

MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2022

The **UNISON North West Housing Forum** is for members who work in Housing Associations across the region. We have quarterly meetings for members in the sector, and Housing Association members are part of the 'Community Service Group' in Unison.

The Community Service Group is made up of Unison members in housing, social care, charity and voluntary sectors. As part of this group we are able to influence collective bargaining and UNISON policy around our sectors.

If you want to get more involved in the Housing Forum you can click [here](#).

If you want to become involved in the Community Service Group or have any questions about joining the housing forum then please email V.Knight@unison.org.uk or your branch secretary.

Winning union recognition in the Housing Sector



In 2021 UNISON members working at the Together Housing Group managed to achieve union recognition.

This meant that members would be able to collectively bargain with their employer to improve their pay, terms and conditions.

Having recognition also means that members are able to have paid time off to take part in Trade Union activities. There is more information on Union recognition and how you can get recognition in your workplace later on in this newsletter

The Real Living Wage

The real Living Wage is the only UK wage rate that is voluntarily paid by almost 9,000 UK businesses who believe their staff deserve a wage which meets everyday needs - like the weekly shop, or a surprise trip to the dentist.

You can click [here](#) to go to the Real Living Wage website and check if you're being paid the Real Living Wage.

In the North West, Nugent Care have recently negotiated a pay claim to receive the real living wage. This is an example of UNISON members winning real change for them and their colleagues.



	THE MINIMUM WAGE <i>Government minimum for under 23s</i>	NATIONAL LIVING WAGE <i>Government minimum for over 23s</i>	REAL LIVING WAGE <i>The only wage rate based on what people need to live</i>
WHAT IS IT?	£8.36	£8.91	£9.90 across the UK £11.05 in London
IS IT THE LAW?	Statutory	Statutory	Voluntary
WHAT AGE GROUP IS COVERED?	21 and older	23 and older	18 and older
HOW IS IT SET?	Negotiated settlement based on recommendations from businesses and trade unions	A % of medium earnings, it aims to reach 66% of median earnings by 2024.	Calculation made according to the cost of living, based on a basket of household goods and services
IS THERE A LONDON WEIGHTING?	No London Weighting	No London Weighting	Yes - Separate higher rate for London

Pay claims

This year has seen a huge rise in the cost of living for ordinary people. But in many cases there has not been a pay increase to go along with it.

What is a Pay Claim ?

A Pay Claim is the wage or salary asked for by trade union representatives on behalf of their members from employers. It addresses the need for a rise in pay and may include changes in terms and conditions on behalf of the members to maintain a reasonable level of income and is normally negotiated on a yearly basis, dependant on what has previously been agreed.

An example of a recent pay claim that was achieved for 2021 was for Anchor Hanover:

The Anchor Trust and Hanover Housing Association merged in November 2018 to become the largest provider of specialist housing and care for older people in England. An agreement was made to pay direct employees the Living Wage from December 2021 to all hourly paid staff across the organisation a minimum of the Living Wage (£9.90 per hr).

An uplift to the voluntary Real Living Wage of £9.90 per hr for all care workers and the other hourly paid staff. This will apply to about half of Anchors staff, approx. 4880 in number. For those previously paid the statutory Nation Living Wage of £8.91 this represents an 11.1% increase.

Community Conference 2022



A number of UNISON members attended the annual Community Conference on behalf of the North West from the 18th to the 20th March in Glasgow. Members had been able to put forward, discuss and vote on motions presented to the conference.

One of our young members on the North West spoke on the 'Time to Change' motion which was a call to press "pause" and assess the real impact of regular restructures in Housing Associations.

Trade Union Recognition

How can I get a union recognised in my workplace?

Most recognition agreements are made voluntarily by the employer agreeing to recognise a union. However, if you can recruit more union members in your workplace, then you are legally entitled to receive recognition in your workplace, regardless of whether your employer wants it or not.

Who can I speak to about getting recognition?

You can reach out to your branch or to your Regional Organiser for support in getting recognition or becoming a contact for your workplace.

You can see a list of branch contact details [here](#).

What does it mean to have Trade Union Recognition?

When an employer "recognises" a trade union they are recognising the right of that union to collectively bargain with the employer over the terms and conditions of a group of workers.

How will having a union recognised benefit me?

It will mean that UNISON can negotiate on behalf of you and your colleagues for improvements to your terms and conditions (which can include health and safety, pay, hours, holidays, disciplinary matters, workload and redundancy).

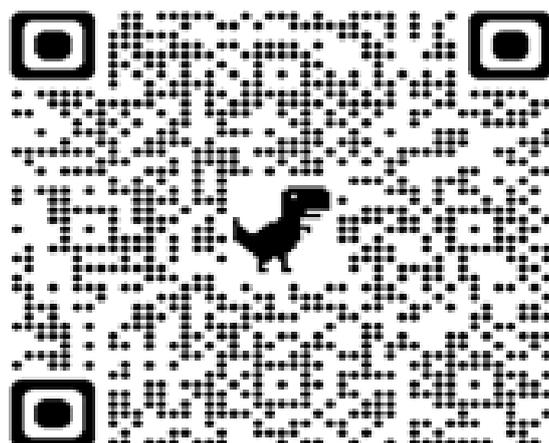
Having recognition also means that workplace reps are entitled to paid time-off for training and union duties

Not a UNISON member yet?
JOIN YOUR UNION TODAY

Join online at www.joinunison.org

Or call 0800 0857 857

Or scan the QR code



Become a Workplace Rep

Why are Reps important?

Reps are the backbone of UNISON. Without Reps, there would be no one there to act as a link between members and to organise and support people in the workplace.

What does a UNISON Rep do?

Reps in the workplaces where UNISON is recognised by the employer have rights to time off for training and to carry out their work.

As a rep you can:

- ✓ Recruit new members and stewards
- ✓ Represent members in your workplace
- ✓ Be involved in how your branch and union is run
- ✓ Talk to, recruit and organise members around workplace issues, advise them and keep them informed

How can I become a rep?

Reach out to your branch or any of your existing reps (if you have any) and let them know you're interested in representing your colleagues. They will help you through the process.

Join the Housing Forum

The newly established, North West UNISON Housing Forum is a way for our members who work in the sector to come together and discuss issues relevant to YOU and YOUR WORKPLACE. Members can discuss policies which will help you and your colleagues, as well as looking at campaigning for pay claims.

If you are interested in joining the housing forum then please fill out [this form](#) or email Vicky at V.Knight@unison.co.uk



The next meeting of the UNISON Housing Forum will take place on:

Wednesday 28th September
4pm
Via Microsoft Teams