

# Raise Your Voice

The Newsletter for Branch members

## New General Secretary of UNISON is one of us

For the first time in our unions history, the top job is held by someone who has come through the 'rank and file'. Andrea Egan, a Social Worker from Bolton, won the General Secretary election by a whopping 20% margin. The news was announced with a quiet fanfare just before Christmas, and has since been given little publicity by the Unison communication team.

All previous incumbents of the top job have been career figure heads (with the possible exception of Rodney Bickerstaffe who held office between 1996 -2001). This really is a first and opens possibilities for members to become the lead figure in our union in the future.

The Branch nominated Andrea in the GS election and, many will have heard Andrea speak at our AGM last year. You will recall Andrea saying that **members come first**. Anyone following Andrea's campaign will of heard that statement repeated at every opportunity she has had to speak out.

**Congratulations** Andrea and we look forward to working with you during your period in office.

### NJC Pay Claim

**The NJC Pay Claim** for Local Government workers and School Support Staff has been lodged. The claim is for £3,000 or 10%, which ever is the greater. The full claim, including the inclusion of an extra A/L day, is on the website.



[Visit the Branch website by clicking here:](#)



## Equal Pay is our priority

**The Branch** is pursuing an equal pay claim with Huntingdon District Council. If we are successful, and we will be., it will mean huge pay outs for many workers, mainly women, who are not receiving pay and allowances which are either below their male counterparts or, not receiving allowances at all. HDC communications remains stubborn and may be said to border on hostile. The Branch has for the last few years, asked HDC to open conversations to resolve this issue fairly. It's fair to say that we have been met by silence. **It is regrettable but necessary that we now take these steps** said a Branch spokes.

# Branch News



## Annual General Meeting

**The Branch AGM** is less than 2 months away, so pencil in the 24 February. All members received a communication in November announcing the AGM, some papers and joining instructions. If you need a reminder, and access to further information and papers please visit the Branch website at: <https://www.unisoncambridgeshire.org.uk/>

## AGM Speaker

**Last year** we had **Unison President** Andrea Egan speak, this year we are enormously excited to have, if her busy diary allows, **Unison General Secretary** Andrea Egan. Come and here Andrea outline her plans for the role for the next 5 years. If you have a question for your new General Secretary, send it to the Branch and we will put it to Andrea at the meeting.

## Care providers in trouble

**The last week** of 2025 and the first of 2026 has seen huge problems for members in 2 care providers. Enlightenment Care based in Peterborough has gone into voluntary liquidation, this on the day before staff were due to be paid. A new company calling itself Dignity Care sprung up immediately with the same Directors! The company think somehow it can continue employing its international workforce, despite the fact that Dignity do not hold their certificate of sponsorships, a flagrant abuse of the visa requirement. Meanwhile Lav Care also based in Peterborough, appears to have lost its license to issue certificate of sponsorships. This means that all its International workers will need to find alternative work before the conditions of their visa would require them to leave the country. All are being dismissed, this shows the precarious position that our International workers face on a day to day basis. The poverty pay is the least of their worries at this time. The Branch is supporting over 20 members to find alternative work and, claim money owed through The Insolvency Service.

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**As we are likely to move quickly to a pay ballot this year, check your contact details are correct at: <https://www.unison.org.uk/my-unison/>**

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Visit the Branches website for more information on all these articles:

<https://www.unisoncambridgeshire.org.uk>

## Branch Membership

**Branch membership** continues to smash all targets. National set a target of 1% growth but by the end of 2025, we estimate our growth to be 15%. Our success is down to the hard work and excellent results of our Stewards, Health and Safety reps and Branch staff. Well done to you all and lets make 2026 just as successful.

