

# UNISON Matters

Aberdeenshire

July 2013



## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2013

**AGM hears how austerity is not working as members agree to go out and recruit.**



government's austerity measures," Kate told the meeting. "There was never a more important time to stand up and be counted. And to speak out against poverty and the demonisation of the poor.

### Living wage win

Inez Teece, spoke about the challenges and wins.



"The biggest boost for Branch has been the 'Living Wage' for our lowest paid members," she said, we will continue to fight for members pay, pensions and terms and conditions.

### Extend the living wage

Naida Sneddon called on the council to extended the Living Wage to all employers from whom the council commissions services.

Naida said, "People should not be expected to work for wages which don't keep up with inflation. This causes misery to both workers and their children who are forced to do without the basics of life or make a choice between heating their homes and having food on the table.

### Recruitment key to challenging attacks on our living standards

Kate Ramsden called on the Branch to make recruiting new members its first priority. "Trade unions are at the very forefront of the fight against the

## Stephen Boyd, STUC debunks austerity myths



Stephen debunked many of the myths

### Where is Britain in The Global Race?



and misdirections put out by the UK Government as he outlined how their

approach to dealing with the deficit is not working and could never work.

### We are not all in this together



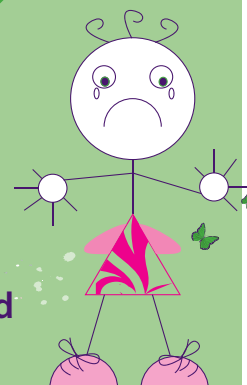
The meeting heard a call from Susan Kennedy to step up UNISON's campaign against public service cuts to welfare benefits and to get the key messages out to members and the public that the austerity measures are not working; are damaging the economy; and have created the greatest inequality we have seen for generations.

"Local government jobs and public services are essential to keep our local economies ticking over.

**USE YOUR VOTE**  
for FAIR PAY

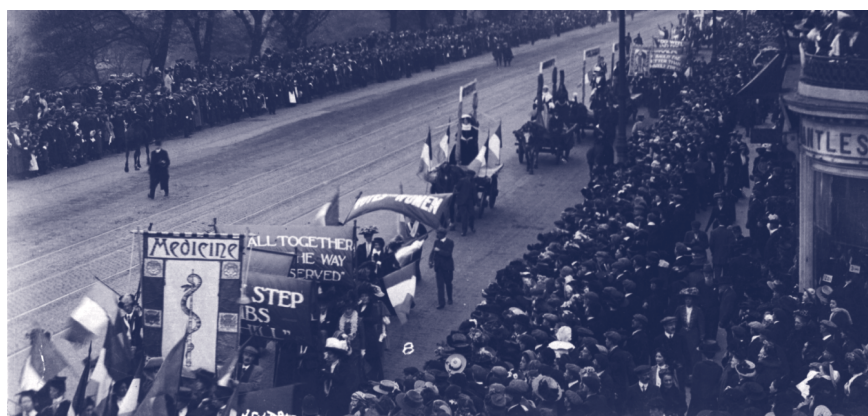
**YES to FAIR PAY**

Want more in your pocket than fluff and moths?



# WOMEN FIGHTING FOR THEIR RIGHTS

## The Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU)



The WSPU Edinburgh March, Princess Street 10 October, 1909

© National Library of Scotland

**The WSPU was founded in 1903 by Emmeline Pankhurst and took a more militant view on the campaign for women's suffrage than other groups from the period.**

By 1906, the WSPU had become well known for their extreme line - often resulting in arson, vandalism and hunger-strikes to promote their cause - all covered extensively by the national press. In 1908 the government

passed The Public Meeting Act, 'to prevent disturbance of Public Meetings' that effectively made the disruptive 'Deeds not Words' of the WSPU illegal.

Support for the WSPU had swelled over the years, something that did not cease even after the threat of arrest and imprisonment. In the same year as The Public Meeting Act was passed, the group devised an innovative way for supporters

to show their allegiance by developing 'corporate' colours - purple for dignity, white (for purity) and green for hope). It did not take long for the colours to take hold and in June of 1908

**30,000 women displayed their colours in a demonstration in London's Hyde Park - thought to have been watched by up to half a million spectators - a dramatic scene in purple, white and green.**

This demonstration marked the beginning of a remarkable and persistent campaign for women's suffrage that continued until the outbreak of war in 1914, at which point the members of WSPU vowed to concentrate on the war effort. In 1918 women over 30 were granted the vote, with the voting age dropping to 21 years old in 1928.



## International Women's Day 2013

**International Women's Day was celebrated on the 8th March, it is a global day celebrating the economic, political and social achievements of women past, present and future. In some places like China, Russia, Vietnam and Bulgaria, International Women's Day is a national holiday.**

International Women's Day started in 1911 and is about celebrating the political, social and economic gains of women. Many have risked and do risk violence and imprisonment fighting for the rights of their fellow workers and justice for all. In Massachusetts young women mill workers won a dispute for fair pay and

dignity at work exactly 100 years ago. In the UK, the Match girls in 1888, the Chainmakers in 1910 and the Ford Dagenham workers

in 1968 all won disputes for fair and equal pay and dignity at work, the latter now having been immortalised in the film "Made in Dagenham".



Barbra Castle, Secretary of State for Employment and Productivity in Harold Wilson's government, has tea with some of the Ford Dagenham workers in 1968.

© Associated Newspapers

**There are still issues affecting women unfairly such as the pay gap. This has been addressed by UNISON in Aberdeenshire Council where an agreement was reached to bring the pay for jobs done mainly by women up to the same level as similar jobs done mainly by men.**





## 'VITAL TO SCHOOLS' SAY HEADTEACHERS

### about the teaching & pupil support assistants

A new survey by UNISON, the UK's largest union, reveals that the vast majority of head teachers and school leaders believe that their school could not run without the hard work of teaching assistants (TAs & PSA's).

The in-depth survey reveals that

95% of heads and school leaders believe TAs add significant value to the team around children, including to those with special educational needs.

The survey also outlines best practice, and reports that TAs & PSA's could play an even greater role in improving quality given better supervision and deployment.

Jon Richards, UNISON's National Secretary for Education, said:

"The findings of our survey are a testament to the huge role

that teaching assistants play in delivering high quality education to our children in schools today.

"To make sure they can play an even greater role in boosting quality and standards, we want a national framework to regulate how they are deployed, as well as their pay and conditions.

"Realising the potential of children and young people in our schools is inextricably linked to realising the potential of the TA & PSA workforce."

## STUC Congress in Perth

Susan Kennedy spoke on behalf of UNISON to back a motion by EIS to target spending on tackling poverty. "It's obvious that a child that arrives at school hungry doesn't have an equal opportunity to reach the potential that their classmates have.

"It's obvious that a child that misses lessons because free school transport has been cut back and their

parents either won't or can't make finding the bus fare a priority, isn't experiencing an equal chance to learn and grow.

"Congress - this motion is a recognition that what happens OUTSIDE the school has an impact on what happens INSIDE the school."



## Katherine cycles round Cuba for the ARCHIE foundation

Branch member Katherine Irvine has raised over £5,000 for the ARCHIE foundation by cycling round Cuba on an epic adventure.

The Branch was amongst many organisations and individuals who

supported Katherine's fund raising adventure.

You can still add to Katherine's amazing fund raising efforts. You will find a link on our website.



Katherine in Cuba wearing her UNISON pensions tee-shirt, in Cinefuegos, near the Bay of Pigs on the Caribbean Coast of Cuba.

**Use your vote**

### Rejection of Local Government Pay Offer

UNISON Scotland will now plan a campaign of industrial action to secure a better pay offer for all our members. Use your vote to say Yes to Fair Pay in the current ballot.

UNISON's ballot resulted in members rejecting the employers' offer.

Branch delegates attended the meeting when the result was announced. Stephanie Herd, Chair of the Scottish Local Government

Committee said, "We will now consider with our members, and with the other trade unions, what our next step is in terms of action to shift the employers.

"We will want to speak to COSLA to

seek to re-open discussions on pay".

We will now arrange further meetings to give members the opportunity to hear more.



## 87% of local government workers struggling with stress

A survey of more than 14,000 local government workers by UNISON, the UK's largest union, reveals that a staggering 87% are struggling to cope with increased stress and pressure at work.

A toxic cocktail of declining staff numbers (70%) and increasing expectations from public (61%) and employers (82%), is piling on the pressure say workers.

72% say stress is affecting how well they can do their jobs, and 70% say that workplace stress is affecting their personal life.

The union is urging the government to slow down the multi- billion pound cuts currently

hitting councils. The toll of job losses has already hit 250,000, making it difficult to provide services which are in high demand as communities struggle to cope with the recession.

The union is calling on employers, currently consulting on a pay offer, to recognise that councils cannot function without their dedicated workforce, and to ease the pressure of the three year long pay freeze.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a questionnaire devised by our Health & Safety team at UNISON Aberdeenshire Branch. Please complete and return.

### One of the Benefits for UNISON members Legal Services

Did you know that as a UNISON member you and your family have the benefit of cover against:

**Injury and accidents at work and outside work.**

**Also there is no need to add legal expense to your motor insurance policy as you are already covered.**

[www.unison.org.uk/benefits/](http://www.unison.org.uk/benefits/)

Tell your colleagues we need them to join us.  
**More Members**

**More Clout**

Join us today:  
Tel:  
E-mail:  
Web:

UNISON Aberdeenshire  
01224 620624  
[aberdeenshire@unison.co.uk](mailto:aberdeenshire@unison.co.uk)  
[www.aberdeenshireunison.com](http://www.aberdeenshireunison.com)

**Joint union efforts got vastly improved outcome to recent Fleet Depot Review.**

**Members in housing with union support are looking for a similar result.**

**Please let the UNISON resource centre know about any reviews on 01224 620624. This will allow us to get involved at the earliest stage.**

## National Local Government & Annual Delegate Conference on 16th – 21st June in Liverpool Who's who and what's what

Every UNISON branch elects a delegation to attend annual conference and to vote on behalf of their local branch members. Scotland has about 200 delegates. This branch has three. Two must be women and one of these must be a low paid woman, to reflect the make-up of the branch.

**Branch Committee voted this year's delegation to Conference in Liverpool as:**

Inez Teece, Susan Kennedy, Kate Ramsden, Steve Gray, Morag Lawrence, Tricia Morrison.

UNISON's annual national conference is the union's ruling body. Every year delegates from all over the country take part in debates to choose our campaigning priorities and policies.

As delegates we will vote on the motions and the rule changes in line with branch policy, where we have that in place and we can speak for or against any of the motions, amendments and rule changes.

