all concerns – sickness, bullying, grievances etc. Many in virtual meetings.

Continued to offer support to members.

Reassuring members continuously with meetings both on line and in person (in outdoor spaces) where online meetings were not possible.

Supported members through domestic violence and mental breakdown

Monthly quizzes through lockdown. Christmas Quizzes and Colouring Competitions.

Continuing to hold a series of 'virtual' branch meeting including new 'Update' meetings open to all members.

Arranged pay consultation online.

Arranged SAFE AGMs - with dates and information circulated to members.

Attended all level meetings in each directorate, worked with Authority on providing guidance for ALL staff to join 'Teams' meetings – facilitated providing equipment.

Lobbied Members of the Senedd – meetings with Julie James LG minister re exit cap payments and pension strain arrangements.

Raised awareness of White Ribbon Day, 25 November. There has been an increase in domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women during the pandemic. The day aims to raise awareness of the issues involved.

Encouraged members to volunteer with many members taking up the opportunity. Branch Officers volunteered throughout the period.

**We hope you, your families and loved ones are safe and well. Please get in touch if you need ANY help or assistance...we are here for you.**

### ***A message from the Branch Chairman, Mark Fisher***

Dear Colleagues, Comrades and Friends

On behalf of the branch can I personally thank you for your contribution in dealing with the COVID19 restrictions, YOU HAVE BEEN AMAZING. Your contributions, whether on the frontline or behind the scenes, have shown how versatile you can be.

Our Branch Committee—thank you for your valued and continued hard work.

We, as you are aware, have supported you throughout this unprecedented pandemic, we will continue to be your strength through these difficult times. We listened to your issues and ensured that your voices have been heard by the Authority.

Again massive thanks to all staff working through these difficult circumstances.

Stay safe, HAVE A WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS

Thanks Mark Fisher

**Here's a reminder from our colleague and Covid survivor Mark Fisher about why we should all do everything we can to protect ourselves and those we care about from the virus...**

[Watch on u tube](#)



This year all our 'AGM' meetings are going to be held on 'TEAMS'.

Tickets can be booked on Eventbrite—

Just Search for

'NPT Unison AGM'

9th—11th Feb 2020

Looking forward to

'seeing' you!



**For all the Officers and Stewards who have worked tirelessly during this really difficult time—most of the work being completed in their own time. Especially to one of our Branch Officers,**

### **Hazel Dance**

Hazel Dance is our Assistant Treasurer and Welfare Officer, and assists members in times of great needs in many areas. She held the post of Autism Spectrum Disorder and Neuro Diversity Disorder Lead for Neath Port Talbot when the pandemic hit us in Wales. Hazel had previously been responsible for all discharge management of residents in hospitals, and was asked on a Friday to report for duty at Neath Port Talbot Hospital on the coming Monday, which she did without hesitation or concern for her own health and wellbeing. Hazel remains in post to this day and has continued to fulfil her duties of Welfare Officer in her spare time. We would like to say a huge THANK YOU to Hazel for everything she is doing for the community and the branch!



## **Winter Self Care – Make it a gift from you to you!**

### **IT'S TIME TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF**



Let's be honest, most of us are completely tired and fed up of the present situation. We have all done our best to battle on—not seeing our family, friends and loved ones like we used to and managing through the new changing work situations we all find ourselves in. Christmas is coming soon and boy do we need a break—but take care—Christmas sometimes brings additional strains and stresses.

Here are a top ten of mindfulness pointers that may help!

1. Good music is a great way to improve your mood. Whether you've got the radio on or are streaming your favourite album, forget the neighbours and sing along.

2. We might be spending a lot of time indoors, but that doesn't stop us from refreshing our surroundings. At this time of year, there's plenty of scope for decorating our favourite spaces. Put them in the room you spend most of your time in!

3. During lockdowns, many of us have been separated from friends and family. We can still reach out and reconnect and there is never a better time to do so than now. Have a look through the photos on your phone—send a few to those you are missing most.

4. Many of us spend long periods in front of screens both in and outside of work. Mixing up your usual screen routine can be a welcome change of pace, as well as a nice break for your eyes! Why not play a board game or do a puzzle....

5. Learn something new. Learning new things can have many positive effects and open new doors. Search U tube—it's amazing what FREE tutorials are out there to see! From DIY to making decorations to making bread— have a go!



6. Being outside in green spaces is a proven boost to mental wellbeing, so make time for the outdoors. Go for a walk on the beach, in the woods or a park. Why not take a picture of something you have not noticed before and send it over to someone you have not been able to meet up with?

7. With so many nice things to eat over the Christmas period, it can be easy to over-indulge and stop paying attention to what we're putting in our mouths. By eating mindfully, we can really slow down and appreciate what we're eating. After all, there's no need to rush at this time of year. When you eat without thinking, you miss out on so many wonderful flavours, textures, and aromas. A single bar of chocolate, for example, has over 300 different flavours. How many of them do you normally taste?

8. Be kind to your body. Have a nice hot bath; have a nap for 30 minutes (or perhaps a little less); treat yourself to your favourite food without feeling guilty; have your favourite hot drink.

9. Come to a 'positive appreciation' for the small things in your life, you can try the gratitude exercise. It simply means that once a day you should bring to mind 10 things that you are grateful for, counting them on your fingers. It is important to get to 10 things, even when it becomes increasingly harder after three or four! This intentionally brings into awareness the tiny, previously unnoticed elements of the day.

10. Whatever this Christmas means to you, there is always something to be grateful for. William James, the Father of American Psychology once wrote: '*The greatest weapon against stress is our ability to choose one thought over another*'. So this Christmas, if you can, choose the grateful thought over the anxious thought. Notice that whatever your situation you can meet it with kindness: compassion to yourself and kindness to others. And remember, it is a strength to reach out in connection both to offer and to ask, for help.

**A Winter Self Care– Make it a gift from you to you! IT'S TIME TO TAKE CARE OF YOU. So, take some time to look after yourself.** There are some more tips here [Coping with Covid sessions](#).

# UNISON NPT BRANCH CHRISTMAS COLOURING COMPETITION



**Crayons at the ready!**

**This year we are holding a Christmas colouring competition for the children, step, fostered and adopted, and grandchildren of NPT UNISON members.**

**There are four age categories – up to age 5, age 6-9, age 10-13, age 14-18 - and three prizes to be won per age group – First Prize £50, Second Prize £30, Third Prize £20**

**The winning entries will be used for this year's branch Christmas card!**

**Entries must be submitted to [unison@npt.gov.uk](mailto:unison@npt.gov.uk) – just email in a photo of your colouring along with the application form by 5pm on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020.**

**Winners will be announced on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December on Facebook and email.**

**Good luck and have fun!**



Check out all the details on the Branch Website by [clicking here](#)

## Christmas and New Year Holiday Arrangements 2020

**Pay Day** Tues 22nd December 2020

Monday	21st December 2020	Normal working day
Tuesday	22nd December 2020	Normal working day
Wednesday	23rd December 2020	Normal working day
Thursday	24th December 2020	AM– Offices closed – all employees required to use half day leave (*) PM - Offices close at 1 pm—special leave granted
Friday	25th December 2020	Christmas Day Bank Holiday
Monday	28th December 2020	Boxing Day Bank Holiday
Tuesday	29th December 2020	Additional Annual Leave day (*)
Wednesday	30th December 2020	Extra Statutory Day
Thursday	31st December 2020	Offices closed – all employees required to use one day of annual leave (*)
Friday	1st January 2021	New Years' Day Bank Holiday



# Merry Christmas

## From all the Branch Officers, Stewards and Work Place Contacts

NEATH PORT TALBOT UNISON BRANCH  
OFFICERS 2020-21



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there  
for you

**COVID-19  
response fund**  
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