



# UNISON Scotland LGBT Newsletter



Spring 2017

UNISON's LGBT group celebrated the Recruitment and Organising Award winners on 19 November, when the annual conference handed out the trophies in Llandudno.

Delegates from the Scottish Environment and Protection Agency (pictured), Yorkshire and Humberside region, and the North West region were handed their awards – sponsored for the first time by UNISON Living – by union vice president Carol Sewell.

Earlier, Ms Sewell had urged delegates to continue recruiting and organising, saying that both were crucial for the future of the union.



And she complimented the conference on being a “well-gelled group” and indicative of “a movement that anyone would want to be a part of. Stressing that she was “absolutely committed to inclusiveness” in UNISON – it is the union’s “superpower,” she added.

And UNISON would continue to hold the government to account on what it did to the country's public services, said Ms Sewell, adding that, in June's EU referendum, nobody had voted for a continuation or hardening of austerity. In the context of defending public services, she took the opportunity to point delegates toward the union's Public Service Champions campaign that is engaging the public in the defence of services.

## STUC LGBT Conference

Your regional committee will be attending the Scottish Trades Union Congress, LGBT Conference.

This will be held in Clydebank at the Golden Jubilee Conference Hotel on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of May 2017.

The Committee is proud to be involved and attend this important conference.

We have submitted 2 motions to conference, supporting unaccompanied LGBT asylum seekers and Erosion of LGBT rights : A global threat.

## PRIDE Events

This year the regional committee will have stalls at both Glasgow and Edinburgh Pride.

Edinburgh Pride will be on Saturday the 17<sup>th</sup> of June. We will be based at Teviot House from 11am till 16:30pm. Parade meeting point will be outside the Scottish Parliament Building at 12 midday, just look for the banner.

Glasgow Pride will be August 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> at Glasgow Green. We will be there on both days. Parade meeting point is at Charlotte St entrance to the green at 11.45am.

# UNISON Scotland LGBT AGM

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2017

11am – 2pm

UNISON Shared Branch Office, Empire House,  
Floor 4, 131 West Nile Street, Glasgow, G1 2RX

# Social Event

## **The LGBT Scotland Committee SOG event.**

**Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 1:30pm**  
**UNISON Shared Branch Office, Empire House,**  
**Floor 4, 131 West Nile St, Glasgow, G1 2RX**

All LGBT self identifying members, are invited to join us for an afternoon of discussion, and fun. We will be showing a movie and will discuss the themes involved and how this impacts on LGBT people across Scotland. Food and drink will be provided and we plan to continue out later onto the scene for a few drinks for those who wish to join us.

We hope to grow the Self Organised Group, and encourage others to become active and to get more involved.

## Cutbacks leaving LGBT people without specialist mental and sexual health support

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people are facing long waits for appointments at gender identity clinics and being denied specialist mental health counselling because of cutbacks, says new research published on 22 November 2016 by UNISON.

Sexual health and youth support has also been scaled down. This has resulted in reduced opening hours, cuts to the range of advice sessions offered – and even services axed altogether, according to the report Implications of Reductions to Public Spending for LGB and T People and Services. This includes HIV awareness programmes providing condoms as well as youth groups offering a lifeline for trans people.

The report, commissioned by UNISON from NatCen Social Research, presents a damning picture of how the needs of the LGBT community in Britain are not being met especially around health, gender identity and mental well-being. Not enough staff are available who are trained to give advice around LGBT issues, despite increasing demand for treatment and counselling, according to the report.

The findings suggest ambulance services are being increasingly relied upon by LGBT because cutbacks have made appropriate support difficult to access. This is putting an extra burden on an already overstretched NHS according to the report, which is based on interviews and written testimonies from charities, support organisations and from LGBT people using these services.

UNISON's national officer for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality Carola Towle said: "Fears about public spending cuts have now become a reality for LGBT people.

"They already face prejudice on a daily basis and some end up needing support because of this discrimination. But cutbacks to vital services have left them feeling even more marginalised, isolated and invisible.

"It's wrong to believe that withdrawing specialist services for LGBT people is a cost saving. It's a false economy that is damaging lives and storing up trouble for the future." More info at <http://www.natcen.ac.uk/>

## **UNISON National LGBT Conference**

**17th – 19th November 2017**  
**Brighton Conference Centre**

**Come along and be a branch delegate and meet your regional committee**