

RETIREED members Scotland news

NATIONAL CARE SERVICE BILL

- IS FOR SCRAPPING SAY UNISON THE UK'S LARGEST UNION

The Scottish Government's troubled National Care Service Bill faced a further blow as UNISON, called for them to withdraw the Bill.

The call came from a resolution approved at the UNISON annual conference being held in Liverpool.

The policy adopted by the Union included a commitment to campaign to have the Bill withdrawn and the belief that care should be delivered on a not-for-profit basis.

Criticisms of the Bill made at the conference included that it will not solve the recruitment and retention crisis in the care sector and will extend a contracting culture in public services and responsibilities are removed from both councils and the NHS are powers are transferred to Ministerially appointed quangos.

Kate Ramsden a social worker in Aberdeenshire and member of UNISON's National Executive told

the conference: "The NCS (Scotland) bill offers nothing at all to our social care members but, if passed, will devastate local government by taking staff, functions and services out of councils and giving them to unelected quangos.

"Simply put, it is the biggest threat to local government in Scotland that we've ever faced. It has serious implications for the NHS too. It's an outsourcer's charter which will expand rather than remove the market in care and will re-create the purchaser/provider split in the NHS. There is also nothing about the investment in frontline services that we all know is desperately needed.

"We need to kick profit out of care and scrap the National Care Service Bill".

UNISON RETIRED MEMBERS' CONFERENCE 2023

TUESDAY 3RD OCTOBER — WEDNESDAY 4TH OCTOBER

VENUE: Edinburgh International Conference Centre

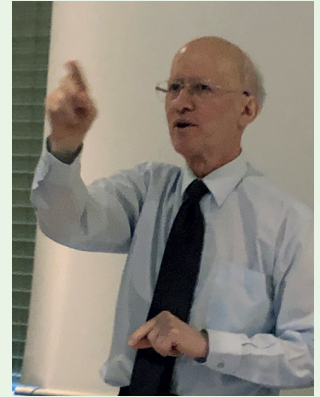
registration for this is now open and deadline for submission of delegates is Thursday 13th July so if you are interested in attending get in touch with your branch.

Each branch can send between 2 and 4 retired members

SCOTTISH RETIRED MEMBERS' DAY CONFERENCE

Scotland's retired members met for their first annual day conference since Covid on 29 March 2023 at Leonardo Hotel in Glasgow.

Registration at 10am took a bit longer than planned as we were delighted to welcome many late registrations and Babs our Secretary made the necessary arrangements with the hotel. But time was well spent as we had more opportunity to meet and chat with our peers in the union.



Secretary Babs Fulton and Chair Gray Allan



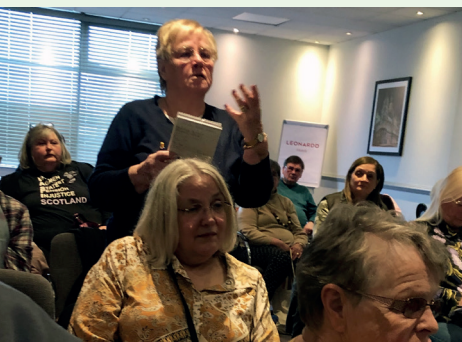
Conference opened with a report by Gordon Mackay; past UNISON President and current National Executive Council (NEC) member representing and still working in our National Health Service.

Marie Quigley, UNISON Local Government Service Group Executive Member spoke of the managed decline that has happened under the current Scottish Government.

Both of these speakers were followed by many members making informative and interesting points and observations.



After Lunch we heard from Jim Anderson of Lothian Pension Fund. His workshop created much interest and resulted in further questions and debate and increased knowledge of how complex it is to keep all eleven of Scotland's Local Government funds working and investing in a fair and at the same time profitable way. Some less welcome fact's such as one of the highest polluting investments that our funds might have considered are not only fossil fuels but the cruise companies that provide a favorite holiday choice for many retired members.



He told us of the alarming number of people who are ready to leave hospital but are unable to as they wait for a suitable care package to support them, caused by the critical shortage of staff in the care services.

We heard also from Mrs. Rena McGuire and Mr, Neil about how the Cora Foundation which work across Scotland has helped to set up Dunterlie Foodshare in Barrhead East Renfrewshire. It has been a great success in the area to help people with dealing with the Cost of Living and also a great opportunity to increase many other community activities.

We also heard that the Scottish Governments plans for the National Care Service have been paused until June (now January) as all groups involved with our current care provision including all trade unions have objected.



WASPI LEGAL VICTORY



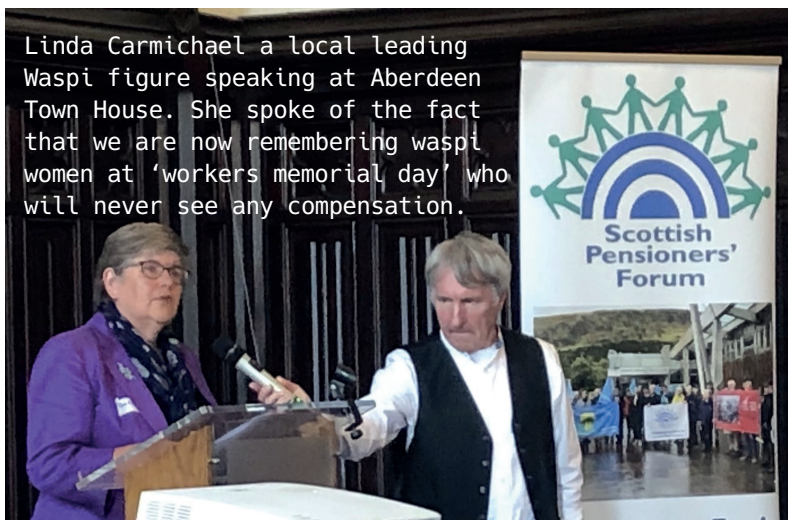
The Ombudsman has conceded that his approach had been **“legally flawed”** and will be reconsidered. Although this victory does not guarantee fair compensation for all those affected, it makes a positive outcome a bit more likely.

The 1950s-born women who received inadequate notice of the rise in their state pension age to 66 have received a boost to their battle for compensation, with a settlement of their Judicial Review claim against the Parliamentary Ombudsman.

The Ombudsman had already agreed that maladministration by the DWP had occurred, but the WASPI women had taken issue with the limited way he was approaching his investigation of the injustices caused, and their claims for compensation.

The judgment having been found to be “legally flawed” means the Ombudsman will now have to reconsider the Stage 2 report before continuing with Stage 3 when compensation is considered.

WASPI are pushing for a hasty and uncomplicated decision by the end of this year but will continue the campaign with the help of the lawyers and crowdfunding to fight for fair compensation for 1950s born women.



Linda Carmichael a local leading Waspi figure speaking at Aberdeen Town House. She spoke of the fact that we are now remembering waspi women at ‘workers memorial day’ who will never see any compensation.

THE JUST TRANSITION PARTNERSHIP CONCERN AT THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ENERGY STRATEGY

The Just Transition Partnership was formed by the Scottish Trade Union Congress and Friends of the Earth Scotland.

Just Transition Partnership endorses the vision for ‘a just transition to a net zero energy system’, we are very concerned that the draft Energy Strategy and Just Transition Plan does not set out a plan which can deliver this. There are many statements in this document which the Partnership is glad to see made by the Scottish Government but they are almost all at the level of re-statements of vision and intent. Accordingly our comments here focus on the gaps and omissions and are, in summary:-

Our full document can be read and downloaded [here](#)

- This is not a strategy – it does not say how the proposed outcomes will be achieved nor address the risks and obstacles to achieving them
- This is not a Just Transition Plan
- There are important omissions from the document
- Relying on markets for achieving change is flawed – without priority to public action and ownership, the objectives can’t be met
- Engagement with drafting the strategy has been poor

SCAM TEXT MESSAGE ADVICE

Rip Off Britain's tech expert David McClelland and solicitor Gary Rycroft have put together this handy guide to help you avoid falling victim to fraudsters...

How can I tell a scam text from a genuine text message?

- Don't panic!
- It's natural to think you have to reply straight away, but think about it first
- Take some time to look at the message closely.

A good place to start is looking for the following signs that indicate the message may be a scam:



Unknown numbers

Requests for payment or payment details

'Urgent' requests

Carefully examine website links & check for any characters out of place

Spelling or grammatical errors



Gary says...

"The key message is to be really suspicious about any message that you get out of the blue."



David says

"A number of legitimate companies are now not including links in messages they send to their customers"

- Fraudsters are finding ways around some of these indicators, including 'spoofing'. This is where fraudsters use identity masking technology to change the name or number that is displayed as the sender. This can make it look like the text has come from your bank's number or from an organisation like 'NHS' or 'GOV UK'. So even if it looks like the text has come from a legitimate source, you still need to take it with a pinch of salt!
- If in doubt, contact the company or organisation you think sent the text and ask if it's genuine. Look online for a number for them – don't try to call the number the text came from.
- Some organisations and companies have information on their website about how they will contact customers or users.

“REMEMBER... Scams and threats don't just apply to text messages but other messaging services too - such as WhatsApp and Facebook Messenger. Be extra vigilant for the “Hi Mum and Dad” scam message. This is where scammers impersonate your family members, particularly adult children, in order to ask you for money. ‘Hi Dad, I've broken my phone and I'm using a mate's phone. I need to talk its urgent can you text me on WhatsApp on my new number please.’

If you receive a message like this don't be tempted to transfer money immediately, enquire further by asking who specifically it is by name and by calling them or asking for a voice note.



David says

What do I do if it turns out the message is a scam?

- Don't reply to a scam text. It informs the scammers your number is active and you could be bombarded with more scam messages.
- Do not click on any links, even if they look genuine. Clicking a link could result in malware being downloaded onto your phone that compromises your data.
- Do not share personal or banking information.
- You can report the scam text by forwarding it to 7726, which is a free reporting service provided by phone operators. This information can then be used by your provider to investigate the origin of the text message and arrange to block or ban the sender.

I've replied to a scam text, what should I do?

- If you've shared your banking details, you should contact your bank immediately.
- If you've shared your password, change the passwords on any of your accounts which use the same password.
- If you've lost money, tell your bank and report it as a crime to Action Fraud (for England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or Police Scotland (for Scotland).



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THE YEAR OF THE BLACK WORKERS 2023 FOLLOWS THE YEAR OF THE DISABLED WORKER



Year of Disabled Workers had a successful 2022 and 2023 is shaping up to be equally successful as The Year of the Black Workers.

The year helped provide a campaign focus for action across the many disability workplace issues that our members continue to raise.

Throughout the year they delivered a series of webinars, hosting awareness raising stalls, writing articles, and attending Scottish party political conferences to promote the campaign, the last of these being the SNP Conference in Aberdeen.

But 31st December doesn't mark the end. This journey is continuing into 2023. The disability employment and pay gaps are evidence that the way the labour market operates disadvantages disabled people.



UNISON Scotland pledged full backing to the decision to designate 2023 as UNISON's Year of Black Workers.

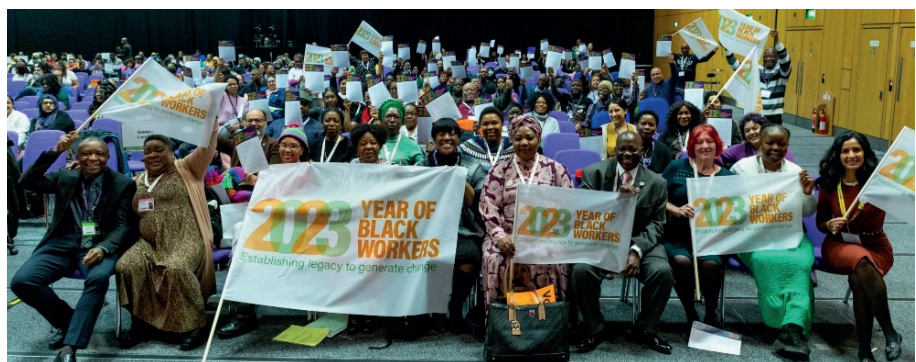
UNISON's Year of Black Workers is underpinned by the desire of 'establishing legacy to generate change, and the national Black members committee hope to develop legacy campaigning work across several areas, including:

- The ethnicity pay gap, which shows the difference in the average pay between staff from ethnic minority backgrounds in a workforce, compared to 'white' staff;
- The TUC anti-racist manifesto;
- Implementing the NHS and social care workplace race equality standards;
- Ending the hostile environment for migrants, including removing the international health surcharge;
- Implementing UNISON's race discrimination protocol.

Kay McKerrell, Secretary of UNISON's Scottish Black Workers Committee (SBWC) explains,

"Our aim this year is to involve the whole of UNISON Scotland in standing up to racism in the workplace and in society. We want this year to be about building confidence and knowledge amongst our activists and also developing a strong network of Black activists. That way we will create a legacy from the year that will generate change for years to come."

Visibility is one of the main issues to be tackled, Raza Sadiq, Chair of the SBWC says, "We want to raise the visibility of UNISON amongst Black workers and members and also the visibility of the Black Workers Committee and Black members and activists within the union."



UNISON HAS VOTED TO ACCEPT THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT NHS PAY OFFER

Chair of UNISON Scotland's health committee, Wilma Brown said:

“Whilst acceptance of this pay offer will remove the specter of industrial action



there is no room for complacency. This pay deal does nothing to solve the NHS Scotland staffing crisis! Government commitments to review the working week; deliver fair pay rise on promotion and tackle the workforce crisis must make rapid progress and be backed up with new money to ensure that patients and staff get the NHS they deserve.”



Alicia from retired members committee doing her bit to make sure members return their votes.

HELP WITH BROADBAND AND PHONE COST

Social tariffs are cheaper broadband and phone packages for people claiming Universal Credit, Pension Credit and some other benefits.

Some providers call them 'essential' or 'basic' broadband. Most but not all providers do this so check first if your current provider offers a social tariff. If your provider doesn't offer a social tariff, you

can switch to one that does. But check whether your provider will let you leave your current contract without paying a penalty fee first. Other support might be available to customers who cannot get online.

If you're struggling to pay your mobile phone or broadband bill, speak to your provider as soon as possible to see how they can help.



This year's STUC Congress was held in Dundee from 17-19 April. I (Morag

Lawrence retired committee member) spoke on behalf of Aberdeen TUC in support of a NASUWT motion demanding councils save our libraries. This issue is particularly important for me as Aberdeen Council had just closed six libraries. I also told congress that campaign groups are fighting to have this decision reversed.

Congress slammed attacks on library provision, recognising the key importance of libraries for our children and our communities.

I moved an emergency motion from AberdeenTUC based on recent scientific reports that highlighted the need for urgent action on the climate crisis. This urgency having been made far worse as a result of ten years of inaction from our current governments. I also spoke of the necessity to move forward with policies that would see a 'Just Transition' for any affected workforce.

“Delegates gave overwhelming support to both motions”

MAKE SURE YOU ARE GETTING THE HELP YOU NEED

CAN YOU CLAIM MARRIAGE TAX ALLOWANCE

WHO CAN CLAIM?

You are married or in a civil partnership

You were both born after 6th April 1935

One of you earns less than £12,570

The other earns less than £50,270

Click on this link <https://www.gov.uk/marriage-allowance>

5 TIPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM SCAMS

1. *Don't give out personal or financial information just because someone has your basic details and asks. Phone or email the company directly using a trusted method of contact.*

2. *Don't be pressurised into making a decision. A bank or trusted organisation would never force or rush you into making a financial transaction.*

3. *Don't click on any links or open any attachments in a text or email unless you know the email is from a trusted source.*

Protect others by reporting phishing attempts or fraud to [Action Fraud](#).



2 NEWLY RETIRED HONORARY MEMBERS OF UNISON

Left to right Laura McDonald Grampian Health branch and Kate Ramsden Aberdeenshire Local Government branch.

It would be great to see them at a retired members forum in the near future.