



NEW YEAR MESSAGE FROM YOUR CHAIR

Firstly, I'd like to wish you and all of your families a happy and prosperous New Year. What a past year we've had! We have faced potential redundancies, possible outsourcing of services, continued lack of funding from the Welsh Government, management of change meetings to name but a few. Through all this I am really pleased to say there have been no compulsory redundancies, no outsourcing, and we have attended and supported all our members through the management of change process.

I would like to place on the record my thanks to YOU for your support in our recent campaign for Fair Funding for Local Government. As you are aware, UNISON alone has been standing up and fighting for a better financial settlement for Neath Port Talbot. I am pleased to say we have achieved a better settlement, which will hopefully avoid outsourcing, job losses and redundancies. We could not have achieved this extra funding without your support. I thank you.

However, we face difficulties year in year out with pressures on services. We will continue to lobby and fight for you, our members, who will be at the heart of our decisions and campaigns for 2019. If you would like to become a part of UNISON's fantastic team, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Your UNISON Branch works in partnership with the local authority to try and avoid outsourcing, job losses, redundancies, loss of services and cuts to our terms and conditions. We face uncertain times and we will be calling on you again in 2019 to support our campaigns to keep services in house and to protect our terms and conditions into the future. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please let me know. Your input is VITAL.

Again I thank you for your support and look forward to seeing you all over the coming year.

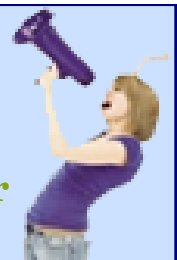


We will be sending the newsletter out via email to members that we have an email address for. You will have the option to request a hard copy if you would like one. All other members will still receive a paper copy in the post. However, it would help to have email contact details for all our members, it saves on postage and trees! Please update your details using the form inside!

In solidarity,
Your Branch Chair Mark Fisher

AGM

**Dates and details for your
branch AGMs page three**



UNISON Backs Kier Starmer to be next Leader of the Labour Party



UNISON – the UK’s largest union – has decided to back Kier Starmer to become the next Leader of the Labour Party. The decision was taken by the union’s Labour Link Committee, which is made up of working people from across the country and from all walks of life. All are members of the Labour Party.

Commenting on the decision, UNISON general secretary Dave Prentis said: “This is a pivotal time for Labour. We believe - if elected by the membership - Kier Starmer would be a leader to bring the party together and win back the trust of the thousands of voters who deserted Labour last month. “Unions created the Labour Party to give working people a voice in Westminster. But it can only achieve for them, their families, their communities and the country’s public services when in government. “Keir has a clear vision to get Labour back to the winning ways of the past. He is best placed to take on Boris Johnson, hold his government to account and ensure Labour can return to power and once more change working people’s lives for the better.”

Vice Chair of UNISON’s Labour Link Committee Linda Hobson said: “Under Kier Starmer’s leadership Labour could move forward and learn the lessons from – and understand the reasons for - the party’s

terrible defeat last month. “With Keir, Labour could also move the country on from Brexit and start to heal the painful divisions created by the referendum.”

UNISON backs Angela Rayner for Deputy Leader of the Labour Party. UNISON General Secretary Dave Prentis said: “Angie has a long association with UNISON as a member and a union rep and has an intimate understanding of the day-to-day struggles facing working people and their families across the UK.

“Angie’s popularity across the party means she is the right person to handle the challenges of this job. Angie will make a great deputy leader if elected.”

Linda Hobson said: “Angela Rayner has been a care worker and a dynamic campaigner for UNISON, representing the needs of workers, before entering Parliament.

“Unlike so many out-of-touch career politicians, Angie has had a real job, a real life and has faced the sort of difficulties experienced by millions of people in communities across the country. She’s not someone who has spent their career in the Westminster bubble.

“If elected, Angie will be a powerful passionate voice at the top of the party to win back voters and create a brighter future.”



Help offered to foreign nationals working in Welsh public services

European nationals working in Wales as carers, healthcare assistants and school support staff amongst others are to be offered assistance by Wales' biggest trade union - UNISON in processing their applications to remain in the UK after Brexit.

UNISON Cymru Wales has linked-up with charity Settled, to pilot training on how trade union representatives might best support and guide EU citizens who may be struggling with their application to the UK Government's Settlement Scheme.

Training courses – the first of their kind anywhere in the UK – are being held in UNISON offices in Abergele and Cardiff and it is hoped similar events will be rolled-out across Wales.

The trade union has repeatedly underlined the contribution of foreign nationals working in Welsh public services and says they face an increasingly hostile environment during the Brexit transition.

The idea is for UNISON representatives in workplaces across Wales to become 'Settled Status Angels' who could assist people and signpost complex cases to organisations with the relevant experience.

German-born Manuela Hughes has lived in the UK since 1992. She is employed as a special unit leader in an autism centre in a Pembrokeshire secondary school and has just secured Settled Status. Manuela said "The whole process of applying to remain in the UK is confusing, frustrating and traumatic, and could put people off pursuing what is their right. That's why it's so good an organisation

the size of UNISON has made a commitment to offer support to Welsh public service workers caught up in this."

"Home Office decisions on right to remain seem arbitrary and there are horrible cases of families being split-up when children and dependant relatives have been denied Settled Status.

"My Settled Status has just been confirmed but there's no certificate or paperwork that's legally binding. I worry if a future government chooses to move the goalposts, the UK will be looking at another Windrush scandal where people who have worked and built lives here are pressurised to leave."

Tanya Palmer, UNISON Cymru/Wales Secretary, said, "You only need to visit your doctor's surgery, a local hospital, or school to see EU nationals are working hard in public service and caring for our communities. They have enriched our culture and now it is time to help them.

"We are leaving the EU and it is important these public servants are treated with dignity and assisted if they wish to remain in Wales. UNISON wants to provide assistance where we can and we will continue to raise awareness of their plight with employers and Welsh Government."



AGM

AGM dates for you diary

FREE lunch vouchers for attendees!



- | | |
|---|--|
| Monday 3rd February | <i>NPTCBC The Quays ~ 12.30pm Rooms 3&4
NPTCBC Neath Civic Centre ~ 4.30pm Rooms A&B</i> |
| Tuesday 4th February | <i>NPTCBC Port Talbot Civic Centre ~ 12.30pm Chambers</i> |
| Wednesday 5th Feb. | <i>NPTCBC SRC ~ 6am Room 2
NPTCBC Neath Civic Centre ~ 12.30pm Rooms A&B</i> |
| Thursday 6th February | <i>Celtic Leisure - Neath Town Hall ~ 12.30pm Main Hall</i> |
| Friday 7th February | <i>NPTC Group Neath Campus ~ 12noon
NPTC Group Newtown Campus ~ 12noon Boardroom</i> |



Stars in our Schools is organised by UNISON as a celebration of all school support staff across the UK. It takes a whole team to make a school a safe and happy place for children to learn.

School support staff help children learn, keep children safe and healthy and make sure schools run smoothly.



We had a busy time preparing and delivering goody bags to the Stars in our Schools support staff.

Our schools wouldn't be the same without them, and we appreciate everything they do!

WELL DONE ALL.



We spend a lot of our lives at work. When we are healthy, happy and safe our lives are better overall. However problems at work can have serious consequences for our mental and physical health. At worst people are seriously injured and killed in avoidable workplace accidents. Thankfully incidents like these are rare.

But work related health problems can affect anyone and some are very common such as headaches, back problems and stress.

There are steps you can take to keep well at work but your employer also has certain legal obligations such as the need for staff to engage with their employer and colleagues about health, safety and the welfare of each other.

Very often the best way to avoid and resolve problems is to work with UNISON and your employer on how to make the workplace safer and healthier for everyone. By working in partnership we can improve upon working conditions and ensure our place of work remains a safe place to work in. If you are having specific concerns or problems please contact the UNISON Office for help.

Leigh Batchelor, NPT UNISON Health and Safety Rep



*19th November 2019: Handing over our Fair Funding for Neath Port Talbot petition at the Senedd with David Rees AM and Jeremy Miles AM
#fairfunding #SaveOurServices #CouncilsCan*



"I feel that I have to share how grateful I am and how supported I felt by my UNISON representative Jane Gebbie.

I have suffered severely with depression and severe anxiety and had to have several months on sick leave. During my sickness absence, Jane

was always supportive and I felt that I could pick up the phone at any time to discuss anything.

I have now returned to work, but without the support from UNISON and the kindness I received I don't think that this would have been the case, and I can't thank them enough for the care and support I had from Jane and the team."

UNISON Member



We all LOVE the new steward's purple fleeces and black polo shirts ... easy to spot in your workplace. Many thanks to our models Hannah and Richard and the Quays Team.

UNISON OFFER: Some Proper Grown-Up Time Away

Sneak away to a gorgeous country manor or historic castle. Blow the cobwebs away at a coastal village or hotel with stunning sea views. Feast your way through exciting new menus. Get carried away by live music and a dramatic performance on stage. Do it your own way relaxing in the spa or over afternoon tea in an elegant lounge. There's never any need to go far away to enjoy a long weekend or midweek break at any of the 14 amazing hotels.

Holidays in 2020 are now ON SALE and UNISON members can enjoy an extra £10pp off per break with FREE Warner Holiday Protection and only £10pp deposit is needed when you book any 2020 stay.

And every Warner break includes:

- * Fantastic accommodation
- * Breakfasts and three-course evening meals
- * Exciting activities
- * Use of leisure facilities
- * Live music and shows every night
- * Just for grown-ups

Call 0333 202 0304 or visit warnerhotels.co.uk/unison



Annual Sporting Awards

Every year outstanding sports men & women are recognised in the Neath Port Talbot Annual Sporting Awards. 300 people attended a packed Princess Royal Theatre in Port Talbot and witnessed an array of talent within the County Borough.

The event was organised by NPT Council's Physical Activity & Sport Service (PASS). The past finalists and winners highlight the array of talent we have within our County Borough.



PASS Development Officer and UNISON Steward Derek Jones said "This year was the 13th year of the awards and once again there was a packed audience with a very strong list of athletes in all categories." **NPT UNISON kindly provided a donation for the young volunteer award which was won by Rachel Burton. The award was presented by Litza Rees and Hannah Jones from UNISON.**

The nominees are shortlisted and filmed and videos are shown during the presentation evening. There will be one outright winner and two runners up. All finalists receive a trophy and recognised on the night.

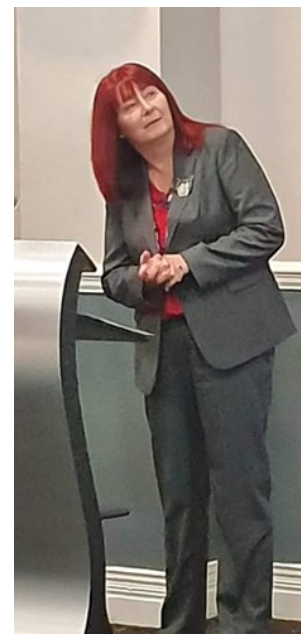
The Categories are as follows: Young Volunteer of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, Coach of the Year, Senior Club Team of the Year, Junior Club Team of the Year— District Sports Council, School Team of the Year, Disabled Sportsperson of the Year, Junior Sportsperson of the Year, Ambassador Award, Service to Sport Award, and Lifetime Achievement Award.



UNISON is delighted to have negotiated a new Stand-By payment for all those affected of £1.52 per hour! Well done TEAM NPT UNISON.

NPT UNISON Leading the way at the #UNISON Cymru Wales' first Funding Councils in Wales seminar opened by Dave Rees. Great turnout & exciting programme for the day.

#fairfunding #workingtogether #Wales



NPT CHRISTMAS EVENTS MEMBER REVIEWS

CINEMA CHILDREN'S PARTY, 7TH DECEMBER 2019

"Thanks very much for all your hard work organising the Children's Cinema event on Saturday 7th December, we all had a lovely time, everyone was really friendly and the children had a lovely surprise with the tubes of sweets. Looking forward to the next one."

GLOUCESTER QUAYS VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS MARKET, 23RD NOVEMBER 2019

"On Saturday 23rd November 2019 I went on the Branch Special Victorian Christmas Market trip to Gloucester Quays with my Mum. The trip was fantastic value for money and there were two pick-up points available - one in Neath and one in Port Talbot. We got on the coach in Port Talbot at 8.30am at the Age Concern with plenty of parking being available to park your car for the day. The coach was very comfortable with a toilet on board.

"We were in Gloucester at around 10.20am and were dropped off very close to the market entrance. It was extremely busy and the members of staff at the drop off location were extremely helpful in directing you to the various sites to be seen in Gloucester. The stalls in the market were very festive with plenty of choice for all. The smells coming from the various types of festive food cooking were amazing with lots of free samples of food and drink (especially flavoured gin) being given out.

"After the market we headed into the town and did plenty of Christmas shopping in the High Street shops. After we had 'shopped out' and stopped off for tea in the local Weatherspoon's we headed back to the coach which was leaving at 6.30pm.

It was a fabulous Christmas shopping trip and I would definitely recommend a visit to Gloucester. I am hoping that UNISON will organise another trip and to go back again next year."



**Congratulations! NPT UNISON is officially an ASD aware organisation.
Thank you to everyone who completed the training.**



'I don't want bailiffs to come to the door' ***How debt affects us and how UNISON can help***

UNISON's Debtline service is available to all our members to help you manage money and deal with debt: we offer free confidential advice to help you clear your debts.

If you're struggling with debt or money worries, call UNISON Debtline free of charge on 0800 389 3302.

For over 20 years, UNISON has been working in partnership with PayPlan to support members struggling with debt, and to de-stigmatise debt as a whole.

Helping members 'live again' and get away from fear, pressure and letters, PayPlan is a lifeline.

Jason West, a PayPlan advisor, says: "There's always something we can do to help. No matter what the circumstances are. There will always be options for help."

So how do you access UNISON Debtline as a member?

Simply call UNISON Debtline on freephone 0800 389 3302. You'll have an initial chat with one of the trained advisors to get a true reflection of your circumstances.

Gemma Clark, a special advisor, explains: "Some people come to us and they haven't missed a payment yet, but they're struggling to cope and are reliant on an overdraft.

"For others, they haven't paid debts for months or years. Sometimes they're panicking because of changing circumstances, like losing a job, separating from a partner or being put on Universal Credit.

"We deal with a really large spectrum of emotion, and we make a note of any vulnerability, like whether they're suicidal or coping with domestic abuse.

"Some people are happy to go through the whole conversation and others are at their absolute lowest and are saying, 'I don't want bailiffs to come to the door'. But we can always offer help. There is always something to be done."

The service is free and confidential.

there
for you

supporting UNISON members
when life gets tough

Get help staying warm this winter



Are you on a low income? Help is on hand

There for You has set up a limited fund to help UNISON members. If your net income is £18,000 or less you may be eligible to receive a grant of £40.

To apply and download the application form visit unison.org.uk/thereforyou or simply contact UNISON Direct 0800 0857 857 between 6am-midnight Mon-Fri and 9am-4pm Sat.

Closing date for receipt of applications is **Friday 14 February 2020.**

NOTE: The £18,000 net income applies only to the There for You small grants programme. Any member who is struggling financially due to an unexpected crisis should either contact their branch welfare officer, call us on

020 7121 5620 or visit www.unison.co.uk/thereforyou for more information.


UNISON
the public service union

There for You is the working name of UNISON Welfare, a registered charity supported by UNISON the trade union. Registered charity no. 1023552/SC038305

A LITTLE
consideration,
A LITTLE
thought FOR OTHERS,
MAKES ALL THE
difference



Promise me you'll always remember:
You're braver than you believe, stronger
than you seem, and smarter
than you think



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Branch Chair / Labour Link Officer

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Office Administrator

Leonie
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UNISON Direct Hotline

0800 0 857 857 (Freephone)
Open 6am-midnight Monday-Friday
9am-4pm Saturdays



Top 10 jobs in the garden for February!

- ★ Prepare vegetable seed beds, and sow some vegetables under cover
- ★ Chit potato tubers
- ★ Protect blossom on apricots, nectarines and peaches
- ★ Net fruit and vegetable crops to keep the birds off
- ★ Prune winter-flowering shrubs that have finished flowering
- ★ Divide bulbs such as snowdrops, and plant those that need planting 'in the green'
- ★ Prune Wisteria
- ★ Prune hardy evergreen hedges and renovate overgrown deciduous hedges
- ★ Prune conservatory climbers such as bougainvillea
- ★ Cut back deciduous grasses left uncut over the winter, remove dead grass from evergreen grasses



Did you know that your membership includes legal services?

One of our members, Gareth, was driving to work one morning and his car was unfortunately hit from behind by another vehicle, resulting in him being taken to hospital and suffering injuries.

Gareth contacted Thompsons Solicitors via UNISON and successfully recovered damages of over £3000.

www.thompsonstradeunion.law/trade-unions/unison



***If your membership details have changed please help us by completing this form.
Every form returned has the chance to win one of 20 travel mugs (what's not to love?)!***

Membership number:

Surname:

Forename(s):

Home address:

Postcode:

Previous surname *(if applicable)*:

Previous address *(if applicable)*:

Postcode:

Personal contact number:

Personal email address:

Job title:

Work address/location:

Postcode:

Employer:

Work contact number:

Work email address:

Please indicate your preferred email address:

Personal email

Work email

Please indicate if you would like UNISON to contact you via:

Email

Text

Phone

***Please email completed forms to unison@npt.gov.uk
or send to UNISON Neath Port Talbot Branch, Room 254, Civic Centre,
Port Talbot, SA13 1PJ***

Please go to unison.org.uk/privacypolicy to see how we will protect and use your private information



