

NOTTS UNISON NEWS

Web Site: <http://pages.unisonfree.net/nottscounty/>

UNISON's 10th ANNIVERSARY EDITION

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On 1st July 2003 we celebrated our 10th anniversary – and we have come far in the past decade.

UNISON has made a difference to millions of people's lives, including thousands of our lowest paid, most vulnerable members. We speak up for those who provide our public services. We give our members a voice in the workplace, in the community and with the government. We campaign to end racism, discrimination and poverty. We have a vision of a more just, a more inclusive society.

UNISON is a union that is listened to. Without UNISON there would have been no national minimum wage. No-one would have heard of the two-tier workforce. And there would have been no campaign against PFI.

Over the next decade, we will continue to stand up for those deliver our public services, day in, day out – people who deserve more from this Labour government than the failed policies of the last. And we will continue to offer first class services to all our members, where they need them – in the workplace.



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NJC JOB EVALUATION NEWS

INTERVIEWS READY TO ROLL!

The Steering Group would like to thank all those who helped with the benchmark test interviews in early June. Whether you took part as an interviewee, a manager or trade union steward, your support has been a vital part of the Job Evaluation process. With the completion of the benchmark interviews, we are pleased to say that we are ready to start the formal NJC Job Evaluation interviews.

It has been a period of intense work in a short time. Since the joint Steering Group was set up in late February this year, we have:

- => Agreed joint working procedures between management and trade unions
- => Purchased and installed the Gauge computerised Job Evaluation program
- => Identified local conventions for Nottinghamshire County Council
- => Agreed how Job Evaluation will be carried out by means of group meetings, interviews, job overviews etc
- => Identified over 1000 jobs and put them into 64 groups
- => Appointed a Project Co-ordinator, 5 Job Analysts and 2 admin support staff for the duration of the project
- => Identified a representative range of jobs for nearly 100 benchmark interviews so that we could test our system and confirm that our local conventions work
- => Produced Job Evaluation Newsletters and a guidebook for employees
- => Set up the Job Evaluation Help Line



The next stage is to carry out the formal interviews and verify the results...In the previous two newsletters and the guidebook, we explained the Nottinghamshire approach to NJC Job Evaluation with its tight timescale, use of computers and a specialist team to carry out the interviews with representatives of job groups. We explained about Job Overviews and how they describe a job in terms of the 13 Job Evaluation factors. What we have not explained so far is what happens after that.

The Job Overviews for all the interviews have to go through a process of verification by a process known as data monitoring (also known as "moderation"). There are five stages to the data monitoring process.

Stage 1:

Individual employee(s) who have been selected to represent their larger job group or a unique post will be interviewed by a Job Analyst in the presence of a line manager and a trained trade union Steward.

At the end of the questions, the interviewee will be able to read the draft Job Overview (JO) on the computer screen and revisit any factors that do not appear to reflect the job. The JO produced at the end of the interview will be the Initial Job Overview.

At the end of the interview the employee(s) will be asked to sign to say that the **process** is accepted as appropriate and fair. If not, the interview will be suspended and the post will be resubmitted for a fresh evaluation.

Stage 2:

A copy of the Initial Job Overview will be circulated to all employees within the group with 10 working days. Any employee may register a concern about the content of the JO within 5 working days of receipt by contacting the JE Help Line by phone or e-mail. This should specify:

- => Name of the employee
- => Post title (quoting the job reference on the JO)
- => Which factor(s) are incorrect
- => A brief explanation of the reasons.

Therefore, a maximum of 15 working days after the interview, the JO will either go on to stage 3 or, if no concerns have been registered, it can go on to stage 4

Stage 3:

The Steering Group will consider the registered concerns and may determine that:

- => There is no case for further action
- => A partial re-evaluation should be undertaken
- => A total re-evaluation should be undertaken.

If there is no case for further action, the JO will go on to stage 4.

A partial re-evaluation is carried out by means of a further interview that will revisit the answers to the relevant factor(s). After this, a revised JO will be produced.

A total re-evaluation is carried out by means of a further full interview. After this, a new JO will be produced. Any replacement JOs will be circulated as before in stage 2.

Stage 4:

A Data Monitoring Panel (DMP) will consider the JO and supporting documentation. Each DMP will consist of 2 trade union and 2 officer representatives, will be representative of gender and will have a cross-departmental focus. In the event of unplanned absence, reserves will be on stand by from each side to ensure an even representation. There will also be a reserve Chair. Each panel will be chaired by a member of the Steering Group, on a rota basis

Panel representatives have been selected who are independent of any other stage or process in the implementation project, they will not undertake data monitoring for their own service area or any other job groups for which they have provided support at group meetings and/or evaluation interviews. Every effort will be made to allocate each panel individual posts and groups within the same job family to ensure a consistent consideration of the width and depth of posts at all levels

The job of the DMPs is to:

- => consider and check the accuracy of data provided by Job Analysts from evaluations through the Job Overview statement (JO)
- => check the validity of data at the extremes i.e. large increases and large decreases (or "sore thumbing")
- => identify any apparent instances of over or underselling of a job role
- => highlight inconsistencies
- => identify any missing information
- => challenge the validity of information and seek further evidence where appropriate
- => recommend re-evaluation to the Steering Group as necessary
- => recommend amendments to the Steering Group as necessary

Panels will either:

- => Agree and sign off the JO as correct and complete.
- => Request additional evidence to verify figures such as number of employees supervised or size of budget for which job is accountable.
- => Recommend that the Steering Group refer any number of factors back to Job Analysts for full or partial re-evaluation and resubmission.

If the JO is signed off as correct and complete the JO will be go on to stage 5.

If the DMP recommend that the Steering Group refer any number of factors back to Job Analysts for full or partial re-evaluation and resubmission, this will be carried out as before in stage 3.

As the evaluation process proceeds it will be possible for the DMPs to undertake vertical checking across the range of levels within any job group, e.g. seeing if the job of supervisor ranks higher than the jobs of the employees they supervise. If the Steering Group supports recommendation for re-evaluation, a further JO will be produced as before in stage 3.

Stage 5:

Horizontal checking (across groups and departments) and consideration of consistency across the scope of posts Authority wide will be undertaken by the Steering Group when all results are in, supported by 2 expert analysts from the wider group of Analysts. The Steering Group will make any final decisions regarding re-evaluation. In exceptional circumstances this may involve a referral for a further evaluation and the Steering Group may request a final JO as before in stage 3.

WHAT HAPPENS ONCE ALL THE FINAL JOB OVERVIEWS HAVE BEEN PRODUCED?

Once all stages of the job evaluation process are complete, a separate process of attaching final job rankings to an agreed pay structure and communicating the scores to all jobs groups in that context will take place.

Formal Appeals will take place after 1.4.2004, the criteria and process to be subject to discussion in Corporate Joint Forum (the central joint consultation and negotiation body).

JE Help Line

Tel: 0115 977 3643

E-mail:

prjobevalhelp@nottsc.gov.uk

School support staff lobby Parliament



Too many schools are trying to get by with using staff who only get paid when school's open - but who have to fend for themselves the rest of the year.

This is the warning from unions and observers of the UK education system, which in recent years has become more and more attached to so-called 'term-time working'.

UNISON, along with the GMB and the T&GWU, lobbied Parliament on 5th June as part of its 'Justice & Equality for Term-Time Workers' campaign.

Delegates from Nottinghamshire went along (and got their photo, below, on the front page of UNISON Focus, the national newsletter for stewards). Delegates fixed up meetings with their constituency MPs to draw attention to the unfairness of many term-time workers' situations. Jenny Hogg, Joint UNISON Convenor for Environment and a school meals worker explained that, although her MP wasn't able to come out to see her on the day, she has arranged a future meeting with him to make clear the injustices of Term Time Only contracts.

'Term-time working' is pushed to staff as offering them greater 'flexibility' - but the effect is to hire someone for 52 weeks but only pay them for 42.

“After all, teachers and MPs get paid for 52 weeks a year despite their well earned holidays, we want equality for those of us who do the vital support work in schools”

Jenny Hogg, Joint Environment Convenor

The result for term-time workers is too often poverty and not flexible working, say critics. Such workers' access to employment rights, sick and annual leave, maternity and paternity pay, and even Job Seekers Allowance if they can't find alternative employment in school breaks, is very unclear.

For example, the issue of whether term-time workers can claim for benefit went up in 2001 as far as the House of Lords, which was evenly split on the question. The situation still hasn't been clarified.

All in all, as term-time workers are typically female, usually with dependent children, and already lowly paid, it's time they got a fairer deal, says UNISON.

The unions involved in the 5th June rally and lobby are submitting a joint national claim to employers which will aim to minimise the use of term-time contracts, saying they should be a matter of choice.



CONFERENCE DELEGATES REPORTS

UNISON held its Local Government and National Delegate Conferences in Brighton this year. The Local Government Conference was held on Sunday 15th and Monday 16th June. The National Delegate Conference ran from Tuesday 17th to Friday 20th June. Notts UNISON sent a delegation to both Conferences and what follows are their reports of the week.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE

Sunday Morning

Delegates were plentiful and expectant this year. We had two days not one!

Nothing contentious with standing orders. Jean Geldart from the Service Group Exec moved sections of the Annual report and as always was direct, open and affirmative, her comments on PFI, the two tier workforce and teaching assistants grading were pertinent. Heather Wakefield, Head of Local Govt, then gave an overview of the past year telling delegates that PFI, pay and grading, the introduction of directly elected community representatives thus isolating local authorities, and the fragmentation of the workforce especially in service delivery were all tasks to be faced. Craft workers also need to have recognition with the local govt NJC scheme where UNISON is prominent at the negotiating table. Front line workers feature highly in the unions' submission to the Local Government Pay Commission, their value can never be overstated.

Dave Prentis, General Secretary, then addressed the delegates. His speech was exciting informative humorous and aggressive (where it needed to be). He stated that UNISON needs to be united not divided in their dealing with Government. The importance of the Labour Link has to be recognised and he noted what had been achieved; the minimum wage, the Code of Practice on the two tier workforce and Trade Union recognition legislation were highlighted.

He referred to other public sector workers, in particular Police and Teachers, and how local Govt workers were lagging behind in pay and conditions and the failure to recognise their contribution in the public services.

Categorically, UNISON would not be bullied and intimidated by other unions he specified the "poor ignorant peasants" description given by NASUWT's General Secretary and Dave's reaction were words to savour.

Barbara Miller

Please Note:

Unfortunately Bob Wallace, a Branch Delegate, was due to report on the Sunday morning session of conference but didn't arrive until Monday afternoon due to illness in the family. In addition we had not received reports from Jan Whooley (a new branch delegate) and Shaun Johns (who was due to report on Sunday afternoon) at the time of producing this newsletter.

Monday Morning

The first motion on Monday morning was on raising standards and tackling workloads.

This motion was about school support staff in order to end term time only pay with pay gradings and job descriptions for all support staff and a fully paid qualification route for teaching assistants. This was endorsed by the next motion on the role of school support staff. These motions were voted for with a large majority.

The Service Group Executive (top table at conference to you and me) spoke for staff support and called for all the unions and the TUC to talk to the Government on issues relating to support staff. Chris Tansley (our branch secretary and a member of the SGE) spoke on the successful lobby to parliament on professional pay for support staff. These motions were supported by London, Derbyshire and Rotherham branches. These delegates spoke for the motion.

The conference gave a standing ovation to the Nursery Nurses who were on strike from the Tower Hamlets. Recognition and applause was also given to all strikers in Kirklees and Scottish Nursery Nurses for their struggle for better pay and conditions.

Next we had a speaker from Local Government, Nick Raynsford, MP, who spoke on accessibility for local people and service users, the need for improved services and for well motivated staff working in partnership with carers and the Health Service to provide good services to the community. He talked about flexibility, organisation, providing services with the private sector and flexibility and more rewarding work. All this was nothing you wouldn't hear in a management meeting.

The conference is a good place to meet other workers in your own field of work and compare issues. There are also a number of stands where you can get information. These were "Jones of Oakwood", our own electrical catalogue (contact the UNISON office for a copy), UNISON Holiday Club in Croyde Bay, Britannia Building Society, Co-operative Funeral Care, Bank of Scotland, Thompson Solicitors (our national solicitors for work and home use) and our own welfare department service.

There was also our UNISON shop with items to purchase for the Branch or ourselves. There were also international stands like Oxfam and the miners' stand and many others.

Reneen Hopewell

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE continued...

Monday Afternoon

After extended lunch break-this delegate and about half the conference walked out from the hall in protest at Local Govt. Minister Nick Raynsford being invited to address conference. On the 18th March he voted in the house of commons for the illegal war upon Iraq- what are we doing inviting Blair's' ministers regarded by the world as war criminals?

Session kicked off with Sandra Howell, National Officer claiming a major success for Unison campaigning and the Labour-link in achieving an end to the "two tier workforce". Henceforth when your service is being privatised be grateful for your "broadly comparable" terms and conditions!

A Modernisation of Public Services motion followed, stressing the importance of the Positively Public Campaign as the way to provide decent services and working conditions. Modernisation, another word abused by this Labour government as a cover for cutting trade union members working conditions. (Refer to Health workers, Fire brigade and local government workers) -motion carried.

Forget the League tables Find the Funding -obsessive monitoring and inspection regimes applied to every aspect of public employees working life seems strangely missing when the same services go private. WS Atkins, Carillion, Jarvis and the other P.F.I. privateers aren't over encumbered by inspection regimes or perpetually reviewed under so called Best Value. Speakers noted the impact upon staff morale as well as the waste of resources when adequate core funding is unavailable. Carried overwhelmingly.

Private Finance Initiative motion -or Profit for Investors. A speaker from Bolton told us how, weeks prior to the kids taking their GCSEs, their recently privatised school went into receivership. Criticism of Unison for failing to co-ordinate all out united opposition to PFI. Calling for scrutiny of the services and working conditions of the "Crapita" services and pointing out to ministers in well-argued papers is not changing Government direction.

Next area up was discussion of Regional Government widely regarded despite statements of denial by such forthright individuals as Stephen Byers, as a Trojan horse to break up local authorities and offer another means to destroy, sorry, re-negotiate terms and conditions (keep your pension in mind when you consider the above).

The National Black Members Committee brought a focus upon the failure of local authorities to implement the Race Discrimination Amendment Act 2000, whereby they must develop and implement a race relations policy which actively challenges discrimination in staffing and service areas. Unison's obligation is to see that authorities are held to it and to ensure that our own house is in order.

The Equality in Employment Regulations due for implementation in Dec. are being watered down so that bigoted organisations can on "religious or belief grounds" exclude people on the basis of their sexuality.

We did a motion on GATS the General Agreement on Trade in Services recognising this as an international threat to democracy and the rights of communities to decide for themselves how services are delivered. It's the big boys -the world bank and IMF compelling national governments to open up the social care market to private profit. Yes the care of your grandparents, the education of your kids is now a market. They've decided that as manufacturing industry has gone through the floor that there is £30 billion to be made in the British social care market. (Report by the Kings Fund 2002)

Conference then went on to agree that a 50% vacancy level, unpaid work at home to keep afloat and individual bonus awards is not the most effective way to run a social work service. So the crisis in social work would like everything this week be best resolved by a cosy chat with our friendly government of the day. Sections of the hall found the excitement of the card vote almost uncontrollable but that's conference anoraks for you. Personally I was just beginning to wake up the amount of effort and energy that the union at regional and national level were putting in on our behalf to maintain the link with the labour party. This policy of "We'll go and talk to our friends in government," has failed our members in the past six years and its time we changed to a more robust and effective opposition to policies which are destroying our services and the Welfare state that took 30 years to build.

Returned from conference determined to work with others to build that opposition.

Doug Walker

Young Members @ Conference

It was noticed this year at National Conference that there were a lot more younger members taking parting in debates, speaking, etc.

As a Young member of Nottinghamshire County Branch I was able to go to conference using the branches young members seat. If a branch has over 4,000 unison members. One person out of the people who attend conference should be a Young Member (aged under 27). So all you Young Members have an opportunity here! Please make the most of it and use this position to experience and attend conference next June in Bournemouth.

If you would like more information about conference you can e-mail me at: I_mclean50@hotmail.com

Lesley Mclean
Branch Young Members Officer

NATIONAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE

Tuesday Morning

This was the first time I had been elected to represent the Nottinghamshire Branch for National Delegate Conference. I noticed a distinct difference from the Local Government Conference in the respect that there was an official opening ceremony.

The Conference commenced with a welcome from the Mayor of Brighton. Our President then sadly read out the Unison obituaries for 2002 to 2003.



Nancy Coull, our President (above), then made an excellent speech as to the reasons we all stand together and are part of Unison, also on the fact that we are now ten years old and what has been achieved over the past ten years, and moved on to our future commitments. Nancy told us that it was her last conference for Unison as she had made new plans for her future in her personal life, she ended her speech with *'Unity and strength will take us forward'*.

Everyone was then welcomed to the Conference that included branch officers, visitors and many international visitors. Standing Orders Committee presented Reports one and two for the Conference and then the Annual Report was presented. Unison Accounts were then presented and agreed. The debates commenced with Pensions, Pension Rights and Fair Pensions for all, which are very relevant to all our members.

Tina Carnachan

Tuesday Afternoon

The afternoon session commenced with a video highlighting some of UNISON's main achievements since 1993 when NUPE, NALGO and COHSE merged to become Britain's largest union. Over the last 10 years UNISON has won more than £250 million in compensation for its members. In 1994 John Walker v Cleveland Social Services became the first successful work related stress case. UNISON successfully represented 1500 school meals workers in 1996 (also in Cleveland) in an equal pay case, followed by the largest equal pay case in Europe against Carlisle hospital. "If you want to be heard, speak in UNISON" advert featuring ants and a bear was the first commercial on television for a trade union. In 1999 a massive achievement for UNISON was the introduction of a minimum wage. 2002 saw the biggest strike since 1926 when 750,000 public service workers walked out. UNISON has continued into 2003 working to end the 2 tier workforce and defending and promoting public services.

The first speaker was UNISON's General Secretary Dave Prentis (right). He stated that the strike was not just about wages but also about a demoralised workforce and PFIs. He said he was angry that after years of the Tories, private companies should still be reaping the benefits under this government. It had been wondrous to see the changes that have taken place. Without UNISON we would not have had the minimum wage that has made a difference to thousands and thousands of people – we have fought for a just and more inclusive society. He paid tribute to Nancy Coull, the President of UNISON, as living proof that low paid, part time members can rise within the union. He continued by saying it was a disgrace that we were having to reclaim our party back but it could be done by using Labour link to work within, challenging the government.



Composite Motion C on "Public Service Reform" was carried. One of the speakers, a nurse, said she was sick of being told to "reform and modernise" when employees are leaving because of staff shortages and abuse from the public, and services would collapse without goodwill. She asked "what good is it for patients to have the choice to watch television or e-mail from their beds if the wards have run out of wipes or gloves to wash them?"

Motion 103 on the Right to Care Campaign was carried, calling on the NEC to use any influence to lobby government to fund free care throughout the UK. Speakers said that care should be based on need not on where you live, and that care should be based on health not wealth. Means tested social care is a scandal and the elderly have been betrayed as they were promised care from the cradle to the grave.

East Midlands' motion calling for the improvement of breast cancer awareness, prevention, and treatment, and universal screening of all women was carried. The speaker from this region told how she had had both breasts removed and if she had waited to be screened at 50 she would not be here today. During her time spent in hospital 2 men had died because they did not know they could get breast cancer and had ignored lumps. A speaker from Nottingham City branch said her mother had died at just 37 from breast cancer.

Conference then agreed the need for accurate and comprehensive guidance for legislation for the protection of children. An East Midlands delegate then moved a motion calling for anti-discrimination legislation for disabled people. The afternoon finished with the carrying of a motion on "Fair Pensions for All" that called on the NEC to raise awareness and campaign to end the discrimination against unmarried partners. A speaker said he paid the same amount of money into the pension scheme as his married work colleagues so should have the same benefits for his partner.

Jenny Hogg

Wednesday Morning (and a New Delegate)

Prior to the conference, Jackie Johnson had been elected delegation leader by the rest of the delegates. A Branch Committee meeting agreed to uphold the branch policy decided at the 2002 AGM to oppose funding the Labour Party. At the pre-conference delegates' meeting on 9th June Jackie stood down as delegation leader. After Barbara Miller was elected as the new delegation leader a vote was taken to overturn the branch policy and to have a free vote on the APF debate which I personally thought was wrong but would abide by the decision.

Train tickets purchased, expenses in hand, I caught the train from Nottingham to Brighton via Bedford. We met other delegates at Bedford and travelled on together, leaving Maggie behind to fend for herself at Bedford, sending Barbara into a big guilt trip. Arrived at the hotel feeling a bit apprehensive, not knowing what to expect. Over a meal in a café I was assured that not only did delegates survive their first conference but enjoyed it (did they speak with forked tongue?).

The first day I teamed up with Mick Worrall and we went around the corner to the conference centre, avoiding paper givers on the way. Made it in and got our new bags and pens. Armed for conference, next had to find our seat, luckily this was easy (due to having a plan) and kept a low profile.

After a day I soon got the hang of things. "Nothing to it" I thought, "I'll soon get used to it". HA! Nothing so straightforward we soon realised. Motions not taken in the order they appeared in the booklet, conference guide and pens all being juggled about or dropped on the floor. But most important item was the voting card. Everything was voted on, including the decision to vote.

After 2 days, Local Government Conference ended and we got an invite to the conference hall to see how it all worked. By now we knew everything, or so we thought. Still, drinks were free, we got to talk to different delegates and find out how they found it, and their opinions. How could they differ to ours? This called for a small debate, which ended with the free drinks.

National conference started. No different to Local Government Conference only more people now. My confidence was growing. Wednesday morning came and it was my turn to take notes for the report.



The Guest Speaker was Stephen Lewis (left), UN Special Envoy, who gave a good speech on HIV/AIDS in Africa that was very moving and really put the case forward, receiving a standing ovation at the end.

We then went on to the APF debate. There were 2 motions on the agenda but one was withdrawn. The motion was carried by a large majority to carry on supporting the Labour Party. We had a free vote contrary to the decision made at the Branch Committee.

The next motion we debated was on Public Sector pay. This was carried and we then broke for lunch.

Friday afternoon was the best session of the week. Although Chris Tansley (Branch Secretary) missed it as he was in hospital. Though he did attend that evening's social in plaster and on crutches. He had to have an operation at QMC when he got back. Hope everything went well for him. On Saturday, returned home catching a late afternoon train which was delayed. Complaint form in the post for "compo".

Dave Cook

Wednesday Afternoon

I must admit that I found it quite difficult to feel engaged by the agenda on Wednesday afternoon after the emotional roller coaster of Conference on Wednesday morning and I don't feel able to write this without at least mentioning what happened before lunch. As Dave Cook reported, the day started with a speech from Stephen Lewis, Special Envoy from the UN for HIV/AIDS in Africa. This was in my view the most moving speech of Conference and I was disappointed that the NEC chose to agenda it for just before the debate on the future of the political fund, the most significant debate of the week for many delegates – very bad timing. In fact the whole of Wednesday morning left me feeling pretty despondent particularly the decision not to ballot members on the future of UNISON's political funds...so on to Wednesday afternoon.

This began with guest speaker Carol Brown of Lincolnshire County branch who had won the Representation and Negotiation category of UNISON's Organise 2002 national organising awards. Carol is a teaching assistant and the branches education and cultural services convenor. Carol's branch had run a highly focused, member-led, teaching assistants campaign for a proper career structure and better pay. The campaign involved winning the support of parents, teachers, head teachers and governors – not an easy task I'm sure. Membership in the branch rose by 53% and there was an enormous increase in the number of workplace representatives, so a great success story.

Motion 51 on Public Sector Pay submitted by the North West Region stimulated some lively debate and a number of really good speakers with delegates calling for a series of co-ordinated pay claims in health, education and local government, backed up with the threat of industrial action. Speakers slammed the repeated attempts this government has made to cut jobs and attack our pay and conditions under the guise of "modernisation" and condemned New Labour for their disgraceful treatment of the FBU which has highlighted the

urgent need for a co-ordinated Trade Union response to this government's treatment of public sector workers. I am pleased to report that as well as supporting this motion Conference also agreed to bolster the UNISON strike fund with a levy of 1% of all subscription income to back up the union's strike action.

Motion 149 Organising Young Members submitted by the National Young Members Forum was won. Young members delegate Nicky Ward welcomed the fact that UNISON is recruiting more young people than ever before but said that much more was needed to be done. Given that the average age of executive members is 47 the call was to "bring young members to the very heart of the union" by creating a young members seat on the national executive committee with a warning that it would be patronising not to let young members into the highest echelons of the union. The motion was carried by Conference despite opposition from the National Executive Committee.

The 2 winners of this year's Bob Cotton Awards were announced. Amanda Mortimer, a Bradford mental health social worker won for her voluntary work with the Bradford Information, Advice, Support, Asylum Network. The second recipient, Geraldine Keys, won for her work bringing the community groups of Omagh together in the days following the bombing when many local groups considered folding.

To finish on a positive note we received some good news from the General Secretary in the form of a victory in the struggle against the BNP. Dave Prentis announced that UNISON had won an employment tribunal brought by a BNP member expelled from the East Midlands region for "bringing the union into disrepute." The employment tribunal had concluded that UNISON was within its rights not to readmit the BNP member because of his conduct in the past. I am pleased to be able to report this – the BNP should have no place in politics and certainly no place in the Trade Union movement.

Jackie Johnson



Thursday Morning

The theme for this year's conference was "no them and us" following on from the big antiracist march and rally held in Manchester earlier this year. Councillor Mohammed Azam (Oldham) was given a warm welcome by delegates. He reinforced that the community involvement and coalition was the only way to defeat the BNP and UNISON could play a part in this with campaigns.

The following five motions on Tackling Racism, the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Asylum Seekers rights, the Rise of the Far right/ Industrial Decay, and Employers recognition of

branch Self Organised groups, were all well supported by Conference. But I feel more could have been done to support and promote disabled members, especially as this is the International Year of the Disabled.

This was my second conference and compared to the first one, it seemed quite subdued. Are we losing our fight and accepting everything? We shall see.

Ingrid Browne-Wallace

Thursday Afternoon

The afternoon began with a speech from Brendan Barber, General Secretary of the TUC. He thanked UNISON for its positive role as Britain's largest trade union. He highlighted the positives of new legislation from the Government including TU recognition, the minimum wage (still not enough, though) and in particular the new code of practice on the two tier workforce for which Dave Prentis (our General Secretary) can take full credit.

He conclude with congratulations to UNISON on it's 10th birthday but reminded us that it is 10 years since the BNP first put an election candidate forward, 10 years since Stephen Lawrence was murdered. These were sobering reminders that the task ahead is great and that UNISON can be counted on. A clear and comprehensive speech that received spontaneous applause.

Next came the session on Amendment to Rules, featuring debates on proposed changes to the UNISON rule book. I will give a brief overview, as changes will be included in the new rule book.

The debate on rates of subscriptions was the most prominent one this year. Subscriptions rates have not been increased for 5 years. A card vote was called resulting in a victory for the branch's mandate that will see the subs rate being amended. A major surprise was the successful revision of Rule D25 on Disciplinary Procedures. For 10 years Notts County Branch have supported this and this year it was carried, follow that for persistence!

After the rules section there was time to debate some more motions. Motion 76 on Health & Safety is of prime importance to all our members. It pointed out the shortfalls from the Govt, relevant ministries and depts which need addressing with a concerted campaign. The amendment referred to work related stress in Reporting Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). I'm pleased to say the motion and amendment were carried.

The afternoon concluded with debates on 4 motions: Motion 101 on "UN support on economic, social and cultural rights", Composite B on "the National Health Service", Composite E entitled "Invest in Council housing/Decent homes", and Motion E "A vision for education". All carried and all supported by the branch's mandate. In all a varied interesting and successful afternoon.

Barbara Miller

Friday Morning

This was my second conference I have attended on behalf of Unison, but the first one I've attended in Brighton, which was nice!

The morning session started off with the presentation for the Communication Awards 2003. This was open to all Branches and this was the first time the awards had been presented at Conference. All the motions were non-contentious for the morning's sessions and all were carried without any problems.

Dave Prentis, General Secretary, gave a warm speech to conference and also commented on the Burnley by-election results, which has stopped the British National Party (BNP) becoming elected.

The guest speaker was Frank Bsirke, President of Verdi, the biggest union in the world. His speech was to do with having much closer relationships with sister unions. Frank received a presentation from Unison after his speech.

The highlight of the morning's events was of course Clytus Williams, Chair of the Standing Orders Committee putting his own words to "Magic Moments", which was as always a delight to listen to. As always he received a standing ovation.

After the morning's programme ended, we presented our Conference Delegation Leader, Barbara Miller with a thank you gift and card for supporting, and giving guidance when needed, to all delegates from our Branch.

Maggie Pilmore

Friday Afternoon

Well! I made it to the last afternoon, I sometimes thought I wouldn't, it was just my luck to have to keep awake and write a report about it.

Entering the hall we were again entertained by a local school choir, sponsored by UNISON, soon followed by a performance of "The History of Trade Unions" performed by the children of the Crèche.



We then settled down to Friday afternoon's order of business and debated such diverse subjects from Prostrate Cancer to Privatisation, Cochlear Implants to Branch Organisation, Fair Trade to The European Union, Iraq to University Funding and Employment Right of Women with Premature Babies (Nottinghamshire's Motion) to Part Time Workers.

The debate on Prostrate Cancer was one of the most humorous yet most poignant debates of the whole week. There are more deaths from Prostrate Cancer than any other form of cancer.

Despite repeated requests from the President to switch off mobile phones one of our delegates forgot and of course it rang didn't it! The final item on the agenda was to thank the retiring President Nancy Coull for all her hard work as President. I thought she handled the Conference excellently and impartially.

Things I will remember most from these conferences are:

1. New Delegates were invited to a reception on Monday Night where the protocol of conference were explained, we had been there from Saturday (never mind we got a couple of free drinks from it).
2. A heart rendering speech from Stephen Lewis, UN Special Envoy on HIV/AIDS in Africa.
3. The number of young members attending conference and being prepared to go to the rostrum and speak.
4. Young members gaining a seat on the National Executive.
5. All disabled members access issues were catered for.

This being my first time at National Delegate and Local Government Conferences I found it tiring but very enjoyable and I would like to thank the delegation for making my first – and hopefully not my last – conference so enjoyable.

Mick Worrall

NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES TO BE INTRODUCED

After the vote at Conference, UNISON subscription rates will change from 1st October this year.

The new rates see the introduction of more bands, extending the top end, and a reduction in the subs for our lowest paid members.

Band	Income £	Weekly subs £	Monthly subs £	Percentage %
A	0 to 2,000	0.30	1.30	1.56
B	2,001 to 5,000	0.81	3.50	1.20
C	5,001 to 8,000	1.22	5.30	0.98
D	8,001 to 11,000	1.52	6.60	0.83
E	11,001 to 14,000	1.81	7.85	0.75
F	14,001 to 17,000	2.24	9.70	0.75
G	17,001 to 20,000	2.65	11.50	0.75
H	20,001 to 25,000	3.23	14.00	0.75
I	25,001 to 30,000	3.98	17.25	0.75
J	30,001 to 35,000	4.68	20.30	0.75
K	over 35,000	5.19	22.50	0.72

Application for Membership - Notts UNISON

I apply to join UNISON and agree to pay the appropriate subscription, to comply with the rules and constitution, as in the UNISON rule book.

BLOCK LETTERS PLEASE

Title (Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss): _____ **Surname:** _____ **Forename:** _____

Payroll No.:
ES(establishment code):
N.I. No.:
Scale/Grade:

Home address	:					
Home Post Code	:					
Home Tel	:					
Department	:					
Employer	:					
Work address	:					
Work Post Code	:					
Work Tel	:					
e-mail	:					
Job Title	:					

Subscriptions

ANNUAL PAY

Weekly/Monthly

SUBS

Tick box

up to £2000	£0.42	£1.81	BAND A1	[]
£2000-£5000	£0.90	£3.90	BAND A2	[]
£5001-£7000	£1.23	£5.34	BAND B	[]
£7001-£10000	£1.52	£6.59	BAND C	[]
£10001-£15000	£1.80	£7.78	BAND D	[]
£15001-£20000	£2.21	£9.57	BAND E	[]
£20001-£25000	£3.13	£13.57	BAND F	[]
£25000+	£3.88	£16.81	BAND G	[]

Retired Members £15(Life) Students £10pa Unemployed £4pa

Conditions of Service:(Tick all those boxes that are appropriate to you and your post.)

Full Time	Part Time	Term Time Only	Job Share	Permanent	Temporary
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*CAR ALLOWANCE:

*DISABILITY

Essential	Casual	None	Yes	No
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*ETHNIC ORIGIN:

Afro-carib	African	Indian	Pakistani	OtherAsian	White Euro	Other
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* This information is entirely voluntary, however it will help the branch ensure that minority groups are kept informed of any National or Local events that might effect them. Any information provided will be completely confidential.

POLITICAL FUND

I authorise the deduction of the following Political Fund payments part of my subscription.

Delete where appropriate.

Affiliated Fund / General Fund

Affiliated Political Fund (your subscription includes 6.5% contribution to this fund) campaigns for members through affiliation to the Labour Party both locally and nationally. Those paying the affiliated levy can take part in the APF activities and make their contribution on policy issues, including Labour Party policy.

General Political Fund (your subscription includes 5p a week or 22p per month contribution to this fund) is independent of support for any Political Party but liases with MP's from all Party's to pursue UNISON's interests. It is used to pay for campaigning at branch, regional and national levels of the union.

YOU MUST INDICATE AT LEAST ONE OPTION
as the NEC will automatically allocate you to the
APF if this section is left blank.

AUTHORISATION FOR DEDUCTION OF SUBSCRIPTION

I hereby authorise the deduction from my salary, for payment to UNISON on my behalf, of the subscription appropriate to my annual earnings.

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

OFFICE USE ONLY

Actioned by Branch Office: LAF 02305

Allocated to Branch: NOTTS COUNTY

Please return your completed application form to:
NOTTS UNISON, FREEPOST,
NOTTINGHAM, NG2 1BR

RETIRING SOON?

If so, you can join UNISON's Retired Members Section for a one off lifetime payment of just £15. Retired Membership is open to all who have at least 2 years continuous membership of UNISON at the date of retirement. But you must sign up within 3 months of retiring. Unfortunately we do not get provided with details of our members retiring or approaching retirement age. So the onus is on the retired member to let us know. So if you are about to retire and would like to join our Retired Members Section, please contact the Branch Office for further details.

MOVED HOUSE OR WORKPLACE?

It is important that we have an accurate record of members' home and work addresses. This is so we can send you UNISON information and to comply with legal restrictions should we ever need to ballot members for industrial action. If you have recently changed address, please don't forget to inform us at the Branch Office.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

We have set up an e-mail news service for the branch.

If there is a press release, some urgent news or changes to the branch web site, we can send you an e-mail. If you are interested could you please send your name, department/ employer, and e-mail address to the Branch Communications Officer, Bob Watt, at the following e-mail address:
nottscounty@unisonfree.net



WOMENS SELF ORGANISED GROUP MEETING

Having lost our previous Women's Officer to the voluntary sector (running Ashfield Women's centre) we need to elect a new one. There will be a meeting open to all women members of the branch:

11th September 2003

4.30 pm onwards

**The Branch Office
39-41 Loughborough Road
West Bridgford**



Please contact
Ingrid Browne-
Wallace, Branch
Equality Officer, for
more details 0115
981 0405



& Young People

and silk seeks catwoman to unwind giant fun an
Marmite ball of wool. prefera
no. 6 reply box no. 5 reply
aged Enthusiastic Young person aged female
interested 16-27 wanted for organising seeks
golf activism and an all round good fish
lettuce time. For more information purple
windsurfing contact Karen Holloway on budgie
own teeth 0115 8475400 or e-mail
box no. 6 k.holloway@unison.co.uk reply
aged 21 Good looking Male interested in girl
own home Monster Trucks boy

**You can help to change the
Face of UNISON**



**YOUNG
PEOPLE in
UNISON**