



## Summer 2024

Welcome to our newsletter providing a roundup of news relevant to our sector. We hope that by sharing this information it will help to raise awareness of activity and issues relevant to members across the Community, Youth and Not for Profit Sector. Please share with other colleagues across your networks.

### sector news

**A big welcome to Andy! - The sector has a new National Officer, Andy Murray, who takes over from Alan Scott who has been appointed Deputy Regional Secretary in the London and Eastern Region. Andy has wide experience of supporting members in the sector particularly in advice organisations and children's charities. Andy has also been Regional Officer for the faith workers branch and for self-employed branches such as Blue Badge Tourist Guides in London (APTG), Spoken Language interpreters (NUPIT) and British Sign Language interpreters (NUBSLI).**

**Sector meetings for activists – We are currently arranging a series of online meetings that bring reps and activists together so that we can discuss our sector strategy for the months ahead. Lots of you will have already been involved in some of the cluster meetings organised by Alan Smith, and the new National Officer for the Sector, Andy Murray, is keen to continue this approach so that reps and activists can fully participate in the discussions and help develop a strategy for the sector that recognises its diversity across the wide range of organisations that members are in. Our first set of meetings will bring together Unite reps working in Housing, Charities and Campaigning Organisations and dates will be circulated to reps in these work areas soon.**

**UCU Dispute - Our members who work for University and College Union (UCU) are currently undertaking industrial action including strike action in relation to their dispute in relation to contraventions of the recognition agreement that Unite has with UCU as the employer. The Unite UCU branch has established its own strike fund, separate from the Unite strike fund, to provide additional support to members who are currently undertaking industrial action in support of this dispute. If members wish to contribute to this strike fund the bank details are: Sort code: 60-83-01; Account number: 20269423 organising across the sector**

**Our organising work is paying dividends with a range of recognition agreements being reached over the past quarter:**

**CofE Leicester diocese - A historic agreement was signed by the Leicester diocese of the Church of England with Unite to represent its clergy and lay staff. The agreement, negotiated by the Church of England Clergy & Employee Advocates (CEECA) covers clergy and lay staff. The CEECA is a distinct part of Unite's wider faith workers' branch. It is the first agreement of its kind ever to be signed by a Church of England diocese and ensures collective bargaining rights for clergy stipends and staff pay, as well as terms and conditions for both. Read more here - [CofE Leicester diocese | Unite For Our Society](#).**

**An agreement has also been signed with Plan UK following a successful ballot organised by ACAS; with Standing Together Against Domestic Violence after a long campaign and an agreement on recognition has also been reached with 350.org, a small environmental organisation.**

**Sustrans - Following months of constructive talks, an agreement has been reached to establish trade union recognition and representation at walking and cycling charity, Sustrans. The charity's 800 staff voted for Unite to recognise them in a ballot last year and the recognition agreement means that Unite is now fully recognised to negotiate with Sustrans on employment matters including pay, hours of work and annual leave. After a number of meetings, the wording of a national recognition agreement with the management of Sustrans was agreed and ratified by our members. Management also agreed to us submitting a pay claim prior to recognition being finalised, and a claim was submitted based on the sector template. More here - [Unite secures recognition agreement at Sustrans \(unitetheunion.org\)](#)**

**A request for voluntary recognition has been made to One Against Poverty where our membership is approaching 50%, and The Guys and St Thomas Foundation have agreed in principle to recognise Unite and have produced a draft agreement which we are currently negotiating around. Recognition is also being sought at the Royal College of Occupational Therapists and the Big Issue.**

#### **sector disputes**

**Oxfam – Unite members held a dispute over pay and recognition, and after one day of action the employer came back to the table and agreed a pay increase of 6% consolidated plus an unconsolidated lump sum of £2600 alongside a commitment for continued negotiation for an agreement with the union and the grading structure. The officer with responsibility for the employer, Jamie Major, did a fantastic job of organising the members, many of whom are charity shop managers and are the sole employee in their workplace, into securing a massive yes vote for action.**

**Glasgow East Women's Centre - Members had a successful strike ballot and took action in support of five members who were dismissed by the employer for raising issues of bullying in the workplace. There was a successful application**

for interim relief with the Tribunal finding that it was likely that our members had been dismissed for trade union activities. The dispute was resolved with all our members being reinstated by the employer.

Sanctuary Housing - Strikes by London Sanctuary Housing repair and maintenance workers continue over pay and union recognition. The dispute is over a four per cent rise imposed in April 2023, when the real rate of inflation, RPI, was 11.4 per cent – meaning the workers received a significant pay cut in real terms. The dispute has been drawn out because Sanctuary Housing, which has assets of over £5.6 billion, a surplus of £101.3 million and a CEO on £400,000 a year, refuses to recognise unions.

#### pay campaigns

JNC Pink Book - The pay claim for JNC pink book pay negotiations for our youth and community work members was submitted last week and we are expecting an initial response from the employers' side once consultation has taken place. [A copy of the claim can be found here.](#)

#### Reports

Not-for-profit and charity workers anxious, overworked and underpaid – Unite research shows that a shocking 69% of not-for-profit and charity workers are suffering from anxiety which is linked to an excessive hours culture with almost seven in 10 voluntary sector employees experiencing anxiety as a result of their work. The survey's findings were released during Mental Health Awareness Month, with the figures also highlighting a concerning trend of prejudice in workplaces throughout the industry with 86% of workers said they suffered anxiety due to bullying and discrimination from colleagues. More here - [Report findings](#)

Shaping a National Youth Service - A delegation from the CYPW Committee, accompanied by Alan Scott and officers from the Unite political team met with the Shadow Minister Lillian Greenwood to explain our claim for a National Youth Service. We were well received and hope that a commitment to a statutory youth service can be secured from a future Labour government. [A briefing paper was prepared for the Shadow Minister which is available here.](#)

#### in the news

Invest in Youth Work - The Guardian reports that young people are “crying out” for a return of youth clubs after swingeing cuts left three-quarters of 16- to 19-year-olds in England lacking ways to connect with youth workers, according to research undertaken by the National Youth Agency. Youth groups are urging the next government to inject up to £1bn a year into services after the number of local authority-run youth centres in England fell from 917 to 427 between 2012 and 2023, as council spending was reduced by 75%. You can read more here - [National survey of young people's attitudes towards youth work - National Youth Agency \(nya.org.uk\)](#)

The latest Bargaining Brief is available on Unite Connected and on the Unite website (members only) [here](#).

Our sector is massively diverse but we need to hear from reps and members across the sector about some of the fantastic campaigns or the issues being faced so please do get in touch. Don't forget to check out our blogs on issues affecting our sector. If you have a story for a blog then please get in touch. You can also support our sector on [Facebook](#); [Twitter](#); [Unite for Our Society Website](#) and the [Unite Website](#).

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