

RETIRED MEMBERS

UNISON works to raise awareness of issues which concern older people and to influence decision makers. Our priorities include:

- Pensioner poverty
- Health care and age discrimination
- Isolation and mobility issues

We believe our union should reflect the society we live and work in. There are more than 10 million elderly people in the UK. Retired and working members have a shared interest in obtaining decent incomes in older age, a universal health service and the creation of a civilised society.

If you've been a UNISON member for at least two years on the day you retire and have either received state pension age or get a pension, you can become a retired member. Membership is a one-off £15 subscription.

UNISON retired members enjoy all the benefits of UNISON membership including:

- Legal advice
- Welfare support
- Special discounts and offers on a wide range of financial and other services

For an application form, contact UNISON on 01925 637927 or e-mail unison2@warrington.gov.uk

RECRUITMENT

Why is recruiting so important?

Organised workplaces with a high density of membership give UNISON greater influence with local management and employers.

This means the union will have greater influence locally and nationally, which helps UNISON campaign to improve public services, to stop discrimination, for equality of opportunity and for better pay and conditions of service.

UNISON's role as Britain's largest trade union ensures our place at the negotiating table. Whether backing you up at work or weighing in on a national policy issue, UNISON draws its strength from its numbers. Face-to-face recruiting has proven to be the most effective way to attract new members.

'Nobody asked me!' That's the single biggest reason people give for not having joined a trade union. And the best people to recruit new members are the UNISON members who work alongside them.

Become a recruiter - help keep us strong! So go on ask your work colleagues if they are a member of a Trade Union. Employees can join UNISON by calling 01925 637927 or email: unison@warrington.gov.uk



WARRINGTON BRANCH NEWS

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PENSION'S

'Stop the great pensions robbery'

The scale of the challenges facing UNISON members has been brought into focus as talks with the government on their proposals continue, talks are dealing with major threats such as:

- the proposed 50% increase in contributions;
- increased retirement ages; for some people this could increase to 68!
- increases in pensions should be linked to the lower CPI measure of inflation rather than the RPI measure of inflation.
- potential changes in the nature of pension schemes, from final salary to career averages, with lower accrual rates;
- the abolition of the Fair Deal on pensions, which protects members transferred to private employers. Workers who are outsourced should not be allowed to be members of the scheme.



On top of a pay freeze, rising inflation and the threat of redundancy, public sector workers now face a pensions raid. There is a lot of mis-information surrounding public sector pensions. **Public sector pensions are not gold plated**, with the average in the local government pension scheme (LGPS) being £4,000 a year and this falls to £2,800 for women. Public sector pension schemes make more money than they pay out and they are **entirely sustainable**. The LGPS also plays an important role in the UK and global economies. In March 2010, the combined funds were worth about £160 billion – yes billion. That's the equivalent of nearly one third of the total value of all the companies on the London Stock Exchange!! Pushing the LGPS into decline would have massive ripple effects on our fragile economy. Is that really what this CONDEM government wants?

If negotiations fail, we will have to look towards joined-up industrial action in the autumn – to defeat the Coalition's attack on our income in retirement. Preparations are already underway to make sure that we can hold a successful ballot of our members. Please ensure that we hold your correct details on our membership system. If you are unsure please contact the branch office 01925 637927



Update your details

www.unisonwarrington.org.uk

UNISON campaigning for a fairer society
Join UNISON - www.unisonwarrington.org.uk/Join.html

ACADEMIES

Academies – a divisive policy for Warrington schools

UNISON believes in good, local schools in a national comprehensive education system, which is what we have in our family of Warrington schools, all schools working together in the best interests of the town's children. This family is now under threat of being dismantled, by individual schools making moves towards academy status. All schools should be controlled by and be accountable to local communities, with staff who are directly employed on nationally bargained terms and conditions of service.

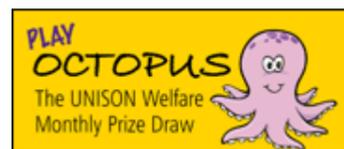
There is no evidence, amid a great deal of research, to suggest that academies out-perform other schools, so why should any of our already outstanding schools wish to change status, academy freedom does not mean improvement.

The Government has claimed that becoming an Academy means a school is escaping from the control of a local authority. But a local authority actually has very little control over what schools do. Its primary purpose is to act as a safety net when there are problems. And it is a provider of services that are not easy to obtain anywhere else. An academy needs to fund and organise these services itself. And it is clear that schools alone cannot provide all of the services needed. They will have to buy them in – and this is where the private sector comes in. They will offer many of the services that the local authority provides – but at a price. And often they will be more expensive and of uncertain quality.

The truth is, becoming an academy means that a school will need to be run as a business.

Our main concern regarding academies however is the fact that they open up the possibility to undermine the terms and conditions for our members. Just like with any privatisation, TUPE will only protect staff at transfer, not for the future. The move to turn schools into academies is part of the Government's agenda to create a free for all in terms of pay and conditions of our members working in schools.

Schools are legally required to consult before becoming an academy. If you are concerned about your school becoming an academy please contact the Branch office on 01925 637927 and we will approach your head teacher and governing body for clarification on whether an application to become an academy is being considered or pursued. More information regarding academies can be viewed via the UNISON website: www.unison.org.uk or the Anti Academies Alliance: www.antiacademies.org.uk



<http://www.unison.co.uk/octopus/>



Sign up to e-mail alerts

Receive News Updates via e-mail.
Send your name and email address to:
unison2@warrington.gov.uk

New Labour Administration is no bed of roses.

The Labour Administration has been in control of Warrington Borough Council for a mere 2 months and is already on a collision course with UNISON & other NJC Trade Unions following the breakdown of informal discussions regarding £2m worth of savings that the employer states must come from the workforce.

UNISON were disappointed when they presented proposals with the GMB to address this year's budget deficit by April. Proposals included restructuring SMB and public consultation on fortnightly bin collections which could equate to £1.3m per year. However Labour dismissed the proposals and it became clear the administration's preferred option was effectively an attack on employees Terms & Conditions despite pre-election promises to the contrary.

The Trade Union proposals are realistic and would meet the required deficit with no impact on the frontline workforce who have already suffered in terms of reductions in the workforce which has resulted in increased workload.

The Trade Unions made it perfectly clear pre election that in the event a Labour Administration was returned to office there would be no time to lose and it would be a case of hitting the ground running. The honeymoon period is over and it is time to deliver not dither on proposals and not at the expense of our members.

We now await the Executive Boards decision on what formal proposals will be put forward to meet the required £2m savings. Rest assured that if the proposals include Terms & Conditions then we will be challenging robustly and will be seeking members views on what course of action UNISON will be taking jointly with other NJC Trade Unions.

UNISON WELFARE

UNISON support members in a variety of ways mainly through confidential advice and financial assistance in the form of grants. For example we can help with sorting out finances, advise on benefits or put members in touch with another organisation that can help. A grant could be made, for example, to assist with household bills, ease debts or help with the cost of a much-needed break. We can often increase the financial support available by collaborating with other grant making organisations.

Support is offered through our team of experienced casework staff at national office and network of branch welfare officers. They are there to listen and help.

The difficult circumstances confronting members who need are help are rarely the result of a single problem. The grants we give often provide a vital breathing space whilst we work with other parts of UNISON and other agencies to find the varied and longer term solutions required.

Log on to www.unison.org.uk/welfare for more information about the range of services and types of help that are available: Financial Assistance, Wellbeing Breaks, UNISON Welfare Debtline.

