

March 2014

UNISON  
Manweb

# LIVEWIRE



Welcome to our first edition of LIVEWIRE 2014. This newsletter is designed for our members to highlight Unison Campaigns and also discuss issues that affect staff locally.

## AGM meetings 2014

We will be holding our AGM meetings for our members in February & March.

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February- Queensferry**

**Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March- Rhos**

**Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March- Liverpool.**

**Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March- Prenton**

**Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> March - Warrington**

ALL MEMBERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND ONE OF THESE MEETINGS  
HAVE YOUR SAY!

## Winter Fuel Grants

With rising fuel costs and another cold winter many members are worried about how they're going to pay this year's winter fuel bills.

### **Help is on hand**

"There for You" has set up a limited fund to help UNISON members on low income by way of a one-off payment of up to £40. To apply and download the application form visit [unison.org/thereforyou](http://unison.org/thereforyou) or simply contact your UNISON branch office. Everyone that applies will receive a booklet giving information about other help that may be available and how to reduce your fuel costs in the future.

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Nationally Unison members are public service workers and contractors, Utilities, Community and Voluntary organisations, local authorities, the NHS and the Police.



We regularly meet with management voicing our shared opinions that we see and are felt by our members. We attend the senior staff meetings with directors and also the main company forums with management across the business. Meetings are also held on sites with senior site managers on a monthly basis to discuss anything from feedback on changing workloads to changes in facilities and health and safety for all. And we also give support and advice on site and attend disciplinary and sickness meetings with our members.

## Unison- If you are not already with us- why not join?

- Get essential cover whenever you need it
- Advice, support and help in the workplace,
- A helpline open until midnight on weekdays and to 4pm Saturdays.
- Legal help and support for you and your family (subject to criteria).
- Financial assistance and debt advice
- Compensation for accidents and injuries in work.
- A range of exclusive member discounts saving you and your family money on shopping, insurances and holidays with the unison travel shop.
- Education and training advice and courses including vocational and professional qualifications.



*If you want to be heard  
—speak in UNISON*

## Recruitment Day

We are going to be holding Recruitment days in March and April so look out for details to be advertised soon. This will give you the chance to meet your reps and ask questions. And if you are not already a member join us? However you can approach us at any time for an application.

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## Unison campaigns Unison cleared to challenge employment tribunal fees



Unison has been given permission to seek a judicial review of the introduction of fees for workers seeking employment tribunals.

People wanting to bring tribunals must now pay a fee for the first time since they were created in the 1960s.

Under the rules, it will cost £160 or £250 to lodge a claim, with a further charge of either £230 or £950 if the case goes ahead.

The judicial review took place back in October 2013.

HM Courts and Tribunals Service said it would refund people if the bid to abolish the charges succeeded.

However these fees have now been brought in and affect anyone making a claim.



Unison general secretary Dave Prentis said: "The introduction of punitive fees for taking a claim to an employment tribunal would give the green light to unscrupulous employers to ride roughshod over already basic workers' rights."

He added: "We believe that these fees are unfair and should be dropped."

The higher charges will cover cases such as unfair dismissal, the lower ones issues such as unpaid invoices.

This will mean some slight changes to process of making a claim through your union.

However where there is a claim with reasonable prospects of success it will be pursued and the member will not have to pay the fee.

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## TRIBUNAL FEES.....continued

- **Unfair Dismissal** – 3 months less one day. Members who start employment on or after the 6th April 2012 will need 2 years service before being able to pursue such a claim. If employment began prior to this date only 1 years service is need.
- **Discrimination** – 3 months less one day from the last act of alleged discrimination
- **Unlawful Deduction of Wages** – 3 months less one day from date of last deduction
- **TUPE** –failure to consult – 3 months less one day starting with the last of the dismissals or the transfer date.

## PENSIONS VICTORY

**In February 2013 the government put forward proposals to remove the legal protection for those who were in Final Salary Schemes in the Electricity Industry at privatisation.**

Our Branch was proud to lead opposition to these proposals and won support for our campaign across the union to defeat this measure. We lobbied the national union and won unanimous support for a resolution condemning the proposals at the UNISON Conference in June 2013. Letters of protest to the government were sent in by UNISON branches, trustees and many other bodies.

In February 2014 the government announced the withdrawal of their proposals and their agreement that promises made at privatisation should be honoured.