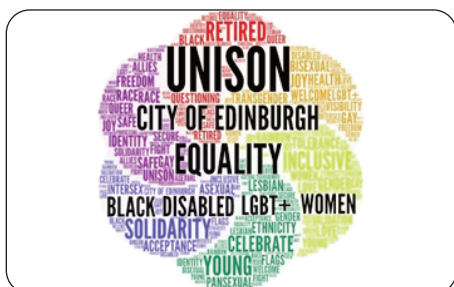


# Equalities Update



**W**elcome to the UNISON City of Edinburgh Branch July Equalities Newsletter. Following our first edition we received feedback from members about what they would like to see included in future editions. We will continue to give an overview of equalities-related issues, information about upcoming dates and any opportunities within our branch for you to get more involved.

Following recent announcements by the Scottish Government, we're in Phase 2 of the route-map with Phase 3 looking likely to be introduced shortly. This means that there is light at the end of the tunnel and we're already seeing signs of life returning to a version of normal.



Last month, I wrote about the increased risk of Covid-19 faced by our Black members and the work our branch is doing to ensure their concerns are raised. This work is ongoing and I'm pleased to report that Sarah Boyack MSP raised the

issue in the Scottish Parliament on behalf of our branch. Thanks to Ian Mullen, branch Health & Safety officer, for his efforts with this. We understand the Scottish Government has set up a new expert group to "provide a clearer picture of the impact on minority ethnic communities of Covid-19" so we await their findings.

Our branch stands in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter human rights movement and will continue to fight racism, and all forms of discrimination, within the workplace and wider society.



*Black Lives Matter solidarity message during recent branch officer meeting*



I think it's safe to say that June this year was one of the quietest Pride months many of us will have experienced. Lots of online events took place including panel discussions, quizzes and film screenings. We couldn't be together in person as a community so I hope your Pride month was filled with extra love and joy.

Last week we were informed that UNISON's National LGBT+ Conference due to be held in November has been cancelled. Whilst disappointing for our LGBT+ members, we recognise that this is of course the right decision given the situation with Covid-19. On a personal level, I was sad to learn that there would be no LGBT+ conference this year as I've attended for the last 2 years and find the whole weekend extremely useful. I learn about amazing work being done across the UK to support our LGBT+ members to feel safe, included and welcome in their workplaces. I always return to the branch energised and with new ideas about how to engage with employers to ensure the voices of our LGBT+ members are heard. I look forward to the LGBT+ conference in 2021 which will feature a packed schedule as we review 2 years' worth of fantastic work whilst setting the agenda and focus for the year ahead.

Edinburgh Pride was also cancelled so although there was no physical march, a virtual pride breakfast was arranged by LGBT Health & Wellbeing. It gave our community a chance to get together, learn about the amazing work of various LGBT+ groups and to enjoy live music and poetry. An Edinburgh Pride Virtual March video was also shared during the breakfast and featured contributions from members of the LGBT+ community. (I make a brief appearance at 1.39 whilst deciding what to wear)



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