

NEWSLETTER

University and College Union
Undeb Prifysgolion a Cholegau

AN INFORMATION BULLETIN FOR Wales Retired Members' Branch

RMB Newsletter

Spring 2021

Chair's report:

This AGM is like no other previously held since the inaugural meeting of February 2010 at the Angel Hotel in Cardiff. Having held meetings at various venues, including the Bus Social Club, the Temple of Peace, the Royal Oak (Broadway), and latterly Unite HQ, Cathedral Road, we find ourselves 'At Home' Zooming! Although not my favourite way to meet it may have some benefits in allowing more members to join in without the need to travel. Holding meetings in Wales has always caused some travel difficulties whether the venue is in South Wales, North Wales, or Mid Wales.

We have experienced some difficulties in making direct contact with retired members in Wales. The Secretary has made frequent contact with all the College and University Branch secretaries to ensure those retiring are made aware of our existence. We have had two recent enquiries and hope they will be joining our Zoom meetings. Since the last AGM our Secretary Allan, has continued to facilitate and host our Zoom meetings. He has continued to produce the Newsletter, providing the editorial and seeking contributions. He has represented our branch at various meetings at regional and National level. Now we have got our heads around Zoom it is hoped we can begin to organise speakers for future meetings.

Many issues have faced UCU members. Covid-19 has dominated our lives since March 2020. It has added to the difficulties already faced by teachers and lecturers in service. With increased workloads, catering for pupils and students at home during lockdown, teaching the children of key workers in school as well as home schooling their own children, the wellbeing of those in the teaching profession should be paramount if they are to deliver the education programmes necessary as well as caring for the wellbeing of those children and students. Other important issues facing UCU members include pay and conditions of service disputes and proposed redundancies in many institutions. Wider issues of concern are the future of employment rights, and the future of ports in Wales post-Brexit, and the Government's policy on public sector pay.

Finally, a vote of thanks to the Secretary (Allan), Treasurer (John) and all members who have participated in our Branch meetings over the year.

Pam Hughes (Chair)

Obituary to Dr. Dave Thornton who sadly passed away on Saturday 28th. November 2020. Dave worked at UWIC for many years and retired to West Wales. Dave was a branch representative for firstly, NATFHE and then UCU. The Secretary attended the funeral, and a donation was made on behalf of UCU to MacMillan Cancer Support.

Branch Activity report:

AGM held on the 5th. March 2021

Elected officers:

Pam Hughes- Chair

Vice Chair – Alan Smith

John Martin – Treasurer

Allan Screen – Secretary

Auditors – Enid Price and John Morrissey

Trade Councils – Enid Price (Cardiff), Mary Barnett (Torfaen)

Annual Wales Congress (24th. April) – Delegates – Allan Screen, John Morrissey, Lyne Gornall

Regional Council delegates – Allan Screen and John Morrissey

UCU Annual Congress (29th. May) Delegates, Allan Screen, John Morrissey.

Current membership – 236

We have two motions going to Wales Congress i) Safety of teachers and lecturers and ii) Free school meals in Wales.

Secretary's Report:

Attended HESC and Wales Regional Council along with John Morrissey who attended FESC. As the Chair has mentioned now that we are getting to grip with Zoom, I shall be looking to arrange guest speakers to address us for future meetings. If members have any suggestions, please let me know. Many thanks to Pam and John particularly when we have our pre meeting Zoom get together. Do not forget to vote in May's Assembly elections. UCU Wales has issued our manifesto to go to SM's. This can be found on the Wales UCU website. It is important that we vote as there are candidates standing who want to abolish the Assembly (whilst presumably drawing their salaries) Wales Government has a strong relationship with UCU and other Trade Unions and this enables us to try to influence policy. It is also advised that where possible members use a postal vote to minimise exposure to Covid.

Next meeting via Zoom

Date: Friday 4th. June 2021

Time: 12pm

Venue: Living room, bedroom, kitchen, or garden shed.

Stay safe.

Allan Screen
Secretary.