

# UNISON City of Edinburgh

Local Government & Related Sectors Branch

## Annual General Meeting 2023

### Aggregate meetings

Thursday 2nd March 2023, 6pm - 7:30pm

Tuesday 7th March 2023, 12:30pm - 2pm

Thursday 9th March 2023, 12:30pm - 2pm

Wednesday 15th March 2023, 12:30pm - 2pm

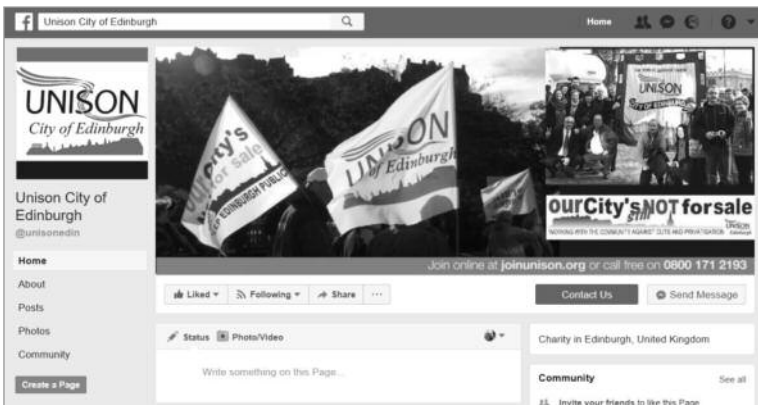
Members need only attend **one** meeting.

## AGM Agenda 2023 and Annual Report 2022



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# AGM Calling Notice

To All Members

Dear colleagues

All members are urged to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the branch which will be held across four aggregate meetings to offer members times that may be more convenient in terms of working patterns. Members need only attend one of the meetings. If they wish, they may attend more than one aggregate meeting but may only vote at one of them and can only be included in the quorum for one of them. The meetings will be held on:-

**Thursday 2nd March 2023, 6pm - 7:30pm**, Augustine Church, 41-43 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh, EH1 1EL

**Tuesday 7th March 2023, 12:30 - 2pm**, North East Locality Office, East Room, 101 Niddrie Mains Road, Edinburgh, EH16 4DS

**Thursday 9th March 2023, 12:30 - 2pm**, North West Locality Office, Room G2, 8 West Pilton Gardens, Edinburgh EH4 4DP

**Wednesday 15th March 2023, 12:30 - 2pm**, The Business Centre, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1YP

The agenda and order of business of each aggregate meeting will be identical and the results of voting will be the total of votes cast across all of the meetings. The quorum is 150 and the total number of qualifying members attending the aggregate meetings will define whether that quorum is met.

## AGENDA

The agenda on the following pages includes nominations, motions and rule changes received by the closing date in the preliminary notice. Any amendments will be posted on the website and made available to members.

## AMENDMENTS

Any two members can propose amendments to motions. These must be in writing and arrive at [branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk](mailto:branchoffice@unison-edinburgh.org.uk) by **Noon, Wednesday 22nd February 2023**. **Questions on the Annual Report and Financial Statement\*** must be received by **noon on Wednesday 1st March 2023** to ensure the information is available for a response.

## ACCESS

We recognise that to ensure all our members can fully participate it may be necessary to make adjustments. If you require any adjustment please contact the branch and we will discuss your requirements.

A good attendance at the Annual General Meeting is essential to the running of the branch. Please make every effort to attend to set your policies and to ensure that the branch can elect its officers and have its structures in place to meet this year's challenges

Yours sincerely

Tom Connolly,  
**Branch Secretary**

\* *The Financial Statement will be in the supplementary agenda.*



# AGM 2023

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# Agenda

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1. Opening Remarks/  
Introductions
2. Appointment of Scrutineers
3. Standing Orders
4. Minutes of Branch Meetings  
2022  
*The 2022 AGM and Recall AGM were both inquorate. A Special Branch Committee took place on 6th April 2022 and confirmed the appointment of all branch officers and the policy motion was overwhelmingly carried.*
5. Annual Report 2022 (p 7-13)  
*Questions on the Annual Report must be submitted to the branch office by noon on Wednesday 1st March 2023.*
6. Financial Statement 2022  
*The Financial Statement and Treasurer's Report will be in the Supplementary Agenda and on the website.*
7. Honoraria  
*No honoraria because auditor posts vacant.*
8. Election of Branch Officers  
*See pages 4-5.*
9. Presentations and Question and Answer Session (on any urgent issues)
10. Rule Changes *See page 15*
11. Policy Motions *See page 16-17*
12. Any other business

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## Agenda Item 8 Election of Branch Officers

NOTE: If more than one nomination is received for any post an election will be held where all members of the branch are invited to vote to select the preferred candidate. In the event of an election voting papers will be circulated in advance of the AGM and returned before the AGM with the outcome announced at the AGM. Where no nominations were received, they will be sought via the Branch Committee.

<b>Branch President</b> No nomination received	<b>Branch Secretary</b> <b>Tom Connolly</b> (Education & Children's Services) Nominated by: <i>Health &amp; Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee</i>
<b>Branch Chairperson</b> No nomination received	
<b>Vice Chairperson (2)</b> <i>One of whom must be a woman.</i> No nomination received	<b>Assistant Secretary</b> No nomination received

**Service Conditions Coordinator**

**Tom Connolly** (Education & Children's Services)

Nominated by: *Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee; Place Shop Stewards Committee*

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**Service Conditions Convener**

**David Harrold** (Place)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee; Karen O'Brien & Alison Stoddart (Place); Abbie Greenan (Education & Children's Services) & Joseph Greenan (Place)*

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**Service Conditions Officers (5)**

**General Posts (2)**

**Kyle Bellamy** (Place)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee, Place Shop Stewards Committee*

**Ian Mullen** (Place)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee; Place Shop Stewards Committee*

**Women's Posts (3)**

**Pauline Henderson** (Education & Children's Services)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee; Place Shop Stewards Committee*

**Caroline McLean** (Education & Children's Services)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee*

**Elaine Wishart** (Corporate Services)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee; Jackie Sloan & Chiara Stagni (Corporate Services)*

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**Health and Safety Convener**

**Ian Mullen** (Place)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee; Place Shop Stewards Committee*

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**Welfare Officer**

**Mike Smith** (Corporate Services)/ **Caroline McLean** (Health & Social Care) **Job share**

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee*

**Health and Safety Convener**

**Ian Mullen** (Place)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee; Health & Social Care Shop Stewards Committee; Place Shop Stewards Committee*

---

**Equalities Officer**

**Elaine Wishart** (Corporate Services)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee; Jackie Sloan & Chiara Stagni (Corporate Services)*

---

**Education Officer**

**Ian Mullen** (Place)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Steward; Place Shop Stewards Committee*

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**LGBT+ Officer**

**Don Naismith** (Corporate Services)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee*

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**Disabled Members Officer**

**Lynne Spence Piercy** (Corporate Services)

Nominated by: *Corporate Services Shop Stewards Committee*

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**Lifelong Learning Convener**

No nomination received

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**Branch Treasurer**

No nomination received

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**Communications Officer**

No nomination received

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**International Officer**

No nomination received

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**Black Members Officer**

No nomination received

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**Women's Officer**

No nomination received

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**Young Members Officer**

No nomination received

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**Environment Officer**

No nomination received

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**Auditors (2)**

No nomination received

# A Brief Guide to Branch Meetings

(See standing orders at [www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk) - The need to have online meetings may mean some changes to this advice)

We hope you enjoy the AGM and that you will feel able to take part in setting our branch's policies at this very important time.

Meetings can seem quite formal but with so many people there, it is important to have rules to:-

- ensure a well ordered meeting.
- make sure as many people as possible have their say without the meeting being abused.

**The Chair** is there to keep order and make sure things are run within *your* rules.

**Motions:** Motions create policy that mandates the Branch. They are introduced by the mover named on the agenda. The seconder can then speak after or later in the debate.

**Amendments:** Can add, change or delete bits of



motions but they cannot merely contradict a motion.

**Speaking:** The mover of a motion gets up to seven minutes to speak and other speakers get three. Then any member can speak and should start by giving their name and department. They must keep to the issue and can speak only once.

**How do I get to speak?:** Just put up your hand or come forward. The Chairperson decides the order of speakers, usually alternating for and against.

**Right of Reply:** The mover gets another chance to

answer at the end but new material cannot be raised.

**Voting:** Normally voting is by show of hands but elections for branch officers will be by ballot. The Chair will rule on whether a motion is carried or not. If in doubt he/she will call for a count.

**Ending a debate:** Normally a debate goes on until everyone who wants to speak has spoken. But, after five speakers, anyone who has not spoken in the debate can move that "*The Question Be Put*". The meeting will immediately vote on this and, if carried, we go straight to the right of reply and the vote.

**If you are unsure about anything at all - just ask the Chair. It's your meeting after all!**

## How motions are ordered on the agenda

In line with practice since the inauguration of the branch, motions have been prioritised under the following headings. In addition, they are prioritised on whether they are urgent, instruct the branch to act on an issue within its remit, and need a branch meeting decision. Where there is no clear priority, they are in the order in which they were received.

- Council Budget, Cuts, Redundancies (local)
- Service Conditions Issues (issues like pay and conditions)
- Health & Safety

- Pensions and Superannuation
- UNISON Services and Structure
- Policy and Campaigning
- Economic Policy
- International
- Miscellaneous

Any motions not dealt with will be remitted to the Branch Committee.

### EMERGENCY MOTIONS

Must be urgent, unable to have been submitted within the timescales and relevant. They require a two-thirds majority to be heard.

\* *marks motions which may be composited*

# UNISON City of Edinburgh Branch Annual Report 2022

## Praise of public services

Early in 2022, my mum went to her GP with some minor symptoms which turned out to be a 5.5cm abdominal aortic aneurysm, requiring major surgery.

Thanks to the skill and dedication of the vascular surgeon and his team, she sailed through it and made an excellent recovery, with only an 18" scar to show for it.

A couple of months after that, my dad went to Jersey, became very unwell and was admitted to hospital.

He spent 17 days in the ICU there before being repatriated to the UK where unfortunately we had to make the awful decision to

### Public services and the workers who deliver them are amazing'

allow the ICU team to remove his ventilator, and he died peacefully.

From the surgeon taking the time to show us mum's MRI and explain his plan, to the Jersey doctor who stayed hours past his finishing time to meet me in the ICU when my flight finally got me there, the ICU staff back in the UK who gave us all the support and time we needed to come to terms with removing the ventilator, to the staff in the coroner's office who were patient and compassionate with the many questions I had

about the post-mortem results, and to the professional and kind registrar as we registered dad's death and navigated our way through unfamiliar processes.

Every public sector worker we dealt with were compassionate, competent and caring.

Public services and the workers who deliver them are amazing.

Thank you all. And please, make a will!



Kirsten Hey  
Branch President

### Three simple ways to join UNISON today



Join online at  
[joinunison.org](http://joinunison.org)



Call us on  
0800 0857 857



Ask your rep  
for a form

You can also call 0131 558 7488 or download a form at [www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk)

## Branch Officers 2021/2022

*President:* Kirsten Hey  
*Chair:* Tom Muir  
*Vice Chairs:* Caroline McLean / Pauline Henderson  
*Secretary:* Tom Connolly  
*Ass Secretary:* Caroline McLean / Gerry Stovin  
*Treasurer:* Jamie McCormack  
*Equalities:* Elaine Wishart  
*Health & Safety:* Ian Mullen  
*Service Conditions*  
*Co-ordinator:* Tom Connolly  
*Convener:* David Harrold  
*Service Condition Officers:* Caroline

McLean, Pauline Henderson, Ian Mullen, Gerry Stovin  
*Communications:* Vacant  
*Welfare:* Caroline McLean / Mike Smith  
*Education Officer:* Ian Mullen  
*Recruitment/Membership Officer:* Vacant  
*International:* Tefsu Gessesse  
*Lifelong Learning:* Hannah Bradley  
*Young Members Officer:* Vacant  
*Women's Officer:* Stacey Monteith-Skelton  
*LGBT+ Officer:* Don Naismith

## Branch employed staff



From left: Monica Niven, Branch Support Officer; Julieanne Finlay, Branch Support Assistant, and Amanda Kerr, Organiser/Caseworker Voluntary and Community Sector.

# 'Build back better' must be fought for

**B**uild back better was promised in 2021 after COVID and what did we get? Cuts in budgets and services, inflation rates not seen since the eighties and stagnating pay.

In Westminster the Tory Government seem determined that the poorly paid and disadvantaged should pay for their catastrophic handling of the economy. Seeing industrial action across all sectors, their response was not to negotiate but to bring in legislation making it even harder for our trade unions to defend their members. They blame us for their ineptitude.

In Scottish Local Government UNISON, Unite and GMB called upon their members in schools,

early years and waste and recycling services to strike on our behalf and it was only by striking that local government workers received the improved offer ultimately accepted.

Our branch obtained a 91% vote in favour of striking but we did not reach the 50% threshold to allow action, despite the best efforts of activists visiting workplaces and phoning members to get the vote out.

The action in Edinburgh (which made the news worldwide) forcing Holyrood to negotiate was thanks to our sister unions who achieved the threshold for action and our members who, without recourse to strike pay, supported their colleagues and ultimately all Local

Government workers. We thank them all.

The 2023/24 pay claim is now being submitted and further action may be required.

Please ensure your address and phone (especially mobile) details are up to date with us and if you are balloted vote.



Tom Muir  
Chairperson

**Update your UNISON details**  
**0800 0 857 857**  
To take part in our consultations, surveys and ballots, we need accurate information: **your work, email & mobile.**

## Labour Link Report 2022

# Two wings of the same movement

**U**NISON's Labour Link works to bring UNISON's policies into the heart of the Labour Party, a unique and historical relationship between Labour and affiliated unions. A Labour minority administration is now running the Council making the link even more important.



A key campaign for UNISON Scotland recently has been around the proposed introduction of the National Care Service (NCS) in Scotland. UNISON

Scotland's view is that the Scottish Government's NCS Bill takes services out of councils and the NHS and is an attack on publicly owned and democratically accountable services and therefore the Bill should be withdrawn. This ties in with our branch's ongoing campaign to save Council-run care homes in Edinburgh.

The Labour Link has been seeking to engage with Scottish Labour members and politicians at all levels about these linked campaigns and has found a positive reception as the NCS draws closer.

Anas Sarwar, leader of Scottish Labour, addressed the Scottish Labour Link Forum in January. He described his party first and foremost as a party of labour with

no conditions attached to Scottish Labour supporting workers on picket lines and the right to strike.

He also made the welcome point that Scottish Labour's elected representatives should not act as managers or administrators but as political leaders.

For more information about the Labour Link, visit <https://unison-scotland.org/labour-link/>.



Kyle Bellamy  
Acting Labour Link Officer



# Health, safety, wellbeing and equality - Are our workplaces really safe



Ian Mullen  
Health and Safety  
Convener

The last 12-months have been difficult having endured three years of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I would like to express my thanks to our health and safety team who continue

to carry out workplace inspections and challenge the employers when required. It is a well-known fact that unionised workplaces are safer, and our team's commitment must be recognised for its important role in the working environment and community.

The Scottish Governments decision to withdraw all COVID restrictions has shown a complete lack of responsibility towards workers and service users, putting the economy before public safety.

COVID-19 has not disappeared but has highlighted how inequality impacts those that are most vulnerable in our society, especially those workers and service users with underlying health conditions or the lowest paid.

UNISON City of Edinburgh is the first branch in Scotland to sign up to the Indie SAGE COVID Safety Pledge and we would encourage all employers to sign the Pledge.

With occupation levels in our locality offices starting to increase and proposed depot closures in place, members are being relocated to larger sites that no longer have the capacity or facilities for increased staffing numbers.

**‘ COVID-19 has not disappeared but has highlighted how inequality impacts those that are most vulnerable in our society’**

Many of our offices, schools and depots remained open throughout the pandemic with no CO2 monitors or HEPA filtration units in place and that remains the case.

Having the option to work from home or hybrid working has been beneficial to many colleagues. However, members have reported feeling pressurised into working longer hours to keep up with increased workloads, whilst others have had the option of hybrid working withdrawn.

Our Health and Safety team continue to carry out workplace inspections, updating the council's health and safety policy, risk assessments and safe working procedures as well as attending safety committees and at the Scottish Council meeting in February 2022, I was re-elected to the national Health and Safety Committee, where I have an active role in the decision-making process.

At UK level the Governments Retain EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill, will severely impact workers current health and safety rights with approximately 75 regulations under threat of withdrawal.

All trade unions, safety campaign groups and political parties must oppose this Bill, which will damage beyond repair the benefits and protections that workers currently have.

Finally, we will continue to work proactively with the councils Corporate Health and Safety team to make sure that our workplaces are as safe as possible for our members, colleagues, service users and those returning to work. However, we will reserve the right to contact the respective regulatory body if workplaces are found to be unsafe.



**We are always looking for new health & safety representatives.**

**If you are interested in joining our team, please contact the branch office on 0131 558 7488 for further information**

# Equity for all

Support us to elect a full Equalities Committee at this AGM – it's sorely needed!!!!

It feels like all organisations have become complacent about Equity and Equalities and talk about D&I instead.

If you're, BAME, LGBTQ+, a women (all women), we want to recruit you! As activists, equality reps and branch officers.

We want to:

- Identify and address the specific needs of our members in marginalised groups
- ...particularly our lowest paid members, who suffer additional hardship and disadvantage
- Campaign for Equity instead of Diversity and Inclusion – THEY ARE NOT THE SAME THING
- Ensure the Council give Equality Reps equal treatment
- Develop self-organised groups

to share our lived experience

- Improve equalities learning and the use of inclusive language
  - Support each other to speak out and challenge discrimination
  - Develop in house learning that meets the needs of all marginalised groups
  - Communicate equality news, progress, learning and events - to all members
  - Improve council collective bargaining and how we work collaboratively with partners and networks
- We must start talking about the causes of inequity:
- White privilege
  - Heteronormativity
  - Misogyny
  - Racism
  - Poverty

If we don't change our approach

## Equality officers



From left: Elaine Wishart, Equalities Officer; Stacey Monteith Skelton, Women's Officer and Don Naismith, LGBT+ Officer

nothing will change - no-one has ever freed themselves from oppression by asking nicely.

We desperately need your energy. So, please, elect our equality officers, support our motions – and tell us what you need – and how want to contribute. For more information email [equalities@unison-edinburgh.org.uk](mailto:equalities@unison-edinburgh.org.uk)

The People United will never be defeated.

## International Report 2022

# Working internationally

Our branch has stayed informed about many global issues over the past six months.

The International Committee, with the support of branch office colleagues, has attempted to raise members' awareness by circulating important messages, announcements, and updates about global unions and campaigns.

We have shared information from War on Want about Israeli soldiers raiding and shutting down six Palestinian human rights organisations. We have also shared information about events

organised by Labour Friends of Progressive Latin America, Brazil Solidarity Initiative, Friends of Bolivia, Friends of Ecuador, NSCAG, and Venezuela Solidarity Campaign.

2022 was an eventful year, with many geopolitical changes affecting the lives of union members around the world and their families.

The ongoing war against Ukraine and the genocidal war against the people of the Tigray region in Ethiopia have caused many people to leave their homes and experience all the challenges

and trauma associated with forced displacement.

On a more positive note, trade unionists and leftists around the world were rallied by the election of Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva (aka Lula) in Brazil.

For more information visit <https://unison-scotland.org/international/>



Tesfahun Gessesse International Officer

# Enough is enough

Before and after the pandemic, public sector workers continued to keep the country running by providing essential and valued services to the citizens of Edinburgh.

Government ministers encouraged people to stand outside their homes and clap for you and your colleagues, now those same ministers are no longer clapping but slapping your very faces! And why? Because you asked for a decent pay rise, an end to continual cuts to jobs, terms & conditions, and the undermining of the high-quality services you provide.

Public services should not be something that you can only access if you have the connections or the finances. If we are to live in a fair and equitable society, we must continue to do all we can to oppose the brutality of service cuts and call for more investment, and a return of all services that have been lost.

Public sector workers should be recognised for the work they do and paid for it. Workers should not be relying on food banks, the only bank they should be using is the one that deals with their direct debits or savings.

Every day UNISON challenges the cuts to jobs and services. We represent you, our members, at every level, we work on the development of policy and procedures that enhance your working terms and conditions at work, we challenge all forms of discrimination and strive to have a

branch that fully reflects the membership. We work for you.

Our successes have not gone unnoticed. Over the past year UNISON branch membership has increased, this is due to our stewards and other representatives actively campaigning on your behalf.

**‘If we are to live in a fair and equitable society, we must continue to do all we can to oppose the brutality of service cuts and call for more investment, and a return of all services that have been lost.’**

Campaigns for better pay, preventing the closure of our care homes and libraries, campaigns that ensure your workplace is a safe environment and that you have the same opportunities as your colleagues regardless of your demographic.

Last year I said that we needed to continue building a more active membership, particularly encouraging the participation of colleagues who are young, female, black, LGBT+ or disabled. I am pleased to say that good progress has been made and we have seen more people getting active and taking up roles within UNISON. Our job is never easy. Everything that workers have gained through the years was not given freely to us by the



**Tom Connolly**  
Branch Secretary and  
Service Conditions Co-ordinator

employers. It was only through standing together and under the umbrella of trade unionism were we able to enjoy what we have. We must remain vigilant. We need you to also play your part.

I ask you to consider becoming a steward. You make the difference; you are the difference. Please give this some thought, the future may appear uncertain but with your involvement it becomes less so. Speak to your local steward or contact the UNISON Branch Office.

## Your branch employed staff

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our branch employed staff, Monica Niven, and Julie Finlay for the invaluable support that they provide to the administration of the branch, and their support to branch officers, shop stewards and health and safety representatives and all the members that contact us.

And thank you also to Amanda Kerr, our Community and Voluntary Sector worker for all the essential work that she does supporting our members across a wide range of employers.

## Convener

## Service conditions officers



David Harrold



Caroline McLean



Pauline Henderson



Elaine Wishart



Ian Mullen



Gerry Stovin

# Membership goes from strength to strength

The branch has almost 1,800 members employed in the community and voluntary sector spread across various ALEOs, charities, voluntary and private employers.

In May 2022 we transferred members from West Lothian CVS into the branch, meaning we now cover all of Edinburgh and The Lothians.

In August we also transferred in all of our SACRO members who were previously scattered across various branches in Scotland. This has meant we have been able to recruit two workplace representatives in the employer and establish our joint consultation committee meetings .

SACRO have been making

changes to contracts as well as reviewing policies so having all the members in the one branch has been much more beneficial.

A large proportion of our membership still sits within the care sector. These members continue to face challenging working conditions. Staff shortages, excessive workloads, long working hours, lack of support, insufficient rest times, short notice rota changes all has led to many cases of stress, anxiety, and sheer exhaustion.

As a union we continue to campaign and organise to try to improve terms for these underpaid and undervalued members.

The Government’s intention to create a National Care Service is

a particular concern as this could have a huge impact on our community members and Local Authorities also.

Throughout the last year, I have been fortunate to have the support of workplace reps in COSLA , Canongate Youth, Edinburgh Leisure, ELCAP, Garvald and SACRO and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their continuous support of members in their respective areas.



Amanda Kerr  
CVRS organiser/  
caseworker

## Welfare Report 2022

# UNISON Welfare - we are here for you

We can't believe how quickly the last year has went, we came through the Covid pandemic and now we are onto a "new pandemic" called the Cost of living Crisis, with high increases within the energy sector, who are making vast profits. This affects most of the population in some way or other but affects the lowest paid the worst.

Foodbanks are still on the increase and being used by public sector workers, low paid, NHS, fire brigade etc. This Crisis was not caused by our member's but they are paying the price causing real hardship and increasing the division between rich and poor.

The Scottish and UK government both state they are trying to end child poverty however, under both governments this is increasing and they wonder why strikes are taking place.

Mike and I as Welfare officers

have continued to provide support and financial advice to our members and their families throughout the year. This is a unique membership service which no other trade union in local government provides. This can include day to day living expenses, utility bills, providing emergency grants as well as benefit advice. We have signposted members to our income maximisation site 'turn2us' website. This provide further information as to other benefits which members maybe entitled too.

As we have in the past, we continue to promote our national charity UNISON 'there for you' and their small grant schemes of Winter Fuel and School Uniform Grants, as well as promoting the other services that the charity can provide including free debt advice using UNISON's Debt Line.



Caroline McLean  
Welfare Officer



Mike Smith  
Welfare Officer

We have sign-posted members to other welfare grant schemes and can provide our members with details of appropriate agencies who can provide a more specialized service.

Finally, this is my last year of being one of the welfare officers as I am planning to retire next year from my substantive post. I have found being a welfare officer with UNISON very rewarding and have enjoyed assisting members through difficult times.

# Full training programme back in 2023

This year's report starts by thanking all our branch representatives who took part in our education and training programme throughout 2022.

The new 2023 calendar has seen the return of our first full training programme in 3 years with both face-to-face and hybrid options available.

I am pleased to say that two new courses have been added to the programme, they are Challenging Racism and Climate Crisis and Green Skills.

Further education and training options have been available via our affiliation to the STUC, TUC, Scottish/UK Hazards, and Scottish Union Learning (SUL). SUL courses have been well attended with additional funding secured in 2022. Funding for 2023 is being sought.

I would like to thank Scottish and UK Hazards for their continued support with their health and safety webinars, some of which I have attended as a guest speaker.

Following branch attendance at a joint Scottish Trade Union Congress (STUC)/Scottish Hazards training course in 2022, a report was compiled on the

councils awarding of a large contract to the private sector, which contravened Scottish Governments Procurement Framework guidance, this has been highlighted to elected members. My thanks to the STUC who invited me to a follow-on course as a guest speaker on this subject.



The February 2022, meeting of the Scottish Council seen my re-election to the national Learning and Organising Committee, to which I have an active role in the committee decision process.

Our Branch Education and Training Strategy 2022 has been updated and continues to promote UNISON, partner, and joint CEC training opportunities for all our branch representatives. The strategy also highlights our branches commitment to equality and accessibility for all representatives including those with seen and unseen disabilities. This is an integral part of the yearly Branch Plan.

Our new state-of-the-art training

facilities, named after the late John Stevenson, are ideal for regional and branch bespoke training.



Ian Mullen  
Education Officer

Our congratulations must go to our Scottish Disabled Members Committee, who organised the UNISON Year of the Disabled Workers campaign, with many on-line events highlighting the difficulties that our disabled members face at work.

The committee's hard work was recognised on 15 December 2022, when Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP, submitted a motion to the Scottish Parliament. The motion debate was well supported by all political parties and recognised the work and commitment of the Scottish Disabled Members Committee.

For more information about UNISON Activists Education Programme 2023 visit, <https://unison-edinburgh.org.uk/unison-activist-education/>



# Membership Audit 2022

## Membership at 31 December 2022

\*Some figures are affected by transfers between departments

Department	31/12/2022	31/12/2021	Var
Associated Bodies	67	62	+5
Corporate Services	499	854	-355
Education & Children's Services	2,540	2,285	+255
Edinburgh Leisure	101	90	+11
Health & Social Care	1,153	1,209	-56
Lothian Valuation Joint Board	48	50	-2
Place	1,368	758	+610
Comm & Voluntary Sector	1,611	1,428	+183
Unallocated	12	41	+2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,399</b>	<b>6,777</b>	<b>+622</b>
Student	0	0	0
Unemployed	19	22	-3
Retired Members	1,160	1,174	-14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8,578</b>	<b>7,973</b>	<b>+60</b>

Recruited 1/1/21 – 31/1/22 = 1,605

Officially resigned = 139

Lapsed via Docas = 831

## Proportionality and Fair Representation Audit 2022

### 1. Women in branch

\*Figures in brackets show 2021 figures.

Branch	Officers	Stewards
70% (70%)	33% (71%)	45% (48%)

### 2. Branch Committee Breakdown

% of Women in membership 70% (70%)

% of Women among delegates to Branch Committee 47% (38%)

### 3. Department numbers at 31/12/20 (% women)

#### Corporate Services (33%)

Female 285 Male 122 Other 11

#### Education & Children's Services (82%)

Female 1,875 Male 363 Other 46

#### Edinburgh Leisure (36%)

Female 32 Male 57 Other 1

#### Health & Social Care (79%)

Female 960 Male 238 Other 11

#### Lothian Valuation Joint Board (54%)

Female 27 Male 22 Other 1

#### Place (28%)

Female 211 Male 529 Other 18

#### Community & Voluntary Sector (70%)

Female 1,003 Male 360 Other 63

## Branch Committee Attendances 2022

Branch Officers	Possible	Actual	Stewards	Possible	Actual
Kirsten Hey	12	5	<b>Associated Bodies</b>	0	0
Tom Muir	12	11	<b>Corporate Services</b>		
Caroline McLean	12	6	Hugh Menzies	12	10
Tom Connolly	12	9	<b>Education &amp; Children's Services</b>	0	0
Gerry Stovin	12	9	<b>Edinburgh Leisure</b>	0	0
David Harrold	12	7	<b>Health &amp; Social Care</b>		
Ian Mullen	12	10	Joan Lancashire	12	3
Pauline Henderson	12	7	<b>LVJB</b>		
Mike Smith	12	10	Sean Allen	12	0
Don Naismith	8	7	<b>Place</b>		
Jamie McCormack	7	0	Allan King	12	9
Stacey Monteith-Skeilton	6	4	Kyle Bellamy	12	10
Tefsu Gessesse	6	2	Tom Howorth	12	7
Hannah Bradley	2	1			
Elaine Wishart	2	1			

# Agenda Item 10 Rule and Standing Order Changes - AGM 2023

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The full Branch Rules are available at [unison-edinburgh.org.uk/about-us/branch-constitution-and-rules/](http://unison-edinburgh.org.uk/about-us/branch-constitution-and-rules/)

Changes to rules require a two-thirds majority of members voting across the total votes of the aggregate meetings.

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## 1. To rationalise the Committee Structure

*Proposed by Tom Muir (Corporate Governance) and Gerry Stovin (Place)*

The Branch Committee of the 4th August 2021 agreed to recommend the following rule changes.

### Introduction

The National Rulebook mandates that the Branch Committee governs the business of the Branch. In addition to that this Branch has several subcommittees which do not meet or duplicate the business of the Branch Committee and would be better served by working groups meeting under the auspices of the appropriate officer who would report and be responsible to the Branch Committee.

### Service Conditions Committee

The functions of this committee are duplicated within Branch Committee, specifically the Service Conditions Convenors Report. The actions currently undertaken would devolve to the responsible officers who report to Branch Committee.

### Equalities Committee

This currently does not meet

### Education & Communications Sub Committee

This currently does not meet

### **Rule Change 1 - Service Conditions Committee**

To delete Section D.3. Conditions of Service Sub Committee

To Amend section D.2. Branch Committee – Structure as follows:

- To append “2.m To be responsible for the Branch’s consultation on national negotiation”
- To append “2.n To support and co-ordinate Departmental negotiation,

To amend Section D.4 Service Conditions Team as follows:

- To replace all references to the Service Conditions Committee with Branch Committee.

### **Rule Change 2 - Equalities Committee**

To Delete Section D.5

To Amend section D.2. Branch Committee – Structure as follows:

- To append “2.o To ensure all Branch business pertinent to the objective of ensuring equality in all matters relating to an individual’s membership of the Branch and shall pursue areas of improvement for disadvantaged groups. This will include matters of National or Regional Policy.

To amend Section D.4 Service Conditions Team as follows:

- To append “4.5 To ensure that all negotiations pertinent to the objective of ensuring equality in all matters relating to their employment and shall pursue areas of improvement for disadvantaged groups.

To amend Section E as follow

- In 23, 24, 25 & 26 to replace references to Equalities Sub Committee with Branch Committee

### **Rule Change 3 - Education & Communications Sub Committee**

To delete Section D.7.

To Amend section D.2. Branch Committee – Structure as follows:

- To append “2.o To appoint an editorial committee and editor for the Branch Magazine”
- To amend Section D.4 Service Conditions Team as follows:
  - To append “4.g To ensure that all stewards and officers can obtain and receive the appropriate training”
  - 4.h. produce a regular branch magazine supplemented by newssheets as appropriate.
  - 4.i. maintain a watch on the media to alert branch officers to issues requiring a UNISON response.
  - 4.j develop and produce information for members and stewards”

# Agenda Item 11 Policy Motions - AGM 2023

Council Budget, Cuts, Redundancies (local)

## 1. Save Our Care Homes

*Proposed by David Harrold & Gerry Stovin (Place)*

This AGM notes the successful “Save Our Care Homes” campaign spearheaded by UNISON in 2021. This campaign, supported by our care home staff and the public, succeeded in keeping Clovenstone, Ferrylee, Fords Road and Jewel House Care Homes open as well as securing a manifesto pledge from many of the political parties to either upgrade these homes to meet the most up to date standards or to build replacements where and when needed.

This AGM also notes the catastrophic blunder by the Edinburgh Integrated Joint Board (EIJB) – which commissions health and social care services from the city – to remove Drumbrae Care Home from residential care. A decision which (despite the evidence provided by UNISON that it would be disastrous) has left a much needed 60 bed unit empty for well over 18 months and at an estimated cost of £3 million. This serious error of judgement does not appear to have given them pause for thought and they continue to advocate for the closure of these much-needed care homes which will open the door for the private sector to move in.

This AGM has serious concerns as to the actions of the EIJB up to this point and the reluctance of certain officials to meaningfully consult with UNISON. This behaviour has caused care home staff to lose all faith in senior management and runs contrary to good practice

as well as policy and procedure.

This AGM believes that any care home closure will have long-lasting effects not just on our care home staff but on the older people who rely upon them now and will do in the future. The need for these services has not lessened, they are in fact increasing. Any failure to ensure the future provision of residential care with adequate staffing as well as proper back-up and resources is to neglect the public we serve and undermine staff morale and professionalism.

This AGM calls upon the union to support the above motion and instructs our Branch Officers to:

1. Continue to organise and coordinate our “Save Our Care Homes” campaign alongside our members, residents and their families, community action groups and the public to oppose any decision that threatens the future of council run residential care and to request the return of Drumbrae Care Home to its original use.
2. Call upon the EIJB and City of Edinburgh Council to bolster current staffing levels and safeguard the future delivery and quality of all services within council run care homes
3. Ensure City of Edinburgh Councillors honour their pledges to keep council run care homes open, upgrading them where necessary or building replacements where that is not feasible.

UNISON Services and Structures

## 2. Personal Pronouns

*Proposed by Don Naismith & Elaine Wishart (Corporate Services)*

This AGM recognises UNISON as a driving force in promoting an equitable, inclusive workplace, including gender-equity. UNISON’s role has helped many LGBT+ colleagues to feel more accepted and to be able to express themselves safely.

This Branch can build on creating safer

environments at work by not misgendering people, which is both upsetting and de-humanising for the transgender (trans) community. Sadly, being mis-gendered is all too common an occurrence in the workplace – and in society.

*Continued on page 17*





*Continued from page 16*

Gender identity and biological sex are different things and whilst there is a lengthy and difficult debate to be had in this arena, this motion in particular, is about encouraging the use of personal pronouns (she/her; they/them etc) to recognise that some people's gender identity may not be obvious. For example, sometimes when we meet people, we often assume their gender based on their appearance. People may do this unintentionally – but how we as a TU approach this, can make a huge difference to people's lives and how safe they feel.

Imagine how it feels to be mis-gendered every day? The answer is de-humansing and harmful - statistics tragically show that the transgender community has significantly higher rates of low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, alienation, exclusion, self-harm and suicide (Stonewall and other research).

However, experience shows that even simple measures, such as everyone using and sharing their personal pronouns - not only prevents mis-

gendering but also:

- Recognises and affirms that all gender identities exist
- Encourages gender-based thinking
- Encourages an environment where everyone can express their gender identity
- Reflects UNISON's values of fairness and equity for all

It is not proposed to compel people to share their personal pronouns – as in some cases this could be alienating and unwelcome for some of the trans community.

Instead, this AGM motion is to encourage all UNISON Branch members to include their personal pronouns in their email and other signatures - where they feel safe and comfortable to do so.

This voluntary action is a simple but powerful way to inspire further progress in equity and acceptance of the trans community in our workplaces. Please support this motion.

### 3. Repeal of the Anti-Trade Union Laws

*Proposed by Place Shop Stewards Committee*

This AGM notes that it has been 30 years since the Conservative Government, led by Margaret Thatcher, introduced legislation that attacks the rights of working people and their Trade Unions. These anti-trade union laws were designed to smash the influence of the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) in the 1980's and continue to be used by successive governments to restrict working people from organising and opposing unfair practices.

This AGM believes that the continued imposition of these laws are detrimental not just to working men and women but their families and communities. This AGM also believes that the Retain EU Law Parliamentary Bill recently put forward by Conservative MP, Jacob Rees-Mogg,

will if not opposed damage beyond repair the benefits and protections that workers require. Benefits and protections such as maternity and paternity rights, holiday, sick pay, health & safety regulations, the 36-hour week and much more.

With the prospect of a future Labour Government, we must be assured that these laws will be repealed. The Trade Union leadership can no longer sit back and accept these attacks as they have in the past.

This AGM instructs our Branch Officers to secure the support of our national union and actively campaign to have all anti-trade union legislation repealed. Please support this motion.

## Branch Meetings

These are the supreme branch policy meetings and are open to all members.

## Departmental Meetings

Open to all members in each department or sector and can mandate Shop Stewards Committees. Members mandate their own stewards via Workplace Meetings.

## Branch Committee

Consists of about 40 members made up of branch officers, stewards elected from Departmental Committees and reps from self organised groups. Steward delegates are accountable to their Stewards' Committees. Structures ensure stewards outnumber officers.

The Committee meets monthly to deal with the running of the branch and oversees work of all other committees.

Delegations must meet proportionality (ie reflect the proportion of women in the membership) and fair representation.

## Shop Stewards Committees

Made up of all stewards in each department. These deal with issues in your department and most have a Joint Consultative Structure through which they meet management regularly. They represent your views through workplace or departmental meetings and elect delegates to the branch committee.

## Scottish Council

UNISON's Scottish forum of delegates from all branches. There are also specific structures for services like Local Government and Health.

## National Conference

UNISON's supreme policy making body made up of delegates from branches. Also Conferences for each individual service (eg Local Government).

## National Executive

Elected by ballot of all members on Regional constituencies (eg Scotland), and UK service constituencies like local government. Implements, interprets and sets policy between conferences. Members are lay officers who have jobs like the rest of us.

## Self Organised Groups

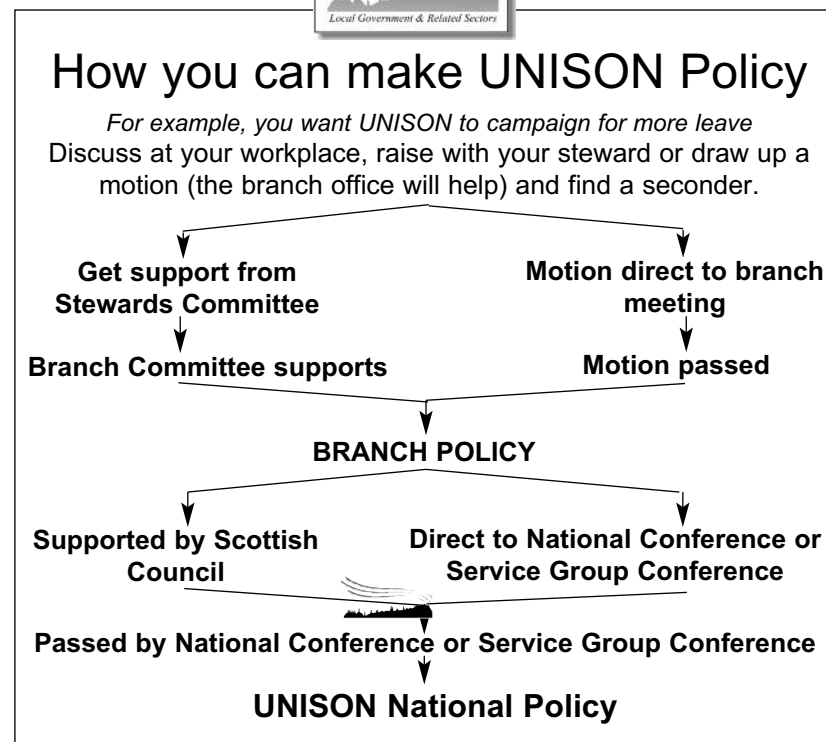
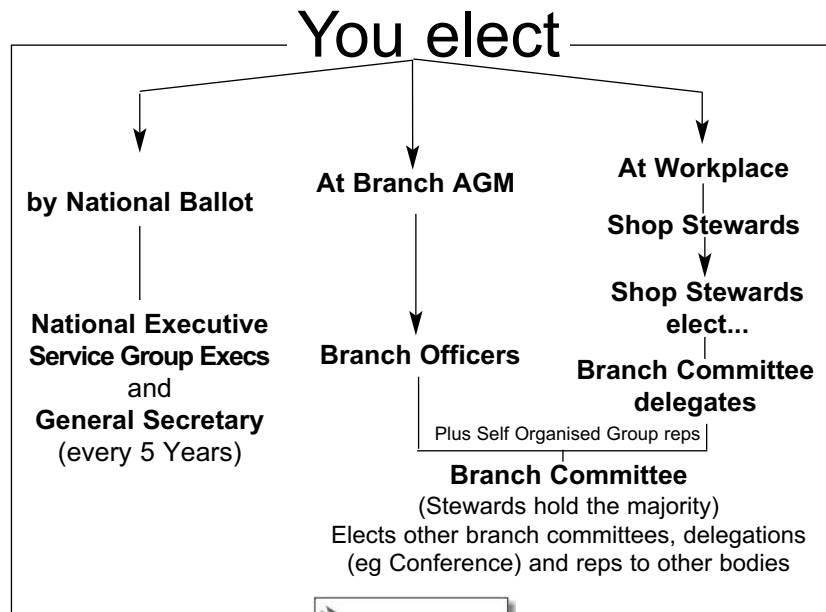
For structurally disadvantaged groups, eg Women's Group, Young Members, Black Members, Disabled Members, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Members.

# Making your VOTE COUNT

Here we outline broadly the current framework and the UNISON structure in which the branch works.

**UNISON is a lay member led union with democratic structures at all levels. But these structures are no good unless members themselves exercise their right to use them.**

The structures which branch members have set up will no doubt develop through experience to meet the branch's needs.





## There For You (UNISON Welfare)

Members experiencing financial and emotional difficulties can contact our welfare charity, There for You, which provides a confidential advice and support service for members and their dependants.

Contact us via your branch welfare officer or branch secretary on 0131 558 7488.

You can also be put in touch with the Scottish Welfare Committee by phoning 0800 0 857 857. See the UNISON UK Welfare pages for information, advice, Debtline Support, Wellbeing Breaks, financial assistance and much more.

