

## CONFERENCES

Reports by: Mike McLoughlin

### **Rules Conference**

Retired members have recently won the rights to submit motions on non-industrial issues; and to have two delegates from each Region present. A great moment for us retired members was when Roy Rix won the amendment on Funeral Benefits against the wishes of the NEC. Roy was asked four times to remit, but stood his ground and argued that their figures were wrong. He won the vote. This was a major achievement. It has been referred to the NEC for costs to be worked out.

The four amendments from the East Midlands Region, which included the right to vote in

Regional territorial elections for the NEC delegate, and to participate in the Regional Equality committees and one from the West Midlands on equalities were remitted after being debated. One of our disappointments was that amendment 38 from Scotland, which dealt with voting rights for RM Plus and RM branches being able to nominate candidates for the Regional territorial NEC elections, was voted on and was lost. We had been given the impression that it was the intention to take it seriously into account if it was remitted. We remitted the East & West Midland amendments because it left us with some chance to get something out of the conference. In conclusion we did well as a team and made our presence felt.

### **Policy Conference**

Though exhausting, this conference proved to be an immense success due to our teamwork. We had a 2.5-hour meeting on the Friday, conversation with the GS and a couple of polite meetings with the Standing Orders Committee. They listened to us politely but stuck to their guns. We moved reference back and received a great response from the conference. The GS intervened and had words with the SOC and the issue was resolved. Our motions were put back on the agenda, were voted on and carried. The exception being the motion from

the Southeast Region, which Norman Chislett decided to remit after a discussion with the Standing Orders Committee.

We were very pleased with Neal and Carol Hodkinson from Derby coming at short notice and running the RM table for us; and the way in which they took the initiative and went out in the hall to speak to delegates and give them literature to take back to their branches. The table was acceptable on this occasion due to the circumstances. In the future at both Policy and Rules Conferences, we will be looking forward to having a proper stall.

### **Blackpool NPC Conference**

By Roy Rix, 999/8 Branch Chair

Our Unite motion was rejected. Standing Orders Committee rejected it on the grounds that there was no precedent for such a motion. Tony O'Brien proved there had been a precedent. The Chair tried to get approval for the SOC Report, which would have ruled out our moving a reference back and having a discussion on the issue. The NPC claimed afterwards that had Unite spoken to the SOC the issue would have been resolved.

We are led to believe that the Chair of the SOC took no notice of the views of the other

SOC members. The NPC National Chair at the NPC EC on 25 July stated that the SOC Chair raised the issue with her on the evening before and she told him that he was wrong, yet at Blackpool she clearly supported the SOC Chair. Ronnie Morrison looked after the Unite stall very efficiently for us. The second conference was held on day two and dealt with general issues. It was better chaired and there were good discussions. However, with six excellent speakers, there was not adequate time for members on the floor to share their experiences.

## Issues that were discussed at the National RM meeting on 1 August 2023

By **Dereck Roberts** National Retired Members Committee

Closure of Railway Ticket Offices: The Mayor of Manchester Andy Burnham has intervened in the government's decision to close hundreds and thousands of Railway Ticket Offices. He had intended to take the issue to court, but

because of the short consultation time (three weeks), this was extended to 1 September. Hundreds of railway booking offices in England will be closed. Wales has decided that its Railway Booking offices will not close,

nor will the few that they have in England. This was a grave issue for people, particularly the elderly and people with disabilities.



Note from editor one: **BIG WIN!** The government has announced plans to close hundreds of rail ticket offices in England have been scrapped (01/11/2023). Well done to everyone involved in this fantastic campaign.

# How would a Commissioner for Older People and Ageing bring about change in England & and Scotland?

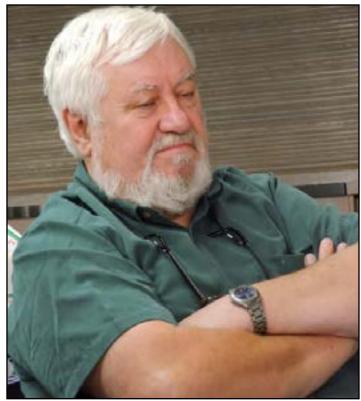
By **Dereck Roberts**, National Retired Members Committee

Dereck Roberts, Chairperson of the National Pensioners Convention Wales, explains the impact that the Older People's Commissioner for Wales has had on people in later life in his community.

"We are one of four national organisations in Wales which represents Pensioners of diverse groups who meet on a regular basis with the older peoples Commissioner for Wales. We also have regular meetings with the Welsh Government where we can raise issues that affect older people in Wales. Our commissioner is independent of Government and has statutory powers, which has helped to ensure that the position has been successful."

"As well as providing effective emergency interventions during the Covid pandemic, she has also been incredibly supportive and kept the pressure upon campaigns and raising issues that affect older people such as transport and digital exclusion. The older peoples Commissioner can also provide advice, signpost people to support and if necessary, provide casework."

"We will be involved in the appointment of the next Welsh Commissioner which could involve an older person's interview panel, as part of the process. It is about having someone in the role of Commissioner who understands how Governments work, but is independent and has the statutory powers to make change.



It's an advantage for the Government because they get to know the problems older people are facing before they get worse, and they can do something about it."

"There are many older people not having their voices heard across the UK. The appointment of older peoples Commissioners in England and Scotland must happen now. We are not only speaking for today's pensioners we are also speaking for the future pensioners."

### Letters to the editor

### Support UK Steel Campaign

Dear Editor,

The South Yorkshire Retired Members branch covers Doncaster, Rotherham, Barnsley, and Sheffield. Five members of our branch turned out to support the Unite the Union Workers' Plan for Steel with the branch banner.

The Steel Campaign was initiated by the Unite General Secretary Sharon Graham this week in

the UK. This plan demands investment in the industry to secure and create jobs. With different political choices, steel could have a bright future and Britain could become a world leader as the demand for greener steel grows. Thirty activists including retired members, shop stewards, and retired steelworkers were present at the Sheffield Launch at



**AUTUMN 2023** 

the Billboard site on Meadow Hall Rd, 100 yards from the Iconic Sheffield Forgemasters Works. The people present at the launch of the Unite Green Steel plan stated that they must have the full support of a future Labour Government.

**Frank Tyas**, South Yorkshire RM Branch & National Committee.

Dear Editor,

The issue of the National Better Bus Campaign due to take place in the first week of October prior to the Labour Party Conference was on the agenda at the Nottingham RM Branch meeting yesterday. We have not done much as most of our activists are suffering serious health problems. It has seemingly not been picked up by the Nottingham Community Branch, or Nottingham Trades Council, so presumably Midlands TUC has not made this a primary issue.

Nottingham City has had for years the bestintegrated transport system in the country, of buses, trams, and cycleways, with links to the trains. This is because the city council has been Labour controlled. Even now with the property millstone around its neck it still finds finances to keep its transport system up to date and now has 50 electric buses. As a legacy of Labour control, the County Council of yesteryear has left us with jointly run Community bus services.

There will be a shortfall of buses to serve our rural areas as private companies Trent Barton and others say there's not sufficient passenger traffic. One of the factors in this is that the DWP says job seekers must travel up to 40 miles when seeking work if they wish to retain their benefits. This means people will have to have their own transport assuming that they can afford it. There are tens of learners every day travelling up and down the road that I live on.

#### Alan Marshall,

Nottingham RM Branch.

Dear Editor,

I did some research into the history of state pensions with respect to the debate about the triple lock. The latest figures show the National Insurance Fund generating a £14.4 million surplus in the financial year 2021/3. The closing balance is £56.9 million. The 1980 Social Security (No.2) Act removed the earnings link for uprating for pensions. From 1980 to 2022 the average adult female

full-time wage increased by a factor of 7.7 from £72.40 to £558.10. The figure for males is £113.3 to £654.3; a factor of 5.8 times. In the same period, prices increased by a factor of 3.5. Direct comparison is complicated by the many changes to state pensions between 1980 and now, 2023. Supporting references are available on request.

**Michael Hudson**, C Eng F1 Mech E, Equality Officer, Lincolnshire RM Branch.

### Asbestos campaign

Dear Editor,

Six of our members from the South Yorkshire branch went on the demo to support SARAG [Yorkshire and Humberside Asbestos Support] in the case against Cape Holdings [a global asbestos manufacturing company], now part of Altrad. SARAG wants Cape to give £10 Million to asbestos research, but obviously, they are not listening. We did the first lobby last year. This is something I have

been connected to for a long time. A friend and I once climbed Ben Nevis to raise funds for SARAG. I also know quite a few people who have died from asbestos-related diseases. We also have a member of our branch who is struggling with it, he is in the photo. When you have worked in the building areas, the chances of being a victim increase quite a lot.

Kind regards, **Frank Tyas**, South Yorkshire Branch

**Take action** to support the campaign here: <a href="https://www.change.org/p/cape-must-pay-we-de-mand-that-cape-donate-10-million-to-fund-mesothelioma-research?signed=true">https://www.change.org/p/cape-must-pay-we-de-mand-that-cape-donate-10-million-to-fund-mesothelioma-research?signed=true</a>



## Belfast rally on 19 August 2023 to defend free travel passes

In the summer, the Department for Infrastructure launched a consultation aimed at cutting free travel for those over 60 by cutting the Concessionary Fares Scheme and depriving senior citizens of their Smart Pass. These proposed changes would also raise the qualifying age for the Smart Pass in line with the retirement age to obtain one's pension, which will soon increase to 67 years.

Trade unionists in Belfast organised a meeting for the purpose of organising a protest against the proposals in the consultation. They were able to involve community campaigners, environmentalists, and political activists. The outcome of this activity was a well-attended protest held on 19 August. The campaign meeting was held in City Hall, as shown in the photo.



The rally held in Belfast in August had good turnout and the Belfast Retired Members Branch was well represented. The event was blessed with good weather and the response from the public was positive.

# Better Buses Campaign demonstration in Glasgow on 19 September, attended by many retired people





### **East Midlands NPC Better Buses Campaign**

By Clare Wilkins, Secretary EMNPC

On 3 October, members leafleted inside and outside Mansfield Bus Station. We got an enthusiastic response and gave out 800 leaflets. Plenty of interest from older and younger bus users. A few college students took leaflets to distribute. Stagecoach no-shows and sudden cancellations are causing people problems in getting to hospital appointments, e.g. at Kings Mill. We were informed by one lady that Pronto's non-appearance had led to her late arrival for her dental appointment in Arnold, by which time the appointment was lost.

Two people told of issues getting to work, walking long distances because of missing buses, told they ought to take taxis, and were concerned that it could lead to job loss. The 210 bus route, Forest Town and Mansfield Woodhouse, runs hourly so when one fails to turn up it's a long wait for older people who use the route. Using cars or taxis has a negative impact on the environment, and taxis are expensive. One woman said that her bus pass cost £20 per week so why should she have to pay for taxis when buses fail to show up. The shortage of drivers came over

strongly. We spoke to two drivers on loan from Grimsby. They are being put up in the Travelodge, a waste of money that could be contributing to better wages. One said there are even London bus drivers on loan. What a shambles!



We had a mixed reaction from bus drivers. Most were supportive once we talked to them and explained we were campaigning for better conditions and pay for them too.

Chesterfield Public Meeting – 3 October. Successful launch of a local 'Better Buses Campaign' after retired member activists publicised the meeting for a month. They had

also done some campaigning for it over the summer, including meeting local Labour MP Toby Perkins, and the Chesterfield councillor responsible for transport. The campaign has been covered three times in the Derbyshire Times and a journalist from the paper joined the meeting. Two people joined the EMNPC whilst at the meeting.

EMNPC has distributed 370 leaflets in Lincolnshire, 350 in Northamptonshire and 200 minimum Leicester.



### LE/RM004 Retired Members Branch Long service presentation on 1 July 2023 to Jack Collins for 78 years of membership

By **Tony Briscoe**, Branch Secretary

Our branch member Bro. Jack Collins was presented with a certificate to mark his 78 years of membership. Jack is on the right of the photo. On the left is Bro. Dean Compton, a branch member and one of our delegates to Barking, Dagenham and Havering Trades Union Council.

Despite Jack's long membership, he does not hold the longest membership in our branch. That honour goes to Bro. Tom Jones, who has 88 years of membership, having joined on 22 February 1935. In February this year, he reached his 105th birthday. I spoke to his care home a couple of months ago. I could not speak to him personally, as I was told "Tom is outside at the moment, doing the gardening for us. He also does our morning newspaper round". I reported this to my branch members, and as a result they sent their best wishes to Bro. Jones.

I know the union has produced some new 70year and 80-year membership badges. It looks like Bro. Tom Jones will be due to receive a 90year badge in February 2025.



## 24 August 2023 – Big day out in Scarborough for Ukrainian children

By **Bob Pinkerton**, Secretary RM 999/6 branch









The Unite Retired Members 999/6 branch financially supported a day trip to the seaside resort of Scarborough for Ukrainian families living in the areas of the Gateshead and Newcastle councils. The Ukrainian families mostly come from Kyiv. We received great support from Suzanne Reid, Helen Elliot and Tom Usher of the Newcastle office. There were 40 children and 40 adults from Newcastle, 23 children and 20 adults from Gateshead, and 16 Unite helpers. The buses were supervised by Kath Marshall, Norman

Kennedy and Margaret Drew. In Scarborough, the group was met by Mayor Eric Broadbent (Unite Member for 60 years) and the Rotary President George Roberts, who donated £200. The children were then treated to free ice cream at the Harbour Bar by the owner. At Luna Park, 60x£10 credits were given to enable the children to go on whatever rides they wanted. At the beach, they were given spades and pails donated by Poundland. The weather was good; Scarborough did its best to give the children a day to remember.

### The Unite 999/8 Branch Retired Members

By **Roy Rix**, Branch Chair

We supported the Regional NCP Better Bus Campaign event in Sunderland on 30 September. It was a tricky day, as there was a bus strike and a train strike! We got a Grand Central Train (not their strike day) to Sunderland. There were approximately 40 people at the rally; we were distributing leaflets and conversing with the public.

There were a number of speakers: North East Passenger Users Group (Newcastle Branch) spoke of the need for services that get people to where they need to go. Jan Shortt (General Secretary NCP) spoke of the problems for the elderly regarding poor bus services. We had a wonderful speech from the Disabled People Against the Cuts Campaign about the problems disabled people face with public transport. Finally, the Green Party spoke of the need to cut back on car usage and improve air quality. A good day was had by all.

The Branch has decided to support General Secretary Sharon Graham's Save Our Steel Campaign. We were part of the rally in Middlesbrough with staff from the National Organising Dept. The October Branch Meeting was a campaign meeting; with branch members; area activist members; the EC member for construction and other prominent Unite members in the Teesside area; and three officers from the National Organising Dept. Teesside no longer produces liquid steel, but has rolling mills and pipe millworks that are

part of Tata Steel. The blast furnace was closed 10 years ago. The main view expressed at the meeting was therefore that the campaign was 10 years too late. The lack of support from the national level and the Labour MPs in the area at that time did little to save the blast furnace. However, on a positive note, the meeting did agree to participate in the campaign.

### **South Yorkshire Retired Members Branch Report**

By Paul Smilie, Branch Secretary

On Wednesday 27 September, we held a Better Bus Campaign session at Clock Corner in Doncaster. We handed out leaflets and asked people to sign the campaign petition, which was very successful. On Saturday 7 October, a

Better Buses rally was held in Sheffield. This was well attended and was a success. The Mayor, Oliver Coppard, wants the campaign team to work with him to get a better bus service in South Yorkshire.



### Report from our retired members in Gibraltar

By Michael Netto, Branch Secretary

A Joint Pensioners Convention was launched on 22 May at Transport House. The aim of the group is to work cooperatively for the improvement of pensioners' lives across the community. The group consists of Unite the Union, GGCA, NASUWT (the Teachers' Union), and Gibraltar Senior Citizens Association. Issues raised will be based on data collected through unstructured interviews and questionnaires, with the aim of working with relevant

authorities to resolve common problems that senior citizens face. The group will meet on a quarterly basis as a committee but will organise meetings with senior citizens at their centers and at the JMH with dates to be publicly announced. The positions of chairperson and secretary will be equally shared and rotated on a yearly cycle. Currently, the chair is NASUWT's Charlie Bishop. The secretary's post is held by Unite's Michael Netto.



# 24 May – The Joint Pensioners Convention held a very successful rally

The following points are from the Gibraltar Chronicle, which had great coverage of both the demonstrators and the government's response:

The demonstrators delivered a clear message on disability rights to No.6. The demonstration numbering 400 people (police said 200) called for more action from the Gibraltar Government on ensuring disability rights, as it made its way from Casemates to No 6. Convent Place under the Banner "We Are One Voice". Event Organiser Victoria Bula stated: "I believe as many others believe that we should be given plans, that children should be given multidisciplinary plans to coordinate their lives on

a day-to-day basis, protecting them from the cradle to the grave." She stated that this is not the first time that parents have organised such an event. "Two years ago, they rallied to call for the publication of the disability and autism strategy, seeking clarity as to how best to manage their children's needs. Promises made by the Government have not been fulfilled." The protesters set out a list of concerns, ranging from requiring more resources and facilities, to better employment rights and conditions for carers. The alignment of the disability legislation with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. There was much frustration at the slow pace of change and that some

Government promises made publicly had not yet come to fruition. Information supplied by Michael Netto Joint Pensioners Secretary.

Mike also wants us to include this link alongside the Gibraltar articles: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTqVcrevRRo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTqVcrevRRo</a>

### **Black History Month**

By **Monica Taylor**, National Committee Chair, Unite Retired Members



(Pictured: Bill, Monica and a colleague at Lucas Aerospace where they worked)

Black History Month is a time to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of black people throughout history and an opportunity to discuss wider issues affecting the black community.

Black History Month is particularly important for the trade union movement, as it provides a chance to reflect on the history of black trade unionism and the contribution of black workers to the labour movement.

Trade unions have played a significant role in the fight against racism and discrimination in the workplace and have been at the forefront of campaigning for racial justice and equality. Black History Month gives us all an opportunity to raise awareness about the issues continuing to affect black workers today.

Our trade union movement has been shaped by black activist and this month we will be using our platform to celebrate black joy and the achievement of our black union members, as Unite strives to be equitable and proud in raising black voices and listening to what needs to change.

So, while we spend October celebrating, our movement will spend the rest of the year amplifying and growing and continue their work towards achieving equity in the workplace.

# Unite LE/RM004 and Barking Dagenham and Havering Trades Union Council Community Anti-Racism Competition

By **Tony Briscoe**, Secretary Unite LE/RM004, President, Barking, Dagenham and Havering Trades Union Councils

My Unite Retired Members' branch (LE/RM004) is affiliated to Barking, Dagenham and Havering Trades Union Council (BDHTUC), with three delegates. The branch receives regular

reports of Trade Council activities and has financially assisted BDHTUC initiatives. These have included the commissioning, design, and installation of a memorial (nationally the first of its kind) in Barking Town Square to the victims of asbestos, which was unveiled on International Workers' Memorial Day in 2022.

This article, however, relates to a different sort of project. The period from September 2023 to April 2024 will see the third annual Community Anti-Racism Competition to be hosted by BDHTUC. The competition is open to school children in the two London boroughs: Barking & Dagenham and Havering. Last year, invitations to enter the competition were sent to every school in the two boroughs, with 32 schools sending in entries from hundreds of children.

The children were asked to produce a piece of artwork – individually or collectively – with the themes of diversity, inclusion, and antiracism. These themes are familiar to the staff, who teach the children about the diverse communities they live in, the need to ensure that the communities welcome and include all our different families and residents, and about the history of racism and the need for an anti-racist community ethos.

This is no small undertaking by the trade union council and it is an important part of the council's commitment to promoting a spirit of anti-racism in our workplaces, unions and communities. The competition was supported by both the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham and the Mayor of the London Borough of Havering.

The competitions involve a considerable financial commitment from BDHTUC, which include publicity materials, postage and administration costs, and prizes and refreshments for the prize-giving ceremony. Support from the trade union movement includes generous donations from Barking & Dagenham and Havering National Education Union, a development grant from the TUC fund, and of course from my own Unite branch.

Judging of the competition entries took place in both boroughs, with nine schools having winning entries and over twenty prizes being awarded. The standard of work was good, and showed a real commitment from the schools and students to the themes of the competition.

Prize winners, their teachers and parents were invited to the prize giving at Barking Town Hall. Council Leader Cllr Darren Rodwell ensured that everyone was made to feel welcome throughout. More than 50 people attended the 2023 prize giving, and a buffet lunch and refreshments were laid on. We all owe a huge thank you to the teachers who work with the children and give them the opportunity and inspiration to enter the competitions.

The winning entries have since been printed onto hardboard and will be displayed in public spaces in the two boroughs over the next year. In August 2023, my branch members were glad to receive the secretary and treasurer of BDHTUC, when we were told about the trade council activities and the Community Anti-Racism Arts Competitions, and had the opportunity to see the winning entries displayed around the meeting room in the Unite Dagenham office.



### Unite Retired Members Dublin Branch Submission on 21/04/2022 to the Department of Business, Employment & Retail on the Pension Entitlements of Retired Workers 2021 Bill

#### By Trainer Taryn

People on average are living longer and as a result, can be reliant on their pensions for more than 20 years after retirement. It is therefore vital that they do not see the value of their pensions decrease or their benefits eroded because of decisions made by Pension Fund Trustees, Trustee/Employer Agreements, Union/Employer Agreements, or Unilateral **Employer** actions. Pensioners experiencing severe problems in maintaining living standards due to the current wave of inflation In Ireland. Retired Members in Unite therefore welcome the Pension Entitlements of Retired Workers Bill which came before the Dail in 2021. The passing of the Bill was adjourned by 12 months to allow for consultation with interested bodies.

The main objective of the Bill is to have proper representation and negotiating rights for pensioners both in respect of their own pensions and national pension policy and legislation. We believe such representation and protection are not adequately provided by member Trustees in pension schemes who are constrained by the legal requirements of their office. Pensioners would also need to have equal representation in national bodies such as the Pension Commission to ensure their rights are protected.

Furthermore, there needs to be a body set up with the necessary legal powers to address and adjudicate the legitimate grievances of pensioners. The Bill proposes the WRC as such a body to adjudicate on such issues. Alternatively, the powers of the Pensions

Ombudsman could be expanded to broaden the nature of these grievances to include communications from Trustees or Employers as well as Trust Deed or Rules issues. Pensioner representatives need to be fully involved in the negotiation of these additional adjudicating structures whether they are within the remit of the WRC or the office of the Pension Ombudsman.

The need for pensioner representation is heightened by the current wave of inflation that is being experienced in Ireland. Pensioner representation is required to ensure that retired workers who are reliant on State and/or private benefits do not succumb to poverty. Unless State and private pensions are increased urgently, pensioners will struggle to make ends meet and without negotiating rights, they will be left behind.

Retired Public Servants wish to retain the link between the pay of serving colleagues and the pension applicable to retired peers and to be present when discussions are held that directly affect their pension. We also believe that safeguards and protection of existing Pension Scheme Entitlements should result in the introduction of a Ministerial Order or legislation preventing employers or trustees from unilaterally changing pension schemes where such changes have a detrimental impact on the pre-existing pension entitlements of retired workers. Retired Members' Branch Representatives of our Retired Members Committee would be pleased to meet with you to discuss the above points.

**Note from the Editor:** It's my understanding that when the old age pension was introduced in 1908 it could be claimed by those of 70 years of age (Men and women).

Dear Editor,

Whilst this matter should be of a political nature, I believe meals and uniforms should be provided at all Schools free of charge. Thousands of our members in industry are provided with uniforms at their place of work. Why don't schools provide uniforms when they insist school uniforms must be worn? The number of working people who are struggling with the cost of both these items is a scourge on our society. I am 88 from a large family so know extremely well the privations we have suffered.

Yours in comradeship.

#### **Geoff Hulett.**

Member for more than 60 years.

Dear Sir,

I've just opened the newsletter and it occurs to me that instead of saying about how unwelcome it would be to increase the pensionable age we should offer a good reason not to. For every person in retirement, there is one person off the dole. Despite my misgivings when I retired in 2011, retired people have a lot to offer; especially assisting in charity shops. The Union should also be campaigning for the "minimum weekly wage" as the minimum wage equates to the hourly rate, and most charity shops just cut their employees' hours and pay them the same. We should also be campaigning to have wages increased where they decreased during Covid as my former colleagues have experienced at Heathrow. The level of pay now for airport workers has fallen behind those outside and they can't get new staff.

Fraternally, Dave Jenny

#### Dear Editor,

We the Peterborough Retired Members branch welcome the change made at the rules revision conference on a change to rule 12.7.1. which allows retired members to be more inclusive in setting motions for the policy conference. The fundamental change

is that the retired members no longer have to put forward a motion that solely affects them. We can now put forward motions that affect everyone, for example on climate change, the health service and much more.

Ken Thompson, LE/RM016 Branch Secretary

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the latest Summer News for retired members of Unite. I read with great interest a letter sent to you from Barry Dixon regarding PPF and your response. Earlier this year I took the matter up with my local MP because I felt so strongly that the PPF regulations have had a detrimental effect on my annual compensation payments. I attach copies of my letter sent to Gerald Jones, MP, his letter to Laura Trott, MP, and the reply from the Department for Work & Pensions. I hope this information will be of some interest to the Union on this matter.

Kind regards, **Gerald Wade**, Wales, Branch WA/B1001. Membership No: 31664655.

**Note from the Editor:** The information that you forwarded will be made available to the Campaign Team

Dear Editor,

Thanks to those concerned in circulating the Summer RM newsletter which I read with interest. A couple of aspects of which I was particularly interested in exploring and expanding. I realise the difficulties in seeking to be, on the one hand, informative and engaging over a range of issues of possible concern to us seniors, and on the other, not sounding too patronising in doing so. I find a number of contemporaries who are approaching frustration at the, (often wellintended) approach used by far too many in the provision of services, both public and commercial, who use them, "stand there my love, I'll be with you in a minute", technique. It does not automatically follow that being a senior means one is senile. I am not suggesting that the newsletter in any decree

falls into this category, rather I was seeking to, hopefully helpfully, overlay the practical potential difficulties, as above, even when guided by the best of intentions and the need for coordinated organisation.

The second point is a suggestion in connection with the newsletter's heading, namely replacing, "fight", with "battle". Quite a

lot could be said in favour of this change but I have found a definition of both words, copied below, which outlines the concept well enough without any further advocacy of mine for you to plow through. I commend the suggested change for earnest consideration.

Yours fraternally, **Neville F Harris**, membership number: 14446105.

### Unite retired members: What we do

Unite retired members campaign on any issue affecting retired workers, through Unite and also through the National Pensioners' Convention, the Scottish Pensioners' Forum and the TUC Pensions Committee. We don't just campaign on retired members' issues, we support all workers in struggle and campaign on issues such as:

- **Dignity in retirement** an end to pensioner
- poverty, safe, accessible public transport, properly funded social care and health services, universal benefits such as the free bus pass, TV licence for the over 75s, winter fuel allowance and NHS prescriptions.
- Better communities better care in the community, securing decent public services, ending poverty, stronger social cohesion and safe, secure and affordable homes for all
- Decent work for all ending zero-hours contracts, job insecurity, low pay and demanding better career opportunities

### Coming up to retirement? Stay involved in Unite

Simply call your local Unite office and they will adjust your membership and direct deb-it. Retired membership is just 55p a week.

Only Retired Member Plus members will be able to play a full part in the Unite Retired Members' section.

You will not be able to play a full part in the constitutional structures of Unite unless you join Retired Member Plus.

See the map below for Unite local office telephone numbers.

