

National Executive Council Elections 2023: Nomination requests

<p>Jane DOOLAN Islington Branch</p> <p>Membership No. 1179349 Standing in the Local Government Female seat 1 email: doolanjane57@gmail.com</p> 	<p>Andrea EGAN Bolton Local Government Branch</p> <p>Membership No. 1289161 Standing in the Local Government Female seat 2 Email: egan52a@icloud.com</p> 	<p>David JONES Wirral Branch</p> <p>Membership No. 8666296 Standing in the Local Government Male seat Email: wintersong@hotmail.com</p> 	<p>Antoinette SOLERA Central & East Berks Branch</p> <p>Membership No. 4564000 Standing in the Local Government General seat Email: Ant4NEC@outlook.com</p> 
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Dear Branch Secretary,

We are writing to ask your branch to consider nominating us for the following seats for the 2023 NEC elections:

- **Jane DOOLAN - Local Government Female Seat**
- **Andrea EGAN - Local Government Female Seat**
- **David JONES - Local Government Male Seat**
- **Antoinette SOLERA - Local Government General Seat**

All UNISON members face the threat of a spiralling cost-of-living crisis and now we face further austerity from a Tory Government which is determined to make us pay for the economic crisis. These elections are hugely important in determining the way that UNISON tackles these issues. We are standing in solidarity with the Time for Real Change majority on the current NEC. We fully support the democratisation of the union and making the union's strategy and organisation fit the needs of the current situation facing our members.

Our experience and background

Jane Doolan

I am seeking nomination for one of the two National Local Government Female Seats on UNISON's NEC.

I have held a number of union positions since 1981 including Branch Secretary since 1999.

I continue to fight hard for members and one of the biggest fights we currently face is the cost of living crisis. This affects all our members. We have come through a pandemic which still has serious repercussions for our members.

Branches work incredibly hard and had their resources stretched to the limit in supporting their members through these unprecedented times, so I want to continue to support our branches and members.

In my branch I have been instrumental in bringing outsourced services back in and I am currently working towards bringing our school meals service back in-house.

As a member of the NEC's Services to Members Committee I want to continue to ensure these services are relevant to members particularly during this crisis where members are facing spiralling food and fuel costs.

I have worked very hard alongside my colleagues on the NEC and along with my Local Government colleagues I provide regular written reports to the Local Government Service Group Executive.

I hope your branch will consider my nomination and please feel free to visit my Facebook page - **Jane Doolan 4NEC 2023**.

Andrea Egan

- **Elected Branch Secretary of a large local government branch with over 6,000 members and a member of the Joint Negotiating Team**
- **Branch Lead for education including schools, sixth forms, further education and higher education**
- **Elected NEC member representing the Local Government Female Seat for 6 years**
- **Elected Member of the Local Government Service Group Executive**
- **Active member of the North West Regional Committee, Regional Council and Service Group**

I have been employed in my authority's Children's Services Department for over 35 years and I have been a steward for the majority of that time. I acutely understand the pressure of underpaid work. I also understand the daily pressures workers face, from unmanageable workloads to bullying in the workplace. The need for family friendly policies has never been greater as we juggle family life with the demands of work.

The pressure on working people is at unprecedented levels. The need for equality in society faces its greatest threats.

I firmly believe campaigning and organising is an essential part of getting better pay, protecting jobs and services. Over my long involvement as an activist in UNISON I have participated and organised a whole range of campaigns from opposition to Academy schools to resisting the closure of children's centres and my councils last LA run nursery. Social Care and the NHS are under unprecedented pressures, and I have been at the forefront of defending these at a local and National level.

I am proud to be a member of the largest public sector trade union in this country but feel we can achieve so much more.

With 1.3m members, we need to use that collective strength to resist cuts on a coordinated level. **Our union must be at the forefront of fighting to defend and maintain ALL public services.**

Unison members quite rightly demand a strong leadership, one that inspires and gives confidence to our members. I firmly believe that together we can defend public services from privatisation. Together we can defend the principle of people before profit.

Industrial action is always a last resort, but when the government isn't listening and we have exhausted all means we have to remember what we can achieve together. **UNITED, STRONG, EFFECTIVE INDUSTRIAL ACTION CAN DELIVER!**

As members we need to feel confident that when we do make that difficult decision to fight, that the full weight of the union is firmly behind us.

Our union must change to ensure that we are truly a member led union. **I firmly believe that appointed officials should not dominate the union. I support change to maximise democracy and accountability at all levels of UNISON.**

David Jones

I have been the Wirral UNISON Branch Secretary since 2018. I have overseen a revitalised branch, adopting an organising and campaigning approach, that delivers results for members, including:

- **The Real Living Wage for Care Workers**
- **A Homeworking Allowance**
- **Significantly enhanced Maternity, Menopause and Pregnancy Loss Policies**
- **Previously outsourced Day Services, returned to the Council**
- **Since 2018 no UNISON member in Schools or Council has been made compulsory redundant**

This in a Council facing significant financial challenges, with government intervention being applied. **We can win!**

I have played a key role in these achievements; however the development of a strong, diverse team of Branch Officers and Stewards, under my leadership, has been crucial.

This is the approach I will bring to the NEC. We need a strong NEC, providing real leadership, promoting equality, and opposing oppression; but we must also resource, encourage and develop Branch structures – our biggest strength.

The biggest challenge facing our members now, is the cost-of-living crisis, and with the government signalling 2% pay settlements in 2023, it shows no sign of abating. We must be organised and provide clear leadership on pay.

Antoinette Solera

I am a housing worker based in Reading in Berkshire. **I have been an activist in UNISON since 2011** and I have served my branch in various roles. I am currently a branch convenor, a steward and a health and safety rep. I represent my branch on the South East Regional Council and I am a member of the South East Regional Committee. **I have a track record of fighting against disability discrimination and in organising around women's health in the workplace.**

I have served on the NEC since 2021, using my membership of the Finance and Policy & Campaigns committees to achieve **better value for money for our members**, and to push for **stronger policy positions** on issues such as the minimum wage and housing.

After 15 years' service as a council worker I know that Local Government is often overlooked in the national conversation about our public services, yet we provide vital services to our communities from cradle to grave – from bin collections to social care, housing to public health, and everything in between. However our members are so desperately over worked and underpaid, some are now leaving public service which is an absolute tragedy.

With other like-minded members of the NEC **I have worked hard since 2021 to start to transform UNISON into the organising, fighting union it needs to be**, so we can take action to defend and improve our members' terms and conditions - and to fight for decent, properly funded Local Government services. Please consider nominating me so I can continue this work for our members.

What we stand for

UNISON must be a member-led union – We believe this means that elected members should run our union, not selected full-time officials. We want to work with all our paid officials, but it is members and their elected representatives that should be the real leaders. **We need to be an organising, not a servicing, union** – we cannot solve all of our members' problems on a one-by-one basis. Members will always need individual support, but the focus should be on collective action. We need to increase UNISON's collective

and organising activities and to empower our members. **Every large city and county** should have a proud UNISON resource centre in the high street: we need to make it as easy as possible for members to find us. We must present UNISON as a vibrant, democratic, fighting and organising union.

The pay crisis – UNISON must end the scourge of low pay. For too long UNISON has failed to adequately fight poverty pay, pay freezes and below-inflation deals. We cannot simply approach pay negotiations the way that UNISON's leadership has done in the past. Hikes in the price of fuel, heating and food are seriously impacting our members. No UNISON member should have to rely on food banks. We need fully funded and staffed public services. Members should not pay the cost of Tory austerity. To achieve this, we want **more cooperative relationships with other unions**. We should work together whenever we can.

We must support members needing to take industrial action. Strike pay rates have increased substantially, but there is more to do. UNISON only has a national strike fund of £21 million. This must change if we are to show employers and government we mean business. Also, we need to ensure that every region supports branches who need to carry out effective strike action.

UNISON's finances – We need full disclosure and transparency as to how members' money is spent. We must make best use of the surpluses made nationally and locally during the pandemic. Also, we must review UNISON's large property estate and where appropriate, free up resources for organising. We must continue to bring the UNISON Staff Pension scheme deficit down to manageable levels. Members' subs should not be required to keep the scheme afloat. **We should insource all outsourced UNISON services wherever feasible**, based on our trade union values and our aspirations for our union. **We need a green agenda within UNISON**, including an audit of UNISON company cars and the proliferation of meetings requiring members and staff to travel long distances.

We believe that UNISON should play a positive but challenging role in the Labour Party. UNISON resources and influence should be used to promote the removal of anti-trade union laws, public delivery of public services and a green new deal that tackles the climate emergency through the creation of green, well-paid, union jobs.

Equalities in UNISON are central to our vision. There have been some major developments over the last two years. But there is much more to do to make equality a reality through our entire union, not just its NEC but at all tiers of our union, including within its staffing.

Legal advice – We must review UNISON's main legal services contract and particularly the difficulties branch secretaries have accessing timely employment law advice.

We need a robust and effective review of staffing to ensure that the great work our staff do is as efficient and meaningful to members as it can be. **We believe UNISON members should decide whether our most senior roles should be elected**.

We must end once and for all the punitive culture of disciplinary action. Disciplinary investigations into members take far too long, with no regard for welfare. We must continue to look at these processes from top to bottom and end their use to resolve political differences.

We are confident that the ideas we support will build on the progress made over the last two years. We urge all UNISON members to vote for Time for Real Change candidates in these NEC elections and, if you are able, to help us campaign for real change in UNISON.

Yours sincerely

Jane Doolan, Andrea Egan, David Jones and Antoinette Solera

Branches can contact us as a group at Jane.Andrea.David.Ant4NEC@outlook.com – if you would like to contact any one of us individually, please use the email addresses shown at the top of this letter. Thank you.