

Midlothian fight to save 400 jobs *stop the cuts*
 Union runs petition and joins council to lobby Scottish Cabinet Secretary - p4

Rise in attacks on workers is 'tip of the iceberg'
 Annual Violence at Work survey calls for action - p2

#Cash4Tache demo for equal pay
 Glasgow members mount more lobbies to keep up the pressure - p2



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Thousands march in Edinburgh to demand Pay Up Now!

Edinburgh echoed to the demand "Pay Up Now!" on 7 October, as more than 5,000 public service workers marched through the Scottish capital.

The march and rally was organised by UNISON as part of the union's Pay Up Now! campaign, which is keeping pressure on both the Scottish and Westminster governments to end the pay cap and give all workers a decent pay rise.

Workers providing public services have seen their pay held back across the UK for almost a decade. Public sector pay rose by just 4.4% between 2010 and 2016, while the cost of living rose by 22%.

The Scottish government has said it is scrapping the pay cap a move welcomed by UNISON Scotland convenor Lilian Macer. But she also warned: "There is still much more to do."

"Public sector workers play a vital role in our communities," she told the rally, "looking after us by keeping us safe, healthy,

educated, and cared for.

"We can't accept the end of a 1% pay cap to just implement another pay cap. Public sector workers need pay rises at least in line with inflation and recognition of the pay they have lost for the last decade."

Scottish health worker and UNISON senior vice president Gordon McKay told the union members who marched: "Your families are proud of you. Your communities are proud of you. And your union is so, so proud of you."

"But I need to be honest: not everybody does value you, not everybody does respect you."

"Some people want to drive you into poverty and drive you out of the public sector. And every single one of them is sitting in the Tory cabinet in Westminster."

General secretary Dave Prentis also spoke to the rally, saying: "The UK and Scottish governments are now under real pressure to give all public service workers a decent pay rise."

"Employees across our public

services have had their pay held back for far too long. Classroom assistants, care workers, hospital cleaners and police clerks need a wage rise above the rate of inflation, so they can recoup some of the pay they've lost over the past few years.

And he added: "Any pay rises need to be properly funded so they don't mean deeper cuts to jobs

UNISON submits NHS pay claim to roll back austerity - p3

and services elsewhere. There must be no selective lifting of the cap for some public servants but not for others.

"All public sector employees, no matter where they work or

what job they do, need and deserve a decent pay rise now."

See report, photos and videos of the speakers on the UNISON Scotland website and at facebook.com/unionscot.

Scottish Government must use powers to protect services

No matter what the UK government decides in its budget, the Scottish government needs to use its full powers to ensure adequate funding to deliver these essential services and decent pay for the workers that the services rely on.

That is the conclusion of UNISON Scotland's briefing on the Scottish Parliament's Local Government Committee's

inquiry into the budget for the next financial year.

"Local government delivers essential services to Scotland's citizens. It is a cradle to grave service which plays a vital role in people's everyday lives. The services provided like refuse collection, parks and leisure facilities are as vital to our health and wellbeing as the NHS", says the briefing.

The briefing argues that, apart from the actual money available

it is also important that budgets and the announcements that follow them are clear and easily understood.

Recently the budget debates have focused round different claims about budget level, what's the best year to use as a starting point etc. Last year's budget announcement in particular lacked clarity, and it is hoped that this year there will be less spin.

See the briefing on our website.

Chris Bartter

The death of Chris Bartter on 28 October was deeply felt by so many in UNISON Scotland, even though he had retired as communications officer seven years ago.



From his early days as a steward in Glasgow libraries, to Service Conditions Officer in the Glasgow branch, to Chair of NALGO's Publicity Committee to lay District Secretary and then on to full time Communications Officer, Chris devoted enormous energies to UNISON and the trade union movement.

He didn't just work communications, he created the communications culture in UNISON Scotland, engaging, enthusing and training lay activists and always there to support them. Communications was not just publicity, it was organising.

But it's not all he did. He was instrumental in the first trade union street theatre campaign for the NHS in 1983 and the union's sponsorship of some of the first performances of 'The Steamie'.

He chaired the 7:84 theatre company, he was a huge part of reinstating Glasgow's May Day as a festival and latterly he was organising the launch of the Nelson Mandela Memorial Foundation and the Havana Glasgow Film Festival. He was a tireless Freedom of Information campaigner and he wrote culture reviews for the Morning Star.

Fellow Havana festival organiser Simon Macfarlane said: "He always championed the role arts could play in our struggles and in the enrichment of all our lives. He was of course a creative artist himself, designing and publishing countless resources that we could all use to fight for our members."

Chris and I had many adventures together - always with a laugh even when we shared the bad times. His love of people, his great humour and booming laugh, his famous 'Chris hugs' and his kindness have been reflected in so many tributes.

But he did not do this alone. He was part of a team that was he and Doreen - his partner of 40 years. Matched in humour, kindness and commitment to the labour and trade union movement.

Our thoughts are with Doreen, Chris's family and his huge army of friends.

John Stevenson

PENSIONS SEMINAR Call for better communication by pension boards

This year's UNISON Scotland pensions seminar was attended by pension champions from across the country.

The seminar had presentations on the work of scheme advisory boards and on the recent Financial Conduct Authority report on investment cost transparency.

There was a discussion on the recommendations of the governance review of pension boards in Scotland.

There was broad support for strengthening training and communications between the different boards. Board members will also be asked to step up the pace on issues like cost transparency.

If your branch hasn't got a pensions champion, raise the issue with your branch committee. For more information see our dedicated website at www.pensionsscotland.org/

#Cash4Tache demo keeps up pressure for equal pay

Glasgow UNISON members kept up their campaign for equal pay with a moustache themed demo at the city chambers on 23 October.

And there were hopes of a breakthrough as the council agreed to meet the union as we went to press.

Workers were angry that a legal win on equal pay had been delayed by the council's decision to seek leave to appeal.

"UNISON lawyers, along with the lawyers of all other claimants, are pushing the council to settle in full as soon as possible.

"Many of our members work in low paid employment and struggle to get by on the pay they currently receive.

"If you work in a female dominated job you deserve the dignity and respect of being paid equally to male dominated jobs!"



Rise in attacks on public service staff is 'tip of iceberg'

UNISON Scotland has called on the Scottish Government and all public service employers to take action immediately in order to tackle the "massive scale of the problem of violence against public sector workers".

UNISON's annual Violence at Work survey published in October reveals a further increase in reported assaults on public service workers - but the union warned that this could just be the 'tip of the iceberg'.

The survey returns for 2017 indicate there were 42,421 assaults in total reported in the most recent year - an increase of 1,255 compared with the overall figure of 41,166 in the 2016 survey.

Local Government assaults have risen to 22,006 in the 2017 survey - an increase of 4,401 over the previous total 17,605.

In Health Boards there has been an increase of 2,054 from 17,116 in 2016 to 19,170 in the 2017 survey.

Scott Donohoe, UNISON Health and Safety committee launching the report at UNISON Scotland's Health and Safety seminar, said: "Violent attacks on public service staff have more than doubled in the last decade - but the numbers keep on rising - and we have real concerns that this figure of 42,421 is just the tip of the iceberg.



It is now time for action by employers and stronger legislation, regulation and oversight by government to end the epidemic'
SCOTT DONOHOE

"There are still public sector employers for which low figures and poor information on the issue suggests we still face a good deal of under-reporting.

"Whether reported or not, every assault on a worker serving the public is an assault too many.

"But if we do not have accurate and reliable systems for reporting all violence against public sector workers, truly effective measures to overcome and eliminate the problem will be impossible to achieve."

"The massive scale of the

problem of violence against public sector workers - including those in the community and voluntary sector - has slowly begun to emerge over the last decade.

"It is now time for action by employers and stronger legislation, regulation and oversight by government to end the epidemic."

Dave Watson, UNISON Scotland head of policy and public affairs said:

"The underlying causes of this rise may be partly to do with increased awareness as a result of our campaigns around

the issue of violence at work, and partly to do with improvements in reporting systems and processes by employers.

"However it may also worryingly be due to a real increase in the levels of violence against public service workers.

"Any attack is one attack too many - we need now as a society to act urgently in order to eliminate the problem of violence against workers altogether.

"UNISON Scotland supports the extension of legislation covering violence at work to cover all workers engaged in delivering public services - and not just the emergency services.

"We call on the Scottish Government to move urgently to address this issue.

"UNISON Scotland calls for all employers engaged in delivering public services - whether in local government, health or any of the other services and importantly the community and voluntary sector - to put the guidelines produced in 2010 by the Scottish Centre for Health Working Lives fully into practice, in order that we can make the level of violent assaults fall across Scotland."

The Violence at Work Survey 2017 is available to download on the UNISON Scotland website Health and Safety page.

Lillie McNaughton ... a "Special Person"

Our union has many special people, who dedicate their lives to their friends, their communities and our movement. Lillie McNaughton, who died in September, was one of those people.

A brilliant trade union activist - active in the union until her 80s, Lillie was for many years Police Convenor in the Strathclyde Regional Branch, and later an active

member of the Strathclyde Police and Fire Branch.

It is testament to the kind of person she was, that her first speech at UNISON National Delegate Conference wasn't about her generation which she served so well - it was in support of the rights of 16 year olds, including the right to vote - a true example of solidarity across the generations within our movement.

Lillie spoke with passion on the same issue at

subsequent Conferences and the STUC congress - even when she was over 80 years old. She was made an honorary UNISON Scotland young member as a result.

She will be missed by her friends in UNISON Scotland and across our union, and by those who she stood up for in the workplace and the conference hall.

Our thoughts are with all those who knew her.

Liam Chalmers



Key issue for schools is not structures but cuts

The key issue for school education is not structures but budget cuts, says a UNISON Scotland response to a Scottish Parliament consultation.

Schools have had £300million in cuts over the last five years with more to come.

Giving money direct to head teachers only gives the appearance of more money for schools. In reality that money has to pay for a wider range of services so it's not an increase in funding at all, however politicians may try to spin it.

Our experience of changes in the rest of

the UK shows that the economies of scale offered by the support/services provided by local government are lost and schools have increased demands placed on them.

They then have to source and pay for those services from their own funds. This led to cuts in jobs and lower pay, cuts in hours and the wider terms and conditions of our members.

The formal and informal links to wider children's services are also weaker making it harder to deal with the "whole child".

As things stand there is no spare

capacity in schools, all staff are working long hours. There is no time for reflection far less personal development and collaborative exchange.

Distancing schools from wider children's services will also make it harder to deliver wider support for children and/or their parents.

Neither of the funding proposals in the consultation document offers a route to ensuring staff in schools will be better able to deliver for children, says the response.

See the full submission on our website.

Living wage for sleepovers - not yet

Social care staff working 'sleepover' hours are to receive a pay increase, Health Secretary Shona Robison has announced.

Care workers will now be paid the real Living Wage of £8.45 for sleepover hours, meaning the Living Wage will now be received for all hours worked.

UNISON's Dave Watson welcomed the move but noted that employers have another year to implement it.

UNISON submits NHS pay claim to roll back austerity

by Matt McLaughlin
Scotland Head of Health

UNISON branches across the NHS have vowed to campaign vigorously in support of the UNISON Scotland NHS pay claim lodged with the Scottish Government on 16 October at the NHS Annual Review in Tayside.

In submitting the claim chair of the UNISON Health Committee Tom Waterson said: "UNISON members and NHS workers showed just how they feel about pay at the march and rally in Edinburgh on 7 October.

"Based on that strength of feeling the Health Committee felt that it was important for UNISON to continue to be proactive on the issue of NHS pay in Scotland."

The claim is the first of its kind in a generation and seeks to roll back the impact of pay cuts for all NHS workers. It calls for:

- RPI or 3.9% pay rise across the NHS
- Plus £800 to start to recoup the losses of a decade
- Living wage for healthcare students
- Improve NHS pay structure
- Realign pay bands for better career progression

The pay claim letter states:

"Last year we warned that health staff are unlikely to put up with the NHS Review Body being bound by a 1% pay cap for future rounds.

"Yet just six months away from our April 2018 review date it is still not clear whether



Tom Waterson and Wilma Brown present Cabinet Secretary Shona Robison with the UNISON pay claim at the NHS Tayside Annual Review

the Review Body will be allowed free rein to make recommendations for 2018-19 which start to address the mounting morale issues and staffing shortages.

"Nor is it clear whether central funding will be made available to fund the level of pay rise that is needed for all NHS staff.

"Without a commitment on funding, the Pay Review Body will be rightly concerned that any pay rise it recommends can only be delivered through cuts at organisational or country level."

At the most recent Scottish

Health Committee, branches agreed to target constituency MSPs with a Christmas card campaign which will call on MSPs to back the union's claim.

Tom Waterson added: "Whilst UNISON members are pleased that the Scottish Government have committed to 'Scrap the Cap' they will not rest until there is a fair and balanced pay settlement which starts to roll back on the cuts to their wages.

"UNISON won't be resting on the basis of political commitments to end the pay

cap, we will be working hard to secure a fair offer for members.

The next phase of this campaign will see branches across Scotland campaigning to sign up 20,000 signatures on our 'Pay Up Now' Christmas card in time for delivery to constituency MSPs before the winter recess."

The Health Committee also agreed to support additional campaign work across David Mundell MP's Dumfries, Clydesdale and Tweeddale Constituency on 22 November to coincide with the UK Budget.

UNISON calls for end to 15 minute home care visits

UNISON is calling on Glasgow City Council to halt 15 minute home care visits in the city.

The union has written to the Scottish Care Inspectorate asking them to investigate the practice after its members on the frontline reported a huge increase in fifteen minute home care visits on their work rotas.

UNISON also lodged

Freedom of Information requests with Cordia, the council wholly owned organisation responsible for home care, which confirmed that over one in five visits are fifteen minutes or less.

This equates to around 83,000 visits per month across the city. Over 66,000 of these visits involve the home care worker undertaking multiple

tasks such as medication, use of the toilet, preparing food, washing, dressing and incontinence care.

A UNISON Glasgow Branch spokeswoman said: "UNISON believes this is unacceptable from both a care perspective and workload capacity aspect.

"Some of the most vulnerable people in Glasgow are not getting the time they

have been assessed as requiring by the social work fieldworker.

"No service user has a fifteen minute visit in their care plan. This affects quality of care. Older people in our city deserve better.

"Home care workers are being given unrealistic work schedules, are being overworked and many feel bullied by Cordia Management."

Call to back Residential Care Charter

UNISON Scotland called on politicians at the Scottish Parliament on 31 October to support its new residential care charter.



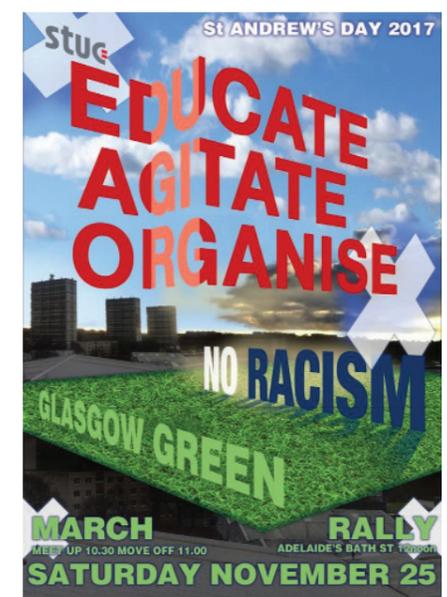
The charter seeks to put an end to the poor treatment of residents, and the workers who look after them, and find solutions so dignity and respect are at the heart of the care system.

UNISON is urging councils and care home owners in both the voluntary and private sector to adopt its new charter so standards of care can be raised. It follows on from the union's ethical care charter, which aims to raise standards of care for people living in their own homes, as well as enhance the treatment of homecare workers.

The charter calls for:

- Time to care – to allow staff to properly care for the vulnerable people they look after
- Proper training and support for staff
- Decent pay for quality work
- Adopt measures to protect and support residents, including adequate staff ratios and thorough risk assessments

Dougie Black, UNISON Scotland regional organiser, said: "We are calling on MSPs to support UNISON's residential care charter and to work with us to make the significant changes needed to restore respect and dignity and to improve standards in Scotland's care homes."



St Andrew's Day Rallies Against Racism
Saturday 25 November,
10.30 at Glasgow Green or
Rubislaw Gardens in
Aberdeen.

NEC report: Engaging members, changing opinion, fighting for better pay

UNISON's National Executive Council Meeting on 18 October was an upbeat affair as members welcomed a number of successes by our union.

The Pay Up Now! campaign has been a major focus of the union's work over the past three months and assistant general secretary Christina McAnea gave an update on what has proved to be a very successful campaign to date.

"UNISON's campaign has begun to engage members and change public and political opinion about public sector pay," said Christina, adding that the next key

date is the government's autumn statement on 22 November.

General secretary Dave Prentis added, "The government is now under real pressure to scrap the 1% cap on public sector wages and UNISON is leading the fight to get our members the pay rise they deserve. More and more people are listening and supporting our Pay Up Now! campaign."

A number of rallies have been held around the country including the very successful 7 October rally in Edinburgh. The Pay up Now! petition has garnered 140,000 signatures and as a result of getting over 100,000 signatories, a debate

on public sector pay will be held in Westminster on 4 December.

Kate Ramsden, Scotland NEC member urged, "We want to get as many signatures as possible before that date so if you haven't already done so, please go and add your name at petition.parliament.uk/petitions/200032"

Scottish NEC members called for co-ordination across service groups and unions and a clarity of aims and objectives; for successes achieved through negotiation to improve low pay to be publicised eg Scottish living wage, lifting members out of the lowest pay grade in Health; and for branches to

be encouraged to take a lead in building members' confidence.

The victory of the Glasgow janitors' dispute was acknowledged as an example of UNISON organising and taking action that makes a difference for members.

Dave also reported on UNISON's tremendous victory in the Supreme Court, which overturned the government's imposition of fees for employment tribunals.

Adam Creme from UNISON legal services praised "UNISON's determination to take every step possible to win.

"This is a significant win not just

for UNISON members but for every worker across the country. We should be proud of this success."

The NEC heard that the number of councils signing up to UNISON's Ethical Care Charter continues to grow, improving conditions for many care workers.

It also agreed to develop a UNISON led campaign to highlight the injustices of Universal Credit and its terrible impact on low paid members and the unemployed.

Scotland's NEC members are Maggie Cook, Jim McFarlane, Kate Ramsden, Stephen Smellie and Davena Rankin

Midlothian UNISON takes campaign to save 400 jobs to government

As we went to press, Grace Chalmers, Midlothian UNISON branch secretary, the council leader and senior council officers were about to meet Derek Mackay, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Constitution, to present a petition calling for Midlothian's services to be properly funded.

The branch has collected over 2,500 signatures in its campaign to save 400 jobs and essential local services.

Grace Chalmers said: "400 jobs are to go at Midlothian Council, that is approximately 10% of the workforce.

"If the proposed cuts are accepted this will have huge detrimental effect for the local economy and services provided by the council.

"The local economy depends on a healthy public sector as public sector workers spend most of their money in their local communities."

Grace points out that Midlothian has the fastest growing population of any council area but that is not reflected in the additional funding it needs.

This is putting further pressure on local infrastructures, services, and the staff who work to provide them.

Grace added: "The joint trade unions are working together with the local councillors to try and address the proposed budget savings by organising a campaign with staff and residents in Midlothian to take to the Scottish government."

See more about the campaign on UNISON Midlothian's facebook page.



Midlothian UNISON out on the street getting signatures to save jobs and services

We stand on giants' shoulders

The recent death of ex UNISON and Nupe general secretary Rodney Bickerstaffe saw the loss of one of the most important figures in the trade union movement in the last 35 years.



A man of huge principal, Rodney was the power behind the campaign that won the minimum wage. As current general secretary Dave Prentis said: "He was the best of us".

The power of his oratory shone through when he spoke at the unveiling of a monument to Michael McGahey in Bonnyrigg in 2006.

Quoting McGahey, he reminded us that we are "a movement, not a monument."

In 2011 he told our pensions rally in Edinburgh: "The government call us unpatriotic because 2.5 million of us are out on strike. What about the 2.5 million unemployed they've created – lost days every day of every year. Who is it who's not patriotic?"

He was gracious, inspirational and had a great sense of fun, which shone through in his speech at the STUC celebrating Mike Kirby's presidential year.

Rodney's links with Scotland read like a history of modern trade unionism. His friendship with two of the most significant trade union leaders of their time, Scots Jimmy Napp (RMT) and Ken Cameron (FBU), was coupled with inspiration from other leaders from Scotland.

Interviewed by *SiU* in 2000 as he was standing down as UNISON general secretary, he said: "At the STUC I recall McGahey and Airlie, giants of the trade union movement.

"But they are all giants, be they members, stewards or leaders, high or low paid who have passed us the banner. This is not us, it is they who have brought us to where we are.

"Everyone has to hand over the banner as I will hand it over to Dave Prentis, as each of us here will hand it over to those who follow. The job is to make that banner shine more brightly".

Memorial events at UK and Scottish level will be planned in the coming months.

Scotland's population is getting older - who cares?

Bield Housing announced on 30 October a new strategy to focus on 'value for money', 'customer choice', to secure the (not -for -profit) company's 'long-term future', and to 'withdraw from the residential care home market... in the best interests of the long-term future and sustainability of the organisation.'

What that means is that the 12 care homes in Edinburgh, Falkirk, Glasgow, Borders, South Lanarkshire and West Lothian will close by Spring or early Summer 2018.

Some 170 frail elderly with dependent needs (24 hour personal care and feeding assistance) will be evicted from the surroundings they have called home for decades.

Many are in their 80s and 90s. Hundreds of qualified and registered care workers will be made compulsorily redundant at a time when the demand for care services for the elderly is at a historic high and will grow.

The task of making alternative arrangements will fall back on public authorities, the tax payer and individual families at a few months notice. Residents will die due the trauma of sudden, changed life circumstances.

How can this happen in Scotland in 2017 when we have created a super-

UNISON Scotland's JOHN GALLACHER on the crisis in third sector care provision

structure of 31 new quangos (IJB's) with Boards and highly paid chief operating officers, to manage and deliver integrated health and social care services for our increasingly elderly and dependent population?

The language of the Bield strategy gives us the answer. We have created a market in care where third party providers (often for a profit) receive millions of pounds of public contracts from the local authorities.

That market is competitive and has driven out job security; suppressed wages and employment terms to be akin to the hospitality or retail sector; and broken the link with local democratic structures and communities.

Public bodies have been content for decades to commission and procure care on the cheap but when third party providers within that market decide it no longer suits their business plan, or the profit margins are too low, then the buck does pass back the local public authorities (council and health) to pick up the pieces.

Third sector providers have been content to build up significant corporate and management structures in support of

these front-line services.

These services should be directly run by councils and health boards and all 32 council areas should ensure there is a menu of services that we can all rely on to take us all through the third act of our lives:

- Home help (cleaning and help with shopping etc)
- Home Care (personal care and food preparation)
- Residential Homes (for communal living, social interaction and through the night care)
- Nursing Home care (where there is a health need)
- Specialist dementia services.
- Even consider renewed long stay NHS care (community hospitals which were systematically closed in the 1990s)
- Acute and emergency care tailored to the growing demands of the elderly.

For those assessed to require these services and who do not have the means to purchase them privately, all of this should be planned, funded and delivered run by public bodies with community identity and political accountability locally or nationally.

They should not be the source of profit-making or business planning which is independent of political influence and accountability to the public and can lead to such 'market shocks' when it is the elderly and their care which is at stake.

We want to hear your news

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