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1. June branch meeting:

12.00 a.m. – 2.30 p.m.

Monday 9th June 2014

Liza Sentance

will talk about

The Canadian First Nation in the Great War

**Venue: UCU Office. Labour Party Rooms
26b Clifton Hill, Exeter EX1 2DJ**

**A buffet lunch will be provided if you let us
know a week in advance.**

ucu.swest@gmail.com

This newsletter is, in part, that of the East Midlands branch who unselfishly share their expertise with all the Retired Members Branches (RMB). Your contributions for our next newsletter welcome.

Email them to ucu.swest@gmail.com

Please inform us of change of address or email

We encourage retired members to use your **home** email address for when you give up your work email address. We send out a regular newsletter by email but only an annual newsletter by post.

2. Pension increases

USS and TPS pensions went up by 2.7% in April, the CPI (Consumer Price Index). If this government had not changed the indexing and still used the RPI (Retail Price Index) it would have been somewhat higher. Hence there a cumulative loss every year on your pension.

3. On-line campaigning

How can you campaign for what you believe in when you are not able, for whatever reason, to march, demonstrate, lobby? How can you do more to add your voice to campaigns across a whole range of issues? How can you start your own campaign that might have a nationwide, or even worldwide effect? One answer to these questions is to get involved with, and make use of, social media. As long as you have a computer or a smart phone, you can take part in, or even initiate campaigns.

There are a number of organisations, with web sites, which are dedicated to this. Some such as 38 Degrees (which is UK based and UK focussed) and Avaaz are becoming very well known in the traditional media and the wider political world. The common feature of these organisations is that they provide a mechanism for creating and disseminating petitions, together with associated letter writing and lobbying. They use facebook, twitter and e-mail to spread their message. You can take part to the level that you wish. You will sometimes be asked for donations, which is reasonable as online services such as these do cost and some of the organisations employ people to run them. However, such donations are optional.

<http://www.38degrees.org.uk/>

<http://www.avaaz.org/en/>

Rob Kirkwood EM

4. UCU Lobby of Parliament, April 2nd

I arrived at the Houses of Parliament slightly early, as we were advised. As I looked for the Cromwell Green entrance, I saw a small crowd and some placards, so I made my way towards them. However, they turned out to be publicising the Ford pensions dispute! I eventually found the entrance to the UCU main lobby, where a few people had already gathered. One person I spoke to had an appointment with their M.P., another was hoping theirs would agree to meet them on the off chance. I had written to Oliver Colvile, my M.P., and knew that unfortunately he would not be available, so after some dithering, I realised that there was little point in my trying to get into the Houses of Parliament.

I knew that a room at 1 Parliament Street was being made available for speeches, so I made my way there. I felt slightly disappointed that the crowds of tourists I fought my way through would have no idea that I was there to protest at the reduction in funding for post-16 education, and indeed would be completely unaware that a lobby was even taking place.



I joined a small crowd at Parliament Street. After going through airport-style security we gathered in the allocated room. Speakers included Paul Blomfield, a Sheffield M.P., Dom Anderson of the N.U.S., and Simon Renton, UCU president. Paul Blomfield spoke of the need to improve the reputation of apprenticeships, and the unsustainability of the tuition fees system, an issue that has received a lot of recent news coverage. Another issue, which was actually reported in the news that day, was that of the drop in numbers of International Students coming to study in this country. He was able to use the two high profile universities and the Further Education College in his own constituency to highlight the disastrous effects the cuts would have. At one point a question was asked about what Labour's policy would be, and the answer that the manifesto had not yet been written was received with some frustration!

Dom Anderson, of the N.U.S., also strongly criticised the tuition fees system, which he said encouraged competition between institutions and meant there was less likely to be co-operation. His speech was well received. The support of students was a pleasing aspect of the day. Rob Goodfellow, UCU's Vice President for F.E., arrived from the main lobby, after what he reported as having been a very positive meeting with his M.P. He emphasised that F.E. was too often ignored, and deserved a much higher profile. Simon Renton ended by contrasting the opportunities that had been available to him, when it had been possible to risk giving up a secure job to embark on a course of study, and be sure that there was a career ahead of you.

Although, during the period I was there, there was not much opportunity for lengthy debate, attention was drawn to the closure of eight Open University Centres, the low hourly rate of pay for first year apprentices and the importance of seeing education as being more than just an issue of economics.

This was my first experience of a Lobby of Parliament, and I was probably expecting it to be more like a demonstration. Of course, being unable to actually enter the House of Commons and talk to my M.P. was disappointing, but I enjoyed my "day out" and certainly listening to the speeches and meeting other members was very positive. I feel I should follow up in some way. My own M.P., although a "toe the line" Tory, will get another letter, and I think our local prospective Labour candidate should be approached. Perhaps there is some mileage in trying to ensure that Labour's manifesto, when it is eventually written, contains a better deal for the funding of Further, Higher and Adult education.

Pat Mee SW

5. Cleansing the stables

Finally, ATOS has bowed out of supervising the work competence assessments that are the portal to disabled and chronically ill people being allowed to remain on disability benefits. Disability minister Mike Penning told MPs the scale of appeals - around 600,000 since its introduction - meant there was "real concern" about the work being carried out. A Freedom of Information request revealed that as many as 158,300 people were wrongly found fit for work by ATOS, decisions that were overturned before appeal by the [Department for Work and Pensions \(DWP\)](#). A further 100,000 won their appeals.

Before we rejoice prematurely, the likely replacement for ATOS will come from G4S, SERCO, A4E or the Capita Group. The [National Audit Office \(NAO\)](#) has looked at four of the larger providers: ATOS, G4S, SERCO and Capita (*The role of major contractors in the delivery of public services*, 8th November 2013). The scale of public money going to the four is staggering. In the financial year 2012-13 ATOS pocketed £0.7bn, Capita £1.1bn, G4S £0.7bn and Serco £1.8bn. The spread of involvement is amazing and covers the NHS and both local and central government.

The [NAO](#) has looked at the profit levels of these big four private providers. "Low margins are often established during the bidding process, but can increase during the contract lifetime". There is a considerable lack of transparency. "Contractors are often wary about putting information on costs and profits into the public domain. They believe that such information is commercially sensitive and would harm their economic interests, as competitors could use it against them."

The failure of accountability of these private providers has been widely reported. ATOS, G4S, SERCO and Capita are all being accused of tax avoidance. G4S is currently being investigated by the Serious Fraud Office over its over-billing the taxpayer by £24m for electronic tagging and prison escort services. Other problems Serco over medical services in Cornwall. Part of the answer to getting the public services we need is to sweep the whole bunch out.

Julian Atkinson EM

For more information
please contact ucu.swest@gmail.com
or contact the officers here:

South West Branch officers and committee

Chair: Jo Corke ucu.swest@gmail.com

Vice Chair: Liza Sentance, lizasentance@hotmail.com

Secretary: Pat Mee Patriciamee@sky.com

Regional rep: Margaret George mmargaretg@gmail.com

Treasurer: vacant.

Membership: ruthamias2000@yahoo.co.uk

6. SW branch AGM Report - Membership secretary

2013 was a year that brought a dramatic reduction in the membership of retired branches. All retired members with life membership were required to pay a monthly subscription or be removed from the national membership list.

Honorary members continue to be exempted from payment. Questions are still being asked by retired branches about how much consultation took place and how much money will actually be saved. The culling of life members in September officially reduced the SW RMB from 325 members to 157. However, for the purposes of circulation of information and local support no life member has been removed from our SW membership email list. The SW delegation at UCU Congress this year will support a motion demanding that the decision to withdraw membership from non-paying life members is rescinded.

[Ruth Amias](#) Membership Secretary

7. Congress 2014 Manchester

Margaret George will be our branch delegate at Congress and will report at the branch meeting on June 9th 2014. The complete list of motions of particular interest to retired members' branches have been circulated with the email bringing you this newsletter.

The issue of the culling of those members with life memberships from AUT and NATFHE is addressed in this motion to congress:

SFC21 Retired members' subscriptions: Northern RMB

Congress instructs the General Secretary and the NEC to rescind immediately the dishonourable and anti-trade union decision to withdraw membership from life paid members unless they pay and pay again.

This is an attack on retired members and their branches.

[Jo Corke](#) SW

8. SW Regional report 18th Jan 2014

Marie Morley as SW Regional Committee chair had written to Sally Hunt at UCU head office expressing the Committee's concern that retired life members are now required to pay subscriptions. Sally replied that she had taken note of the letter and would leave Matt Waddup (national head of campaigns) who was present at the

meeting to provide a verbal reply. Matt was asked to justify and explain the requirement for life members to pay subscriptions. He said the decision had been made by the UCU NEC as part of a package of cost cutting measures. His position is that every member of the Union should make some contribution monthly and he explained that he regards the role of retired members as supporting those members in work. Several committee members made the point that the Union had reneged on a promise to its members and that there was a principle at stake. Matt replied that he stood by the decision and that 3000 life members had been lost saving the Union £100,000 a year. The committee then voted to support any motion proposed at conference to rescind the requirement for life members to pay.

A warm welcome was extended to Nick Varney our new Regional Official. For the first time since the Region was established we are fully staffed at the Exeter Office. However, members of the Regional Committee expressed concern that the Union is still somewhat South East / London centred and that the SW is under-represented nationally on UCU committees. Currently only Harriet Bradley is on the NEC from the SW. The SW has also had a low profile at the National Congress. However, we do have a SW motion at Congress this year proposing a cheap introductory membership which could be continued at the full subscription rate after a year's trial period. It was thought this might help to reduce the problem of poor Union recruitment.

Branch reports took up a lot of the meeting's time as both FE and HE are involved in industrial action. Strong HE action was reported with generally a good turn out for the Dec strike. Action was reported as more sporadic in FE. It was noted that action has been most successful when UNITE, UCU and UNISON have acted together. Pay is not the only issue concerning members in FE. Very few FE Colleges in the area are honouring the national agreement on pay scales or awarding the agreed annual pay increase. The employers' organisation the National Association of Colleges has withdrawn from a national agreement on sick pay. Terms and conditions are being eroded in both sectors as marketisation and casualisation increase. Staff are being recruited on trainer or assessor grades and there are problems with Union recognition agreements in several colleges. Teacher observation policies and systems are an increasing source of stress.

Matt Waddup reported that strikes can increase Union membership and that moving to two hour strikes was a popular move amongst members. Action short of strikes also caused more disruption for management as they produced logistic problems. The need to keep the support of students was stressed and to fully explain the reasons for industrial action. Matt reported that participation in Union ballots is low and there is a shortage of members willing to take on the various roles of UCU branch reps. He pointed out the need to encourage those branches without representation at Region meetings to send someone even if only initially as an observer.

[Ruth Amias](#) vice-chair SW region

9. FE pay dispute

Principals' Pay – Doing Very Nicely

Over ten years, College Principals' pay has grown by 50.7%. This is almost double the rate of growth for the entire education sector and 2.7 times the rate of growth for FE staff subjected to national pay recommendations. FE College Principals' pay has grown at a rate 56.5% higher than UK average earnings in the ten year period 2002/03 – 2011/12; and has substantially exceeded both inflation measures and has risen at more than twice the rate of CPI over the last decade.

In the meantime, FE teachers along with school teachers have had a risible offer from their employers of 1%. This would mean another year of not keeping up with inflation. UCU continues to remain in dispute with the employers over its 2013/14 claim and has rolled over that claim together with the new claim. This year's claim is for:

- ⊗ £1,040 consolidated or 3% on all points, whichever is the greater
- ⊗ A recommendation to colleges to become accredited Living Wage employers
- ⊗ A commitment to safeguard wages for a minimum of three years.

A special conference of English FE UCU delegates met on 5th April and agreed that there would be no immediate industrial action but that we would retain a live ballot to carry the threat of further action into the 2014/15 pay talks.

For more information see:

http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/n/7/ucu_fenews48_mar14.pdf

10. A university with a strong Cornish dimension.

In the THES 13-19 March 2014, Matthew Reisz had a feature on Falmouth University. I thought it might be of interest to members who worked in the associated colleges.

<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/campus-close-up-falmouth-university/2011954.article>

If you cannot access the THES, here is *an extract* and my comment.

The article was, in the main, an interview with the VC Prof. Anne Carlisle with some input from Head of Performance, Larry Lynch. All very encouraging and positive for the Cornwall HE sector, though I would have liked to see a mention of the Falmouth University staff who made all this possible; there was none. Perhaps Prof Carlisle did it all on her own, thus justifying the 3.7% salary increase this year to £223,000. In the extract below I have italicised the THES material, to avoid charges of plagiarism.

Falmouth University, granted full status in 2012, began as the Falmouth School of Art in 1902 and its courses in fine-arts are still based at the Woodlane campus. It also offers Europe's only BA in Marine and natural history photography, including an underwater option.

In 2008, when it was the University College Falmouth, it incorporated Dartington College of Arts, which relocated from Totnes to the university's Performance centre at the Penryn Campus. Head of Performance, Larry Lynch, is



Photo <http://www.falmouth.ac.uk/facilities/performance-centre>

reported as saying he hope to offer “a conservatoire-like intensity combined with liberal arts and intelligence and the adventurousness of the arts school”.

The Penryn campus, opened in 2004 was designed to create “an environment where higher education would continue to flourish in Cornwall. Seventeen % of our undergraduates come from Cornwall and 22% from the South West as a whole. And we would like to increase that ... raising aspirations in Cornwall”. (Professor Carlisle quoted in THES).

Cornwall's illustrious mining heritage has provided the inspiration for a special collaboration between a local artist and University of Exeter scientist. Microbiologist Dr Chris Bryan (Exeter) has teamed up with Cornish visual artist Oliver Raymond-Barker to produce a distinctive

collection of artwork, under the title ‘Natural Alchemy: A Fusion of Art and Science’. The project combines Oliver's artistic creativity with Chris's expertise in microbial populations, creating artwork that draws upon Cornwall's mining industry, past and present.

It uses the diverse properties of plants, rocks, minerals and metals, combined with the systems and organisms that surround them, to create the artwork.

The spectacular artwork was showcased at Back Lane West, an artist-led space in Redruth, in late March before exhibiting at the University of Exeter's Environment and Sustainability Institute (ESI), at the Penryn Campus, on Monday 7 April 2014.

It certainly seems that for many people the opportunity to go to university when they left school was not an option. Now Cornwall's colleges & universities are working together to open the door to people who want that opportunity.

Jo Corke SW

11. Tribunal rules that certain discrimination against civil partners is within EU law

The Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) has ruled that schemes may restrict survivor benefits for civil partners to post-2005 accrual without falling foul of anti-discrimination law. An exemption in the Equality Act 2010 permits schemes to limit benefits for surviving partners of scheme members to accrual from 5 December 2005, the date at which civil partnerships became legal.

The exemption was challenged when human rights organisation Liberty took chemical manufacturer Innospec to an employment tribunal on behalf of Innospec scheme member John Walker. A member of the scheme since 1980 and in a civil partnership since 2006, contested that had he married a woman on the same date, his wife would be entitled to a survivor pension of £41,000 per year. As it stood, his civil partner was entitled to just £500 per year. The tribunal originally ruled that employers which used the exemption for civil partners were illegally discriminating against gay and lesbian members.

However, the **EAT** has overturned this decision, ruling that although using the exemption is a form of direct discrimination, the Equality Act exemption is compatible with EU law. Eversheds, which acted for Innospec, said the decision means scheme trustees may continue to restrict civil partners' survivor benefits, and that this exception will be extended to cover surviving same-sex spouses as well when same-sex marriage becomes legal next month. However, the law firm warned the government is due to report in July on its review of the different treatment of civil partners and same-sex married couples in occupational schemes and that this may lead to further change.

Julian Atkinson EM

12. Bob Crow & Tony Benn

With the deaths of Bob Crow and Tony Benn the trade union movement lost two prominent socialists in one week.

Bob Crow and Tony Benn came from different ends of the social spectrum. Their methods and style were different but they both fought for socialism and were united in the stop the war coalition in their fight for peace Both demystified politics and socialism for people. Tony Benn in his moderate gentle way would say that it is really all very simple. What people want is decent housing, welfare and education. Bob Crow would shout and bang his fists. "It's not rocket science. What we demand is a job for every person, decent pay and pensions and a world that lives in peace".



Tony Benn and Bob Crow regularly attended the Tolpuddle Martyrs Festival.

My favourite memories of Bob and Tony are seeing them at their fighting best in public meetings. They could dispel any air of defeatism in the audience in a moment. Bob Crow at his most rousing shouting, "Get off your knees"; telling us to group together to fight back. But for me the most inspiring was their use of history. History to show us

that we are not alone others have trod the same path. There isn't anything that should daunt us. History shows we have been here before and fought and progressed. You found yourself waiting to hear Tony Benn mention the diggers, the levellers, the chartists, the expulsion and return of members to the labour party. Nothing really new. Bob Crow would describe how over a century ago the RMT was affiliated to the liberal party because it was considered the party that best represented workers. When it was clear it was no longer the case a new grouping was suggested. Keir Hardie was called a "splitter" and vilified but eventually a fully-fledged labour party was formed. So Bob Crow "didn't care" that his new anti-cuts party TUSC was marginalised and ignored by the press. For Bob the labour party no longer represented working people and needed to be replaced. Negative reaction was inevitable. Part of the birth pangs of a new political party. We learn this from history.

Both Bob Crow and Tony Benn were demonised by the establishment press in life for their unfashionable politics and patronised in death as relics. Bob Crow was an industrial dinosaur, the last of the 1970's union militants. Tony Benn harmless old school labour. Why the bad press? Because it is clear they inspired people to action. They showed what people can do if they are organised, determined and well led. They offered an alternative of a different Britain rooted in solidarity and collective action.

Ruth Amias SW

13. What do we do all day or in what way are we a burden on the state?

To be constantly told that pensioners such as ourselves are a "burden on the state" is very frustrating. Many of us are involved in a wide variety of activities that would be costly to provide if paid for. Members of UCU East Midlands Retired Members Branch, friends and acquaintances among only those people I know of, contribute in many ways.

For example:

- ⊗ **By volunteering** in formal roles in Local Community and Residents groups, Hospital Volunteers (including as volunteer patients helping medical students to learn), Museum Volunteers, Neighbourhood Watch, School/Classroom support, Citizens Advice, counselling and medical support.
- ⊗ **In caring roles** for family, neighbours and friends by grand-parenting, including actual fostering and sometimes travelling long distances and staying over, looking after very elderly parents, shopping, odd jobbing and visiting and helping neighbours. No doubt this also happens in many other diverse and essential ways.
- ⊗ **Keeping ourselves healthy and active** by participation in a variety of social, cultural and physical activities surely also keep us from bothering the Health services more than absolutely necessary. Ways we do this can be in Choirs, Adult Learning such as WEA Classes, Art and Craft Groups, U3A, Book Groups, Fitness Classes/Groups (e.g. walking, yoga, cycling, zumba, football), Drama Groups, all these and more.
- ⊗ **Even back at 'work'** by using our expertise and experience to help colleagues still at work, refereeing



publications and research grants, helping researchers, carrying on with research, part-time teaching and a myriad of other such activities.

None of this may be undertaken by a sense of duty and almost all is enjoyable and interesting. As lively and concerned citizens are we therefore members of Mr Cameron's "Big Society" propping up a failing regime? I certainly hope not. And we are definitely not a burden on the state, having made major contributions in our working lives before retirement and all this.

Rowena Dawson EM

14. Equalities Committee, Feb. 14th 2014

The committee was concerned that equalities issues were falling off the agenda, given the current focus on the pay dispute. This would be unfortunate, given that since the recession started in 2008 there had been an attack of employment and welfare rights contributing to a worsening of the position of the protected groups. For example, austerity policies had impacted adversely on women's labour market position, with a massive increase in women's unemployment; disabled people had been heavily affected by the Bedroom Tax; government's anti-immigration stance had led to increased levels of racism and xenophobia; and around the globe savage repression of GLBT people had increased their vulnerability.

The Committee therefore put forward three resolutions to Congress which I am sure delegates from the region would warmly support, one on restoring employment rights, with particular focus on the impact of the imposition of fees for Industrial Tribunal cases on discrimination ; one on stressing the positive contributions of migrants to our country, especially in relation to the role of international staff and students in the HE sector, and pledging to work with groups and parties supporting this stance in the run up to the election; and a third focusing on encouraging branches to deliver best practice on equality issues.

In relation to this, a motion will go from Black Members standing committee calling for branches and regions to ensure there is representation at regional and branch level. This is something we are deficient on in the SW. It is something to which we need to give consideration.

There was discussion about this year's Equality Conference arrangements (the cost saving measure of folding the four separate conferences into a single one). The benefit of this arrangement was bringing the four constituencies together and sharing experiences, the cost was that members eligible to attend more than one conference were unable to do so. The Committee recommended that the Equalities Officer, Kay Carr, explore the possibility of holding a two-day conference next year, which would allow both shared sessions and the ability for members to attend more than one Standing Committee session.

Harriet Bradley Gillen NEC UWE.

Harriet Bradley Gillen is an NEC member from the South West and Harriet is happy to be contacted.

Harriet.bradley@uwe.ac.uk

15. Book corner

In June, 2011, I wrote to Kenneth Clarke, then minister of Justice: "*If you have the time, Wilkinson, R. & Pickett, K. The Spirit Level. 2009, chapter 11 Imprisonment and Punishment, is worth a read*". He did not reply.

March 2014, five years on, Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett argue that research backs up their views on the iniquity of inequality the Spirit Level authors: why society is more unequal than ever

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/09/society-unequal-the-spirit-level>

The Spirit level. Chapter 11 Imprisonment and punishment.

p152 USA has been repeatedly condemned by Amnesty, Human Rights Watch & United Nations Committee against Torture.

I taught in CA for a year, and was sad to read that this state has, since 1894, built one new college & 21 new prisons. (fig 11.2p 149).

The chapter ends with a question. Is it better to develop penal systems in consultation with criminologists, lawyers, prison psychiatrists, & psychologists to reflect both theoretical & evidence based considerations of what works to deter crime & rehabilitate offenders?

OR should legal frameworks & penal systems develop in response to media & political pressure, & a desire to get tough on crime & be seen to be doing something, rather than on a considered reflection on what works & what doesn't?

In UK, "Does prison work? (2006)

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/politics_s/how/6062430.stm says that prisons are effective only "as a means of answering a sustained media battering with an apparent show of force".

I chose this chapter as I have been writing to two prisoners in recent years. One has been released, the other is on Death Row in California. There are a couple of hundred such inmates who are still waiting for a penfriend from Lifelines; here is the link if you are interested.

<http://www.lifelines-uk.org/>

If you have worked in Prison Education, please write a piece for this newsletter.

Jo Corke SW

16. Exeter & District Trades Union Council

7th April 2014 at the Labour Party Offices Exeter

I attended the above meeting as an observer prior to the SWRMB of the UCU affiliating.

The meeting opened with a minute's silence to remember Bob Crow and Tony Benn.

Verbal reports were given by Officers and Representatives.

A motion was put before the council condemning the £110 million cuts and the closure of facilities by Devon County Council including: the Youth Service, Children's Homes, The Women's Refuge Centre, residential and day centres

for the elderly and libraries. These closures will result in the loss of hundreds of jobs and distress for the people who use the services. The properties housing these are to be sold off by Norfolk Property Services Southwest, a firm that works in partnership with DCC. The councillor who has been one of the chief 'architects' of these closures has now resigned from the DCC and has been made MD of NPS Southwest. The following was passed after discussion:

This Trades Union Council calls on the Devon County Council to lead an inquiry into the circumstances of the cuts and the behaviour of the Councillor in question.

A letter is to be sent to the local newspapers expressing concern at these cuts although it was thought that it might not be published.

The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the EU and the US was brought to the attention of the meeting. This is a free trade agreement that 'aims to join up the world's largest economies which account for almost half global GDP and a third of trade flow' (Gov. website). The Government sees it as a 'big boost' to the UK's economy that would create 2 million more jobs, give more choice and lower prices. There was concern raised that it could lead to job losses and companies and governments being sued. The suggestion was put forward that delegates contact their MPs to ask their views on TTIP.

TUC Representatives have been handing out leaflets and making contact with people in the fast food industry to encourage them to join the **Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union (BFAWU)** and to make them aware of their rights.

'**Britain Needs a Pay rise**', demonstration and rally to be held in Hyde Park on Saturday 18th October. The Exeter TUC is to arrange coaches for those wishing to attend and is asking union branches for donations towards the cost.

The next meeting: Monday May 12th

Liza Sentence SW UCU RMB delegate



Photo: TUC banner Oct 2013

We are affiliated to the Exeter TUC; we can send three delegates, so if you are interested let us know.

17. UCU Retired Members Branch

The branch has been underway for 18 months with 150 members. The aims are diverse, but include bringing together retired members of UCU in the South West, giving advice to branches on pension and retired members' matters, campaigning on issues relating to retired members and representation to the UCU national congress, National Pensioners Convention, Local TUCs.

Meetings: We hold meetings three times a year. The meetings centre round important issues for UCU pensioners and give a chance to chat to other retired members over a free buffet lunch.

Newsletter: A regular newsletter for retired UCU members is sent to all branch members for whom we have email addresses. We welcome articles of this newsletter, so if you have something to share please send it to us.

Email addresses: We encourage retired members to use their home email when you give up your work email address. Please let us have any changes to your home address.

Branch Treasurer : We have received no nominations for branch treasurer. The position is not an onerous one – mainly paying out cheques for the branch meetings and a couple of annual affiliation fees. Please consider offering to fill this post for your branch. We can send you further details as soon as we hear from you.

SW RM Branch Committee

More information

A lot more information and news can be obtained from these websites. We recommend that you have a browse.

UCU National Website: <http://www.ucu.org.uk>

AgeUK: <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/about-us/>

68 is too late: www.68istoolate.org.uk

National Pensioners Convention (NPC): <http://npcuk.org>
