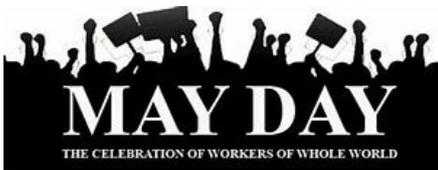


Did you know ...

... that, in 1890, the Second Socialist International declared 1st May as a holiday for labour? 300,000 Londoners stayed away from work and rallied in Hyde Park.

... this was to commemorate striking workers killed two years earlier in Chicago and to carry on their fight for an 8-hour day?



For your diary

Wednesday 1st May

Motion-writing Workshop

Regional Centre, 11am-2pm
See leaflet attached

Wednesday 8th May

UNISON West Midlands

Retired Members (belated)

May Day. See right.

Wednesday 5th June

UNISON West Midlands

Retired Members' Committee

Regional Centre. 2pm

All branch and Self-Organised

Group reps
should attend.

Retired Members' (belated)

MAY DAY, Buxton,

Wednesday 8th May

Join UNISON West Midlands Retired Members. Enjoy all that Buxton offers ...

Natural Spring Water ... Georgian Architecture ... Shopping ...
Have a walk ... Sit in a pub ... Whatever you fancy.

FREE coach from Stoke.

(Courtesy Staffordshire Community Health Branch UNISON)

Departs Potteries Museum, Hanley 10am. Returns 3.30pm.

Or make you own way and we'll meet up in Buxton.

To register your interest (and tell us if you're coming on the coach),
leave name and contact details at

UNISON, Bevan House, Epworth St, Stoke on Trent, ST4 1NU.

Telephone: 0300 123 1891.

Email mswann2009@hotmail.co.uk

All Trade Unionists and friends welcome



Beat the Toy Boy Tax!

From 15th May, 'mixed age' couples— where one partner is over state pension age and the other is under that age— will no longer be able to claim Pension Credit or Housing Benefit. Instead, they must claim Universal Credit.

This will leave some couples £7000 a year worse off.

This will only affect new claims made from 15th May and existing claimants whose circumstances change from 15th May.

If you are a 'mixed age' couple and you are thinking of claiming Pension Credit or Housing Benefit, don't delay.

You may become a retired member of UNISON if you are retired and, on the day you retired, you were a UNISON member and had been so continuously for the two preceding years. Becoming a retired member couldn't be easier. Call free on 0800 171 2193



Pressed for Time and Out of Pocket

A UNISON survey last autumn revealed many home care workers in England still being paid below the National Living Wage.

UNISON asked English councils whether they require externally commissioned providers to pay their homecare workers for their travel time.

Less than half of councils said yes. Only being paid for 'contact time' brings many care workers' wages below

the legal minimum once travel time is taken into account.

Guidance from the Care Act makes clear that:

"Remuneration must ... comply with National Minimum Wage legislation. This will include ... time spent travelling between appointments."

46% of councils said they stipulate that providers must pay travel time, up from the measly 24% who said so in a

similar UNISON survey two years ago. A further 21% said they insist providers pay the minimum wage but don't stipulate how.

Some employers claim to pay for travel time in a 'rolled-up' hourly rate. But many don't pay enough. The UK Homecare Association reckons the average home care worker spends 19% of their working time travelling between the homes of people they care for.

UNISON Death Benefit

Generally, UNISON only pays Death Benefit where the death occurs while the member is in Full Membership i.e. before retirement.

Top Tip

Cut out this article to keep with your personal papers so whoever deals with your affairs knows they must claim.

But retired ex-members of NUPE have their entitlement to death benefit protected providing they have maintained continuous membership.

The benefit goes up annually. Currently, it amounts to £554 on the death of a member and £277 on the death of a member's spouse.

A personal representative of the deceased must claim the benefit within one year of the death.

Call your branch for a form.

*NUPE was one of the unions which merged to form UNISON in 1993. The others were NALGO and COHSE.

Local Elections

Voting will be on Thursday 2nd May.

Polling stations will be open 7am to 10pm.

By now you should have your poll card. If you haven't, this may mean you are not registered to vote.

You can still vote in this election if you register by midnight on Friday 12th April.

If you want to vote by post, you must

apply to do so by 5pm on Monday 15th April.

Or you can appoint a proxy up to 5pm on Wednesday 24th April. A proxy is somebody who will go to the polling station to cast your vote for you.



UNISON West Midlands Regional Retired Members' Committee is made up of two representatives of the retired members of each branch and of each Regional Self-Organised Group.

Remaining meetings in 2019 will be at Regional Centre on Wednesday 5th June at 2pm and Wednesdays 31st July and 6th November at 1.30pm.

To get in touch: email: i.phillips@unison.co.uk telephone 0121 685 3150 or fax 0121 685 4400 UNISON Regional Centre, 24 Livery Street, Birmingham B3 2PA.

This newsletter is circulated by email to retired members of UNISON West Midlands. To subscribe or unsubscribe, contact Irene Phillips above.

Chairperson: Judith Longbottom

Deputy Chairperson: Sue Wood

Secretary: Bob Deacon