



# Members Guide

Nottinghamshire County Branch

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2004





## INTRODUCTION

This is your Guide to who's who and what's what in Notts County UNISON. As a Branch, we are totally committed to the principle of the "member-led union", so it's important that everyone knows where they fit in and feels at home – it may not seem like it sometimes, but this really is your union!

If the Branch is going to operate efficiently and be truly representative of our membership, everyone needs to play their part, whether it's by volunteering to become a UNISON steward or just by attending members' meetings and voting in elections. After all, if you don't, why should anyone else ... ?

While we represent members and deal with emergencies at work, we are not a firm of solicitors or the AA. I am the only person in the Branch paid to represent members – all the hundreds of other activists are volunteer Stewards or Branch Officers who have been elected to a union post while also doing a job for their employer. Without a steady stream of new volunteers – as others leave or retire – the union could not do any of the things it needs to.

UNISON is a democracy in which every member plays an equal part – and unlike Parliament or the Council, you are the ones who can make or change policy. Whether you enjoy your job or not, it is an important part of your life and you will have an opinion on it. We want to hear it, so come along and Make A Difference!

*MIKE SCOTT*

MIKE SCOTT  
Branch Organiser



# Nottinghamshire UNISON

## WHO'S IN THE BRANCH?

Our Branch is one of the biggest – and strongest! – in UNISON. We have over 10,500 members, of which the large majority work for Notts County Council. The second biggest sector is Further Education, with members at every FE College in Nottinghamshire, followed by the Private and Voluntary Sector and the Probation Service.

## Departmental/Local Organisation

Most questions and problems relate to members' own jobs or workplace, so our organisation is concentrated at Departmental and local level. We aim to recruit a Steward (ie local representative) in each workplace and one per 25 members in larger workplaces. Included with your membership pack and this guide is a separate list with the names and phone numbers of all the Stewards in your Department or Sector.

Each Steward attends a Stewards' Committee, which discusses issues particular to her/his Department or Sector and each Stewards' Committee elects a Convenor and Senior Stewards to make sure that members are represented and negotiations are pursued with management as necessary. If you can't contact your Steward (or don't have one) these are the next people in line.



## Central Branch Organisation

With such a big Branch, there is lots of work to do and we have our own Branch Office. The address is:

**Notts County UNISON**  
**39-41 Loughborough Road**  
**West Bridgford**  
**Nottingham NG2 7LJ**

Phone: 0115-9810405

Fax: 0115-9815697

E-Mail: [branch.office@nottsunison.org.uk](mailto:branch.office@nottsunison.org.uk)

**We also have a branch website at**  
**[www.nottsunison.org.uk](http://www.nottsunison.org.uk)**

Based at the Branch Office are seven Branch Staff and the majority of the "core" Branch Officers – these are also listed below. In addition, we have a Sub-Office in Mansfield, where meetings and interviews may take place by appointment.

Branch Secretary - Chris Tansley/Jill Turner (job share)  
 Branch Chair - Bob Moody  
 Service Conditions Officers - Jackie Johnson/Barbara Miller  
 Asst Secretary - Jane Gannon  
 Vice Chair - Vacant  
 Equalities Officer - Ingrid Browne Wallace

## WHAT DOES UNISON DO?

The union may take up any issue to do with your work or affecting your work – it's as wide as that. We can't guarantee to solve every problem, but you will get expert advice. Below are some examples:

- \* Disciplinary/criminal allegations relating to your work
- \* Sexual/racial harassment or bullying
- \* Grievances over work-related issues
- \* Grading of posts – are you getting the rate for the job?
- \* Health and Safety issues/accidents/stress
- \* Unreasonable demands by managers
- \* Financial and other Welfare problems

As well as representing individual members, UNISON also negotiates your Conditions of Service at local level and pay at national level. The County Council's "Orange Book" and the School "Manual of Personnel Guidance" contain the results of these negotiations, as do the Staff Handbooks in each FE College.

UNISON is the chief (and sometimes the only) trade union on the Council's Central Negotiating Panel and the separate Panels for each Department. In FE Colleges, we negotiate through each College's Joint Consultative Panel, and via face-to-face negotiations over particular issues with smaller employers and Management Committees.

We can obtain expert legal advice as necessary and will provide free legal representation when the situation requires.



# Nottinghamshire UNISON

## EQUALITY AND SELF-ORGANISATION

Ever since it was formed, UNISON has had equality squarely at the top of its agenda – and our organisation reflects this.

About 75% of our members are women and our “Proportionality” policy is designed to get us to the position where women play the major role in the union. As you will see from the list of Branch Officers, Convenors and Senior Stewards, there are a lot of women’s names – but we still have some way to go to achieve our aim.

There are a number of groups of members within UNISON who feel at a disadvantage in getting involved and, to combat this feeling of exclusion, there are four “Self-Organised Groups” operating at Branch and/or Regional and National level. These are for:

Black Members.....

Disabled Members.....

Lesbian and Gay Members.....

Women Members.....

The groups decide for themselves what they are going to do and feed ideas and proposals into the Branch Committee as they wish.

**Branch Equalities Officer** Ingrid Browne Wallace/  
Tel: 0115 9529442

**Black Members Officer** Ingrid Browne Wallace  
Tel: 0115 9529442

**Disabled Members Officer** Mick Worrall Tel: 0780 3254017

**Lesbian and Gay Members Officer** Dave King Tel: 0115 9810405

**Women Members Officer** Maggie Pilmore Tel: 0115 9772557



# Nottinghamshire UNISON

*PS...*

This, in a nutshell, is your UNISON Branch. As it says above, the Branch is run by volunteers who feel strongly about right and wrong and believe that everyone should be treated fairly and with respect.

The most experienced Branch Officer started off as an ordinary member like you. For those who are interested in getting involved, we have a programme of training and time off with pay is allowed for union activities. Many of the 1,500 or so workplaces we cover do not currently have a UNISON Steward and your Convenor or a Branch Officer would be happy to discuss what becoming more active in the union would mean to you.

Whether you're part-time or full-time, a woman or a man, you shouldn't underestimate what you can contribute: this really is your opportunity to Make A Difference!



# Nottinghamshire UNISON

