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UNISON Scotland Fringe Meeting:

# Make Votes Matter

## Adopt Proportional Representation for UK General Elections



Thursday 22 June 12.45pm-1.45pm  
Syndicate 4 on the 1st floor Syndicate wing of the Brighton Centre.  
Sandwich lunch provided

**Speakers:** Darren Hughes, Deputy Chief Executive, Electoral Reform Society, and from UNISON Scotland and Northern Ireland

**Chair:** Lilian Macer, Convener UNISON Scotland

**Our First Past The Post voting system makes Parliament unrepresentative. In 2015, one party got 37% of the vote and 51% of seats, while three parties got 24% of the vote but share 1.5% of seats.**

FPTP violates the democratic principle of majority rule and causes problems like costly policy reversals.

The way you cast your vote can depend on the type of election. Different voting systems are used at different elections across the UK.

What can we learn from different PR systems operating in the UK?

# Welcome to National Conference

from UNISON Scotland Convener Lilian Macer

**W**elcome to all our delegates and visitors to Brighton for UNISON's National Delegate Conference (NDC).

As we gather in Brighton to set UNISON policy I would like to take some time to reflect on the past year, both the challenges we have faced and our achievements in Scotland.

As we continue to defend our public services we have witnessed a reduction in funding in all areas. The impact of the Government's social, economic and political policies of austerity continues with the most vulnerable in our society being disproportionately affected.

Our message continues to be that high quality public services are affordable and can be funded through fair taxation; this is the basis for decent services provided by properly rewarded staff and is the key to achieving our social objectives.

Over the past year we have focused on our members pay. Thanks to years of pay restraint and inflation, public sector workers' pay is worth far less now than 10 years ago. Our members

**Our conference is the opportunity for us to set our union's policies that will deliver for our members and the communities we serve'**



are angry with the effect of the Westminster and Scottish Governments' austerity agenda on them and their families.

In December our Further Education members in Scotland won an improved pay rise after a sustained campaign including industrial action.

The strike was about equality of pay and terms and conditions and recognised that support staff are the backbone of Scotland's colleges and don't deserve to be treated as second-class citizens. Our members stood together and stood strong and delivered a significant victory.

Our local government workers' ballot turnout was below the 50% threshold under current legislation imposed by the UK Government, so we are not able to take industrial action.

However this will not stop our campaign to break the government's public sector pay policy.

*continued on page 4*

## IMPORTANT EVENTS

### Scottish Branches Meeting

**Monday 19 June 5.30pm - An essential meeting to get last minute news and updates.**

**The Old Ship Hotel**

**Kings Road Brighton BN1 1NR**

### Local Government Branches Meeting

**Saturday 17 June 4.30 - 6.00pm**

**Syndicate Room 1**

**Brighton Centre**

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# Welcome to Conference from Lilian Macer

*From Page 3*

Since we met last year for our conference we have seen a number of significant changes, not least the result of the EU Referendum and the triggering of Article 50 in March 2017. The UK decision to exit the EU will undoubtedly affect working people, their families and communities in Scotland.

The EU exit negotiations require that the government both seeks to leave the EU but also negotiates a new relationship and trade deal with the EU. This is an historic European negotiation that must answer both the challenges of today and tomorrow and fundamentally address devolved UK constitutional and legal issues that also arise.

There is also the calling of a snap General Election by Theresa May (the outcome of which is unknown at the time of writing). All the indications are for another Tory UK Government which will pose significant challenge and threats to working people and trade

unions

Our international campaigns continue to raise the human rights violations and both financial and social injustice experienced by our sisters and brothers. Since last year's conference the situation for Palestinians has worsened. Israel's military occupation of the West Bank and the siege of Gaza has continued unabated.

In Colombia it has been a dramatic year which saw the peace agreement rejected in a national referendum in October and then in December following further negotiations ratified by the Colombian Government.

The attempted coup in Turkey and then the brutal reaction of the state by sacking 100,000s of workers, imprisoning Kurdish and other political opponents and the closing down of much of the press and media leading up to the controversial referendum, illustrated again why we need to offer solidarity to people in this region.

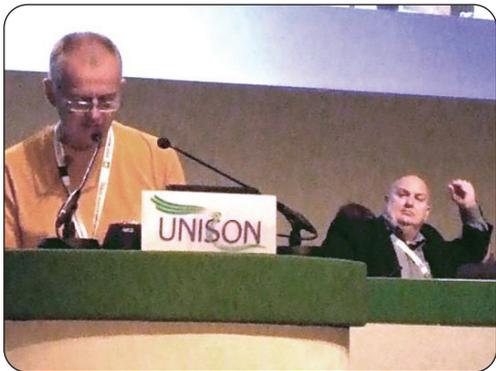
We face difficult times in the trade union movement with an avowedly anti-union UK government which has shown its disdain for workers' rights.

Our conference is the opportunity for us to set our union's policies that will deliver for our members and the communities we serve.

I look forward to seeing you and listening to your contributions in the debates and focussed discussions over the week of NDC. Enjoy conference.



*Memories: Delegates are inspired by a speech at 2007 Conference.*



*The platform finds a novel way of letting Glasgow's Jim Main know his time is up as he ignores the red light.*

## Annual report: Scotland only area to increase members

**C**heck out page 7 of your Annual Report and you'll see UNISON Scotland is the only region to show a net increase in full members in 2016.

Mike Kirby, Scottish Secretary, said: "It shows when branches and organising staff work together in recruiting and promoting the advantages of union membership in the public services, whether delivered in-house,

public sector agencies, the community sector or in the utilities, workers see the benefits and join us.

"Individual grievance and disciplinaries, consultation on occupational group issues, individual professional regulation and registration, equal pay, collective bargaining... over 150,000 people know the strength of the union."

# Who's who, or handy folk to know

## Lilian Macer and Stephen Smellie, Scotland Delegates

Lilian and Stephen are elected as Scotland's reps to Conference by the union's Scottish Council of branches. See page 6 for details of what they do at Conference and how they can help.

Lilian is from Lanarkshire Health Branch and is UNISON Scotland Convener.

Stephen, from South Lanarkshire Branch, is Depute Convener.



## Mike Kirby, Scottish Secretary

Mike Kirby is Scotland's top full time official. Mike took over as Scottish Secretary in December 2010 after serving as Scottish Convener - Scotland's lead lay activist - since the merger that created UNISON in 1993.

Mike was also for many years one of Scotland's lay Regional reps to National Conference. He was 2011/12 STUC President.



## Alison Mitchell, Standing Orders Committee Rep

Alison Mitchell from South Lanarkshire Branch is Scotland's rep on the Standing Orders Committee which sets out the business for the week.

Alison will be the source of information on what's going on and whether your motion has any chance!



## Vice Presidents

Due to the sad and untimely death of Eric Roberts in his presidential year, Conference will be chaired by vice presidents Carol Sewell and Margaret McKee.

**Carol Sewell** has worked in local government in the West Midlands for 41 years and been a benefits officer since 1983. She joined Nalگو when she began her career with the local authority and has been a member ever since.

**Margaret McKee** has been a catering assistant for 37 years in the Royal Victoria Hospital in Belfast.

She was awarded the TUC women's gold badge at the 2016 Congress in recognition of her union and community work.



## Dave Prentis, General Secretary

Dave Prentis was elected in 2000 and then re-elected in 2006, 2010 and 2015.

Born and brought up in Leeds, he took a BA in history in London, followed by an MA in industrial relations at the University of Warwick. Dave is a member of the TUC General Council and its executive committee.

On his re-election he said: "The last few months have been challenging, but now the whole union must come together and work relentlessly to fight for public sector workers, their rights at work, their jobs and their pay. I am proud that members have put their trust in me to lead that fight."



# Scotland policy guide on all the main issues

Lilian Macer and Stephen Smellie were elected by the Scottish Council as UNISON Scotland's delegates to Conference.

Delegates should use them as a source of information and they have a key organisational role.

They can help you liaise with other branches and regions. They will know how debates are organised, who to speak to and, more importantly, how to get to speak.

They will advise on Scottish policy and will speak for UNISON Scotland in debates.

Here, they preview the main debates at Conference, offering comments and advice from a UNISON Scotland policy perspective.

The briefing cannot mandate branches who may have different policies, however it may assist delegates in taking an overview of Conference.



*Depute convener Stephen Smellie detects someone talking during his speech.*

Conference 2016 has 109 motions (19 fewer than 2016) and a pathetic three rule amendments (down by 13 on 2016).

UNISON Scotland and Scottish branches have submitted 16 motions and amendments which is two up on last year. Edinburgh, for the second time, has submitted no motions at all which suggests they are quite happy with the way things are thank you very much.

## Re-prioritising

The experience of recent years is that conference will manage to discuss 30 to 35 or so of these motions.

Therefore if your favourite is not discussed below, it is unlikely to be debated first time around and the only alternative will be in the re-prioritisation exercise. This will take place on Wednesday evening/ Thursday morning, for

Friday afternoon's agenda (see page 12).

## Priorities

The Standing Orders Committee (SOC) has balloted regions, the NEC, self organised groups, National Young Members' Forum and the National Retired Members' Committee on what motions should be prioritised for debate. The Scottish Council meeting in April agreed Scotland's priorities.

## Scotland motions and amendments

The following motions and amendments involving Scotland have been prioritised.

**2. Organising and growing our membership in private contractors**  
*Lanarkshire Health Amendment 2.3*

**3. An organising strategy for the Social Care workforce** *Scotland*

**17. Dying to Work Campaign**, *South Lanarkshire.*

**Composite B (inc motion 22). Pensions and Climate Change**, *Scotland moving*

**74. The Great Repeal Bill - Protecting Devolution**, *Scotland and Lanarkshire Health amendments*

**84. EU Exit - Protecting the Northern Ireland Peace Process**, *Scotland Amendment 84.1*

**85. Standing together for LGBT equality**  
*Scottish Electricity Amendment 85.1*

**Composite D (inc motion 52) Automation**  
*Police Staff Scotland*

**Composite G (inc motion 91) Stand up to Racism**, *Glasgow City*

**96. Climate Change and a Just Transition**, *South Lanarkshire with Glasgow City Amendment 96.2*

**Composite E (inc motion 65) Turkey**, *South Lanarkshire moving.*

**69. New Threats to Cuba from Trump Administration**, *South Lanarkshire*

**47. Defend Whistle Blowing**, *Police Staff Scotland*

**107. Advice on In-Work Benefits**, *South Lanarkshire*

## Scotland priorities

**As a reminder for delegates the priorities for debate agreed at Scottish Council on 1 April were...**

- 3: An Organising Strategy for the Social Care Workforce, *Scotland*
- 22: Pension Funds: Divestment from Fossil Fuel Extraction, *Scotland*
- 84: EU Exit - protecting the Northern Ireland Peace Process, *Northern Ireland*
- 74: The Great Repeal Bill - protecting devolution *Northern Ireland*
- 96: Climate Change and a Just Transition, *South Lanarkshire*
- 65: Turkey, *South Lanarkshire*
- 17: Dying to Work Campaign, *South Lanarkshire*
- 91: Stand up to Racism, *City of Glasgow Branch*
- 69: New Threats to Cuba from Trump Administration, *South Lanarkshire*
- 47: Defend Whistleblowing, *Police Staff Scotland*
- 107: Advice on 'In-Work' Benefits, *South Lanarkshire*
- 52: Automation in the Public Sector, *Police Staff Scotland*



*We're not saying Lilian's speech was long, but an NEC member felt a tea break was necessary...*



*...and in a first for Lilian, she joins the platform in dozing off during her own contribution.*

## Recruiting and Organising: Motions 1 to 15

# Need to develop organising approach never been greater

**M**otions in this section of the agenda around recruiting and organising will focus on the union's organising strategy ensuring we are fit to cope with the onslaught of savage cuts to public services.

This section includes motions and amendments from 1 through to 15 and is supportable from a UNISON Scotland perspective.

Austerity cuts have reduced the number of activists and put further pressure on facility time; while increased fragmentation of the workforce has made organising more difficult. Meanwhile the need for us to develop an organising approach has never been greater.

**Motion 1 Developing an organising branch** from the National Executive Council and amendment 1.1 from Tower Hamlets, focuses on the increasingly hostile environment in which UNISON branches are operating and sets out the organising strategy for the union.

**Motion 2 Organising and growing our membership in private**

**contractors** is from the newly established Private Contractors National Forum: Following last year's rule change to establish the new National Private Contractors Forum the forum is giving our private contractor members a real voice in UNISON and a route to engage in the democratic structures of the union.

This is a unique opportunity for the union to reach out into our membership in private companies, building our power and our ability to protect these workers.

**Amendment 2.3 from Lanarkshire Health Branch** puts the private contractor rep at the heart of the branch structure.

**Motion 3 An organising strategy for the social care workforce: from Scotland** sets out the work UNISON has done

*continued on page 8*

From Page 7

develop a 'Fair Work' agenda which has included a commitment to pay the Living Wage to all workers providing social care and ensure that a range of workforce matters are included in procurement.

**Comp A (motion 11 and 12) Support for Activists** from Worcestershire, Coventry and St Cross Hospitals and Coventry City, notes that our activists are the backbone of our union. They are in the front line of all our battles with employers, our campaigns and they are the first people members turn to

when they have a problem

**Motion 13 Mental health champions** from the National Disabled Members' Committee recognises the work undertaken by UNISON Cymru/Wales over many years.

Last year, with the help of Mind Cymru and Time to Change Wales, Cymru/Wales Disabled Self Organised Group launched their mental health awareness training. They have developed a mental health champions training programme for members and the first champions graduated in April.

## Negotiating and Bargaining: Motions 16 to 27

# Celebrate Scottish Young Members anti-bullying campaign award

**Motion 17 Dying to work campaign, South Lanarkshire Branch.** This motion has been agreed by Scottish Council and highlights the current position for workers with a terminal illness who are not classified as having a Protected Characteristic and therefore have very limited legal protection against employers dismissing them due to illness. The motion sets out a campaign strategy for the branches to follow using the TUC campaign materials.

**Motion 18 Stepping up the campaign against bullying and harassment** from National Young Members' Forum, reaffirms its policy of a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment.

The motion welcomes the development of the work by UNISON's young members to raise the issue of bullying and harassment of young workers.

This motion would give an excellent opportunity to celebrate the achievements

of Scotland Young Members Committee in winning the TUC award.

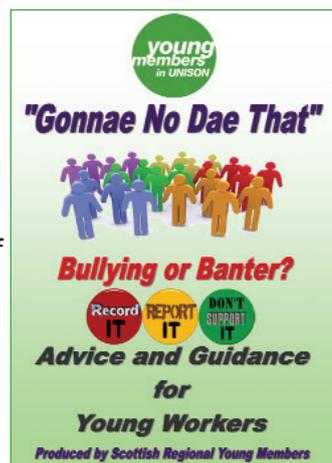
**Motion 19 Tackling stress** from Gateshead recognises the large scale of harm to members caused by work related stress, including sickness and serious illness, and the personal cost to members and their families, and even premature death.

**Motion 20 Pay – Tackling In-Work Poverty** from the National Executive Council, calls for the NEC to continue campaigning for an end to the public sector pay cap.

It further highlights the consequent falling living standards for staff and the need to campaign against cuts to in-work social security such as tax credits and Universal Credit.

**Comp B includes Scotland's Motion 22 Pensions Funds: Divestment from Fossil Fuel Extraction,** and Norfolk County's **Motion 23 Making Pensions Safe in a time of Climate Crisis.**

This addresses the issue of how we protect our pensions from poor investments in fossil fuels that cannot be used if we are to avoid catastrophic climate change.



*continued on page 9*

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## Campaigning: Motions 28 to 57

# WASPI campaign tops the priorities

**M**otions 28 to 57 in the campaigning section will cover the broad range of issues in our campaigning agenda, defending and supporting our members to deliver high quality public services to our local communities, with a number of motions dealing with the crisis in social care.

**Motion 28 The integration of health and social care – responding to the challenges** is the NEC flagship motion highlighting the crisis in health and social care. Together with the corresponding amendments it raises our deep concerns that, as a direct result of the actions of the UK Conservative government, plans are taking place at a time of prolonged austerity, with the NHS experiencing its poorest settlement for a generation and social care continuing to be run into the ground by years of chronic under-funding.

**Motion 30 The crisis in health and social care** from Yorkshire and Humberside, highlights the survey by UNISON which found that 65 per cent of homecare, residential support and day services staff said they have less time to spend with those they care for because of staff shortages and 36 per cent said rationing of supplies had increased as a result of budget cuts

**Motion 33 STPs – the future of the NHS?** from Colchester Health opposes austerity-driven cutbacks in hospital, community and mental health services, whether these be presented in the form of Sustainability and Transformation Plans (STPs) or less overt moves towards reconfiguration, cost-cutting and consolidation by trusts.

The motion agrees to support national campaigns on this issue and campaigns to defend local access to hospital services until new, superior, alternative evidence-based services are developed, properly staffed and funded, that ensure safe and improved services for patients.

**Motion 36 Why we need to build a new housing consensus for affordable and decent homes for all** is from the Greater London Housing Associations. This motion and the amendments highlight that millions of workers and their families live in expensive, overcrowded and insecure homes. Often these homes are long distances away from work or family and involve many hours of daily commutes.

Conversely UNISON research has shown many families have grown up children living with them not out of choice, but of necessity as they cannot afford to buy or rent a home of their own. The motion calls for mass investment in a house building programme to meet current and future needs.

**Motion 39 getting the public on our side – public service campaigning** is from National Executive Council. This motion and amendments set out the work the union needs to do as we get close to a decade since the beginning of the global financial crisis.

The pressure on public services and those that provide them remains unrelenting. Despite the unprecedented cuts that our members and the communities they serve have already experienced, a raft of further measures now threaten to push services to breaking point.



*New NEC cameraderie wears thin as Stephen Smellie subtly suggests that Kate Ramsden's carefully thought out argument may have followed a long lunch.*

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**Motion 41 Challenging the TU Act 2016** from Cymru/Wales continues to condemn the Trade Union Act 2016 in Great Britain and its various restrictive and draconian regulations to hamper the ability of unions to bargain and to advance pay and

conditions in the workplace.

The motion welcomes the work undertaken in Cymru/Wales to mitigate the excesses of the Act and calls on the NEC to continue to oppose the Trade Union Act and seek its repeal at the earliest opportunity.



Aberdeenshire's Inez Kirk (left) remains to be convinced by a Conference speaker while Ann Gray is a bit more adept at keeping her thoughts to herself.

**Motion 42 Media portrayal of older people** from the National Retired Members' Committee, draws attention to the attack on older people in our society. Far from enjoying gold plated pensions and untold wealth, millions are living in poverty or fear of poverty. Services on which the majority of older people disproportionately rely have been cut or are under threat. Pensions and benefits have so declined in

value that even basic needs cannot be met and thousands die each winter from cold related causes.

**Motion 55 UNISON and the WASPI Campaign** from National Women's Committee, was the top scoring motion in the priorities. It builds on the excellent work UNISON has been doing to advance the WASPI campaign.

The Conservative government's Pension Act (1995) included the provision to raise the pension age of women from 60 to 65, in line with men's retirement age. The subsequent Pension Act (2011) implemented a much faster timetable for bringing in the changes which have discriminated against women.

**Motion 57 A living pension** National Retired Members' Committee. The UK State Pension is rated as one of the worst in Europe.

Pensions are not benefits but are in fact deferred wages from previous National Insurance payments and deductions from work and taxable income.

The motion and amendment calls for a single tier pension for every pensioner increased in line with the triple lock that is the better of average earnings, prices or 2.5%, and to continue to seek changes to the index used for calculating prices to include housing costs.

## International: Motions 58 to 84

### Government has ignored devolved administrations on Brexit

**Motion 59 Child marriage is child labour** from National Women's Committee, welcomes the initiative by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) aiming for a world without forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour which it is anticipated will also address other sustainable development goals, including gender equality.

**Motion 61 Working globally for LGBT rights** from the National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee,

celebrates our union's rich history of international work and recognises that the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) group has incorporated this into its own work.

UNISON continues to raise LGBT issues in the different international forums in which we work and raise trade unionism in all LGBT forums in which we engage

**Motion 73 Exiting the EU – a fair deal for workers and public services** from the

*continued on page 11*

From Page 10

National Executive Council, recognises that the triggering of Article 50 in early 2017 is a decision that affects working people, their families and communities in the UK, the European Union and broader Europe.

The motion and amendments insist that these negotiations must be transparent, open to trade union consultation and involve parliamentary scrutiny and accountability.

Workers need a fair deal from these negotiations with provisions for investment in quality jobs; protection of living standards and employment rights.

**Motion 74 The great repeal bill – protecting devolution** is from Northern Ireland. The motion and **amendments from Scotland and Lanarkshire Health** raise the issues affecting the devolved nations.

The motion also highlights the way the government has consistently shown a disregard for the views of the devolved administrations in relation to the protections necessary when leaving the EU.

**Motion 75 Immigration and the effects of the EU referendum and the Brexit vote** from the National Black Members' Committee, recognises the need for the

issue of immigration and free movement of people to be high profile and calls on the NEC to liaise with Regional Black Members' Committees to share best practice and ideas on how to support members impacted by this and highlight the positive influence of immigration both to our public services and wider society

**Motion 84 EU exit – protecting the Northern Ireland peace process** is from Northern Ireland:

The current position of the UK Government for a 'hard' exit from the EU places the Northern Ireland peace process in severe jeopardy

and has serious implications for the island of Ireland as a whole.

**The amendment from Scotland** recognises that the reintroduction of a hard border in Ireland would have an impact on Scotland, Wales and England in relation to freedom of movement, trade and solidarity within these islands.



*Jane Aitchison experiences that moment when you discover you've brought the drinks list from last night instead of your speech.*

## Equalities: Motions 85 to 92

### Integrate LGBT issues into champions campaign

**Motion 85 Standing together for LGBT equality** from the National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Committee highlights research carried out for UNISON in 2013 which found that LGBT people were facing greater financial hardship, problems finding safe accommodation and increased marginalisation and invisibility.

A reduction of specialised LGBT services, including housing support and homelessness services, anti-hate crime and youth services, support and help-line services, mental health and sexual health

services, and gender identity services, are happening at exactly the time these services are more needed than ever.

**The Amendment from Scottish Electricity Branch** asks that the NEC continues to integrate LGBT equality issues into our Public Service Champions campaign

**Motion 86 Race inequality in the workplace** highlights that despite efforts to bring further equality into society, evidence shows that Black workers are still being

*continued on page 12*

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held back in the job market.

The amount of Black members holding senior posts still remains low while unemployment among Black people remains high, particularly among young Black people, and Black workers are also more likely to be in less secure forms of employment than white workers.

**Motion 87 Challenging racism and xenophobia**, from the National Executive Council, asserts that the only real answer to low pay and exploitation for all workers is stronger employment rights protections, stronger collective bargaining and trade

union solidarity against racism. The trade union movement must stand at the forefront of tackling racism in the workplace and in our communities.

**Motion 92 Human rights under attack**, from East Midlands, highlights the despicable acts of the Conservatives who have re-stated their commitment to repeal the Human Rights Act (HRA) and replace it with a British Bill of Rights. This, like the Trade Union Act, is an ideological attack on our rights and freedoms. Workers' rights and human rights are inseparable.

## Effective and Efficient Union - Branch Funding

**Motions 101 and 102 on Branch Funding are similar to Motion 123 which Scotland opposed last year and which fell. They are quite far down the list but if it looks like they will be heard, further advice will be issued in our daily briefings.**

In 2016, UNISON Scotland supported the alternative strategy in Motion 121, Gateway to the Future: Stable and Sustainable Branch Resources, which was carried.

The motion and the report with 11 recommendations was designed to secure the financial stability of the union, while giving immediate support to branches that are struggling to support members.

Scotland also took the lead in piloting Activity Based budgets which brought valuable information to inform the process.

**Motion 103 Activity based budgeting** from Salford City believes these recent developments in activity-based budgeting are unwelcome and will not strengthen branches in the ways anticipated.

The motion therefore calls upon the National Executive Council to ensure that Motion 121 is implemented as passed by National Delegate Conference 2016.

## Amendments to Rules

The Briefings Team will distribute a separate Scottish briefing on Rule Amendments to delegates on the Wednesday of conference. Disappointingly for some of us with anorak leanings, there are only three.

## Keep up with the Conference theme



Conference is a serious business but that doesn't mean we can't have a bit of fun too.

The Briefings Team has run a theme over the last few conferences including 'Indiana John', 'Cuts Wars', 'The Conference of the Rings', 'Star Trek the Conference Generation', 'Conference Royale', 'Lili Potter and the Conference of Secrets', 'Glescalot' and last year 'Mike - The Greatest fairy Tale never Told'. All have been praised for their literary merit (we think).

This year's eagerly awaited theme remains a closely guarded secret.

# What's happening?

## GUIDE FOR NEW DELEGATES (AND OLD ONES WHO WERE AFRAID TO ASK)

**W**ith up to 3,000 delegates and visitors, Conference can be a daunting prospect, especially if you don't know what's happening. But now you will, thanks to *SiU's* handy guide.

### Scotland Meeting

Monday's Scotland delegates' meeting gives last minute information and discusses Scottish input. It is also your chance to push your issues (see p3).

### Seating Plan

There should be a seating plan in this pack. We traditionally get at least one seat wrong - so if you find yourself sitting on someone's knee, it's likely to be a mistake.

### Credentials Bar Code

No this is not a secret sign to get a drink. Your credential card has a bar code which will scan you in. You must wear the card at all times. Wearing it at your waist is not helpful to the stewards, will lead to delays and may end up with more than you expected being scanned!

### Conference Guide

This prints all motions submitted. It also has more detailed useful information. You will also get a booklet with composite motions, listed by letters of the alphabet (usually with the numbers of the motions in brackets).

### Speaking, speakers lists, timings

Seats for speakers FOR and AGAINST are labelled at the front. If in doubt, staff at the Rostrum Control will help (see page 13).

In any case it is best to tell them you want to speak because they will have a list - and with amendments it is not always clear which seat you should be in. It also helps to speak to the Scottish Regional Delegates first!

Speakers can speak *only once* in a debate (except for the right of reply). Movers get five minutes. However, Conference sometimes reduces this. You will get warning to chainsaw all those bits you loved dearly out of your speech. Subsequent speakers get three minutes.

**Always start your speech by giving your name and your branch.**

**HANDY HINT:** Have a brief closing remark ready in case you run out of time.

### Right of Reply

The mover of a motion is allowed a Right of Reply

at the end of the debate or before voting on an amendment (but not both). This is a reply to points raised in the debate and cannot be abused by introducing new stuff (although many try it).

### Voting

Normally votes are taken by holding up brightly coloured cards and the president will decide whether a count is needed.

If it is close, or a major issue is involved, the chair can call for a branch card vote. Delegates can also call for a card vote but

only if 10% of us shout out with voting cards up immediately. If this is on an amendment, the debate is suspended until the result is known.

Branch card votes are stamped with the voting entitlement of your branch and with either FOR or AGAINST.

The correct number must be used for the particular vote. **Get a colleague to check it.**

### Procedure

Like any other formal meeting, Conference is run by a series of rules. This often seems

very bureaucratic but the system ensures some semblance of order is kept.

The president chairs Conference and their ruling on any issue is final.

**See page 15 for rostrum lights, points of order and handy hints...**



*Irritated that Stevenson's photos always have her with her mouth open, Glasgow's Carol Ball mounts a protest silent speech.*



*Lanarkshire Health's Katrina Murray soldiers bravely on as she catches a whiff of something nasty, and hopes it wasn't her.*

# Rough Guide to Conference

After years of being caught out by jargon and sneaky procedural wheezes, your *SiU* scoop brings you a rough guide to help you out.

## Standing Orders Committee (SOC)

Comprises reps elected by each Region (ours is Alison Mitchell) and three from the NEC who

organise the order of business, composites and so on. A report will be issued each morning on the day's business and probably future business - this is really important to understanding what is going on. Sometimes their rulings are challenged but it rarely makes sense to do so

since the committee reflects regions' priorities.

## NEC Positions

Most motions haven't got a chance of being heard and will be referred to the NEC, or somewhere. So it is worth looking to see what position the NEC has taken on your motion.

## Agenda and Priorities

The running order (you'll get one at Conference) is set after consultation with regions on priorities. Motions are grouped into 'themes' to avoid duplication and the risk of voting against what we'd voted for earlier (yes we've done that before!).

## Friday priorities

Come Friday (oh, come, come Friday), there is a chance to re-prioritise your pet motion that was not reached. On Wednesday we will circulate branches with a form to pick their priorities for Friday afternoon. These will be collated and go to the SOC which will set out a Friday pm agenda that reflects Conference's wishes. That can be an eye-opener!

## Emergency motions

Conference has to vote to hear emergency

motions in the first place (after the SOC has decided it is an emergency and is relevant and competent). To qualify for an emergency, it must have been impossible to submit the motion's subject matter before the deadline.

## Composite

An amalgam of similar motions drawn together into one motion that nobody likes! Not fair really, because many composites do succeed in combining areas of agreement through negotiation. You will get a composites booklet before Conference and new ones issued throughout the week.

## Suspending Standing Orders

A super wheeze (needing a two thirds majority) to do something that's not on the agenda. To be avoided in most cases because it cuts across agreed priorities and of course stops Conference making decisions.

## Grouped Debates

Where a pile of similar motions and amendments are all moved one after the other, there is an all-in debate and we vote on them one after the other at the end.

## Reference Back

Reports, such as the annual report or standing orders report, are presented to conference for approval. If someone is unhappy with part of the report they can ask for 'reference back', meaning the committee or working group that prepared the report should reconsider that section.

## Remittance

When the NEC asks for a motion to be referred to them for further clarification, elaboration, or investigation.

## Scottish delegates

Lilian Macer and Stephen Smellie are this year's Scottish Regional delegates. They are there to help, especially if you want to get into a debate - they'll tell you how, who to see, and if you're not careful (or lucky), what to say! Sincerely folks, they are an essential source of advice, information and help.



*Alison Mitchell looks forward with enthusiasm to the prospect of a whole week of Standing Orders Committee meetings.*

## Conference briefings and website service

The Scottish Communications and Campaigns Committee, along with the Regional Delegates, will issue daily briefings during Conference week (new rules mean we are only allowed one briefing a day).

It is not a 'News' service after the event (after all you were *there*), it is for briefing delegates *before* the event.

However, we will issue some special reports as a basis for branch reports back home. We will also be updating the website with most of what goes out in print.

The service is also there to be used by branches to promote motions within Scottish policy. In exceptional circumstances we can

also help from our own resources with typing and communications with branches, media etc back home.

Your contact is **John Stevenson**, *SiU* editor, along with **Kate Ramsden** and **Jane Aitchison**.

Other committee members will be helping out too.

**It would be really helpful if speakers could let the team know when they are speaking (so we can get a photo) and provide a copy of their speech for the reports.**



*Kate, John and Jane in happier times before Kate was elected to the NEC and crossed to the dark side.*

### Handy Hints

#### Card Votes

- If you split your vote, make sure the figures add up. Get someone to check.
- make sure you've SIGNED it.
- and that the branch name is on it.

#### Get your photo in advance

- If you haven't done it online, get your credential photo in advance. Photo booths are few and far between. **Handy Hint:** Try to take it a wee bit more seriously than Stephen Smellie.



#### Consideration

- We hope the briefings will be of some use to you. But for safety, do not leave papers on the floor.
- Don't leave mobile phone ringers on.
- Don't walk in front of the signers.
- Lots of people will be pushing papers at you as you come to Conference. Not taking one does not make you a bad person!

### Blinkin' lights and points of order

#### Timing for speeches is shown by lights on the rostrum...

... but even if you don't notice the light, there is always some bright spark who will shout 'time', usually when they're not agreeing with you.

It can be useful to have an 'escape clause' in your speech to cut to so you can finish on a good note.

#### **The lights mean...**

**Yellow:** means the speaker has a minute to go.

**Red:** means 'zip the lip' now, not after you've made ten more points.

**Green:** means a point of order has been raised and will be heard before the next speaker.

#### **Points of Order**

You can move 'next business', 'adjournment' or 'private session' but the most used is 'that the question be put'.

The president must put this to Conference and, if carried, we go straight to the right of reply, and the vote on the motion or amendment. (The chair can caution there has not been enough debate.)

This move is especially helpful when there are a host of speakers for a motion and none against.

You can only move most points of order if you haven't already spoken in the debate.



*Dundee's Jim McFarlane just manages to hold back the tears as the red light goes on before he's finished*

# End of an era as Jane steps down after 30 years at the top

by John Stevenson

Scotland's Jane Carolan, chair of UNISON's key National Policy Committee, is standing down at the end of Conference after 30 years in the leadership of the union.

The journey to UNISON NEC member and member of the TUC General Council and its ruling Executive Committee, started in the 1980s in the Glasgow District branch of Nalگو.

As an Equalities Housing Adviser and young activist, her qualities were soon spotted by the political giants of the union at the time.

Past presidents Norrie Steel and John McFadden (who taught her 'it is OK to be nervous when you are public speaking'), along with Andy Sweeney, told Jane she needed to stand for top office.

"Norrie used to say it's not 'if' you get on the NEC but 'when' you get on the NEC", Jane recalls.

"I also learned discipline and organisation", said Jane. Nobody is bigger than the union and the only real strength we have is collectivism.

## Equalities

Passionate about equalities at a time when it was an uphill struggle, Jane was elected to Nalگو's National Women's Committee in the mid 1980s.

She was then elected to the National Local Government Committee, the lead negotiating body, soon rising to be the chair.

When UNISON came along in 1993, Jane and Dougie Black were elected to the new Local Government Service Group Executive. Dougie recalled recently that: "Jane was one of the brightest people in the union".

"UNISON's NEC had real organisers at the time", said Jane as she reeled off what have almost become legendary names. Rita Donaghy, Brenda Hudson, Jean



Who said Morning Star events couldn't be fun?

Geldhart and Dundee's 'El Blanco', Jim White.

In 1997 Jane herself was elected to the NEC and became chair of the influential Policy Committee.

By 2003 she was a member of the TUC General Council and its Executive Committee.

## Organising

You need to push Jane to get any sense of pride in her achievements. Personal recognition is not something she has ever craved. For her it was about following her political beliefs, standing up for equalities, raising working class consciousness. It was just what you did.

But she did take some pride in the fact that some women had told her: "You've made it alright to be a woman in a leadership position." That says a lot about her achievements in those days.

When you talk to her, the agenda always comes back to organising.

We hear a lot about the full time/lay officer tension, but what was it like in 1989 when we were winning things like an 8.8% rise, weighted towards the low paid - almost unbelievable these days - after a national local government strike?

"I think we were more of a team. You didn't see it as full time and lay

It's not about getting the best possible deal in the circumstances, but creating the circumstances to get the best possible deal'

JANE CAROLAN

officers and there was no expectation that the full time officers would lead.

"Committees don't make lay leadership, but working together with everyone having a hand and a role in developing the objective, does. We'd develop a plan, stick to it and everyone knew what part they were supposed to play", Jane explained.

"We didn't start from the position of going on strike. We started from the position of organising, building the anger, so that when it got to the point of asking about strike, members were ready."

## Politics affect all of our lives

Jane regrets that the union is not so political these days. "At Scottish meetings we would have passionate political exchanges, votes on policy and strategy. Not personal politics though. We'd have a pint together afterwards."

Mind you, the long-standing rivalry between the Glasgow and Strathclyde branches got to such a level that they had to organise a 'reconciliation social'.

"I think there is not the appreciation these days that all we do in a trade union is and should be political. Politics affects all parts of our lives", said Jane.

But when so many people say they don't see politics as relevant, what do we do about it?

"Dare I say we need to do something about class consciousness?" asked Jane.

Continued on Page 17

# 'Tireless campaigner for socialism and feminism'

From Page 16

"We need to educate new stewards that organising is not just about recruiting, it is as much about understanding politics and organising in the workplace."

"There's almost too much focus on keeping members happy when sometimes it should be about making them angry - that's what will get them to take action at the end of the day.

"It's not about getting the best possible deal in the circumstances, but creating the circumstances to get the best possible deal."

## Equal Pay

When asked about significant achievements over the last 30 years, Jane was absolutely clear: "Getting equal pay in Local Government and in the Health Service. We don't blow our trumpet enough about it. And founding the new union of UNISON on a firm equality agenda."

Who were the significant figures for Jane in the wider movement over the years?

"I had a lot of time for Tam Dalyell", she said and also singled out the late RMT leader Bob Crow.

"Bob and I had lots of fights but we could have constructive comradely fights - that's what was good about it."

## Internationalism

Jane has long been a strong internationalist involved in the Chile, Nicaragua, and Palestine solidarity movements. "It is important to have



Not much changes as Jane belts it out to a meeting - some time ago.

a wider perspective", she stressed.

Top of her international inspirations is Denis Goldberg who served 22 years in prison for fighting apartheid and became a friend and comrade.

She also singled out meeting a general secretary of the CCOO union in Andalucia. His father was executed by Franco, he went into exile and then he spirited back into the country to resist.

"When you hear such a history, it isn't something you read somewhere in a book - it is part of their family. That brings a stark reality to it."

## Advice for the future?

Jane's 'retirement' will include activism in CND ('it's in my blood'), being a director of Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI), 'stuff' for the Institute of Employment Rights, being a Children's Panel Member and getting back to writing.

So does Jane have any advice for the future?

Her head throws back and that

guffaw of a giggle takes over (one that has got her into trouble before when I have made a quip in her ear during formal proceedings).

"Organise!", she said. "Get back to the broad trade union principles. Single issue campaigns have their place. But whether low pay, benefit cuts or child poverty, they all have significant political reasons behind them that we need to understand and communicate to our members."

Jane Carolan has always been true to herself, consistent in the convictions she holds and accountable to the members she serves. She is a tireless campaigner for socialism and feminism.

She has never been afraid to take responsibility and articulate the difficult issues. You will never be in any doubt about her views on a subject but you will always be able to debate it with her.

**There's not many like her left and UNISON will be the poorer without her.**

## New NEC members

With Jane Carolan and Naomi Junnor standing down this year and Gordon McKay elected to the UK Healthcare seat, members in Scotland re-elected **Davena Rankin** (Glasgow Caledonian University) and **Maggie Cook** (Falkirk - unopposed) and elected for the first time, **Kate Ramsden** (Aberdeenshire), **Stephen Smellie** (South Lanarkshire) and **Jim McFarlane** (Dundee). They will take up post at the end of Conference.



## Get the Morning Star at conference

The Morning Star is the only newspaper that reports daily on the debates at conference and reports them favourably.

Other daily newspapers are more likely to attack the delegates who demand an end to austerity and argue for decent pay, conditions

and pensions for our members.

If you make a speech at conference there is a chance you'll see your wit and wisdom reported in the paper next day.

The Morning Star will be on sale each day at a stall in the exhibitions area.

# A wee bit about Brighton

by John Stevenson

If you find you have any time off (after 5pm of course) and you find you've exhausted all the fringe meetings, here is a brief guide of what Brighton has to offer.

Brighton has plenty of trendy bars, clubs and restaurants, as well as traditional British pubs and restaurants. There is a lively LGBT scene.

## The Lanes

The Lanes, an area of winding alleys and hidden squares and passages, are the historical heart of the fishing town of Brighthelmstone which is easy for me to say.

There is a wide range of 'new age' shops and up-market jewellery. They also boast coffee shops and specialist restaurants, as well as the traditional pubs.

## North Laine

North Laine is known as the 'cultural quarter', with 300 or so shops, as well as cafes, bars, pubs and theatres. The Royal Pavilion, Brighton museum & art gallery and theatres are all around here.

## Beachfront and Piers

Famous for its pebble beach and piers, the beachfront area offers a host of attractions



and you can hire deck chairs (contact the Briefings Team for instructions on how to knot your hankies!).

The fishing quarter has a museum, modern art trail and seafront artists' quarter.

**The Sealife Centre** is also on the seafront near the pier.

**The Palace Pier** is the only pier in England to be open year-round. Deckchairs again with amusement arcades and fairground rides and games, souvenir

shops, fish and chips and even a pub.

By night, the beachfront clubs are jumpin' (we're told). There is also open-air cinema, music on the beach, and shows and concerts at the seafront near Brighton Centre.

## Brighton Pavilion

Building on this Regency But 'n' Ben in the elaborate Indo-Saracenic style began in 1787 as a retreat for the somewhat decadent George IV, then the Prince of Wales.

The pavilion is home to the finest collections and examples of the chinoiserie style in Britain.

## History/ Politics

A branch of the Social Democratic Federation was first formed in Brighton in 1889. Organised trade unionism had begun long before with the arrival of the railway and railway engineering in the 1840s.

But it wasn't until 1986 that the Labour Party won control of the council.

The party also won control of the unitary authority from 1997 to 2003 when Brighton and Hove went to no overall control with the Tories as the biggest party.

From 2007, the Greens were famously the biggest party but in 2015 they lost 12 seats while Labour increased their tally by 12 making it the biggest party on 23 seats and it now forms the minority administration.

## ..and finally

Chris Eubank, ex-boxer, holds the purchased title of 'Lord of the Manor of Brighton' and Eleanor Marx, the daughter of Karl Marx, lived here.

# Some Brighton information

## Taxis

Brighton & Hove's licensed hackney carriage taxis are usually either a London type vehicle or saloon car with a large roof sign with the words 'TAXI' and 'FOR HIRE' on the front and are white with aquamarine bonnets and boots.

Both types of vehicle have the council's logo and the words 'Licensed TAXI' on the front doors as well as the licence number on the rear doors.

A plate on the back of the taxi gives its licence number and drivers must display a council issued badge in the taxi. These are the only vehicles which can stop and pick you up if you hail them in the street. The nearest taxi rank to the Conference Centre is just round the corner in West Street.



## Health

**Brighton and Hove's Walk-in Health Centre** is open from 8am to 8pm every day next to the railway station.  
0333 321 0946

**NHS Direct 0845 4647**

## Pharmacies

**Ashtons Late Night Pharmacy**, 98 Dyke Road, Seven Dials, Brighton BN1 3JD, Phone: 01273 325020. Opening hours: 9am to 10pm, every day

**Boots the Chemist**, 129 North Street, Brighton BN1 2BE,

Phone: 01273 207461. Opening hours: 8am to 8pm on Monday to Saturday, and 11am to 5pm on Sundays.

**Westons Chemist**, 6 - 7 Coombe Terrace, Lewes Road, Brighton BN2 4AD, Phone: 01273 605354. Opening hours: 9am to 10pm every day including weekends.

## Useful numbers

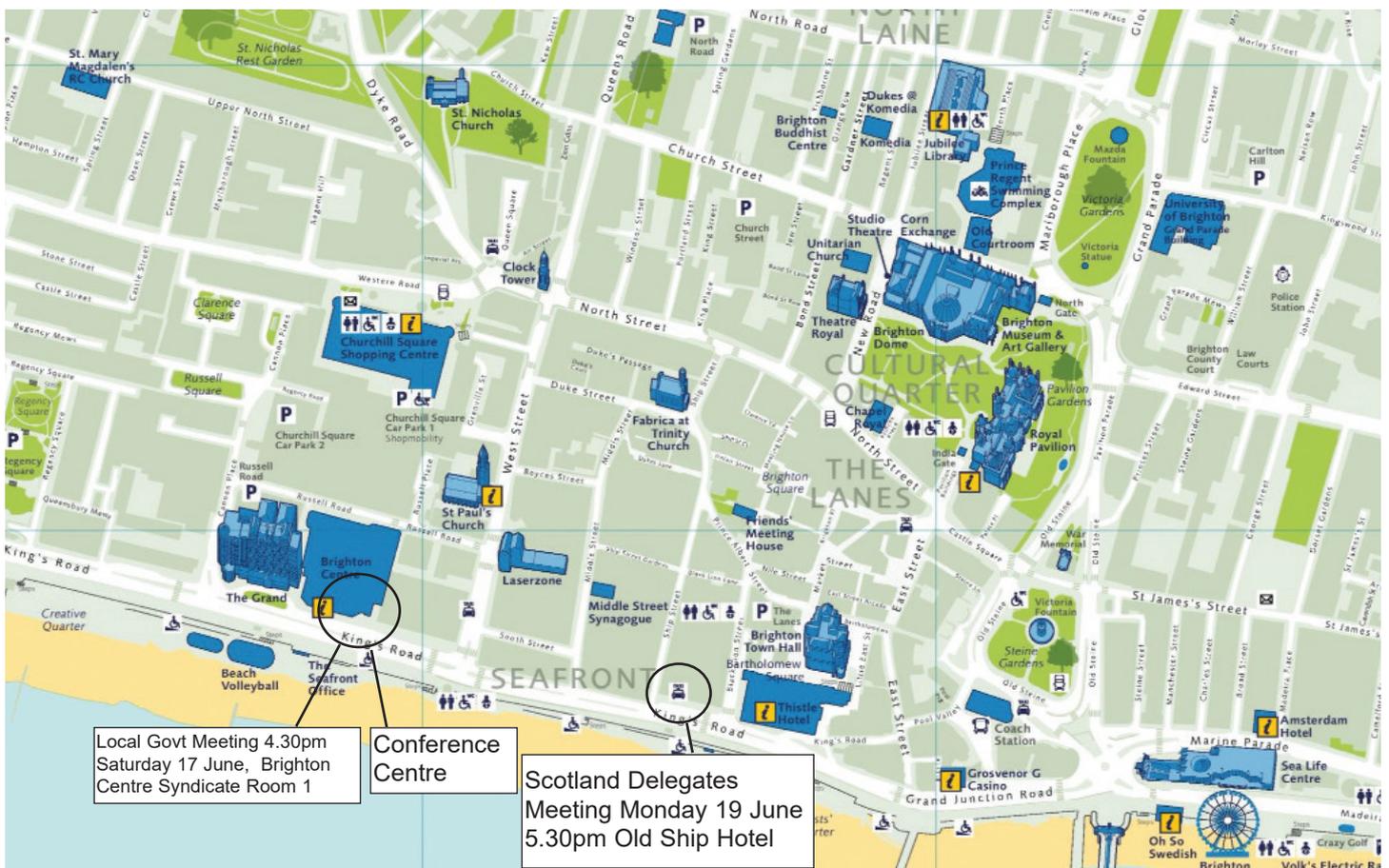
(These are not recommendations)

Brighton and Hove Radio Cabs 01273 20 40 60

City Cabs 01273 55 55 55

Streamline Taxis 01273 20 20 20

Brighton & Hove Bus and Coach Company 01273 886200 or [www.buses.co.uk/](http://www.buses.co.uk/)



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