



**GPF backs Edinburgh stock transfer fight - p4**



**On top of the world for Bucket & Spade appeal**  
Page 3



**Public spending drives Scotland's economy - p 3**

revitalise our public services

scottish council activists bulletin

# Scotland in UNISON

Nov 2005  
No. 57

Copy sections of this bulletin or the online version to use in local branch or workplace newsletters

# English council employers threaten UK pensions

by Chris Barter  
Communications Officer

**A**fter the successful defence of local government pensions and positive steps to reach agreement in the Public Sector Forum, it is disappointing to now be faced with outrageous proposals to change the pension scheme.

The move comes from the England Employers Organisation in the Tripartite Committee established by the Deputy Prime Minister.

While these proposals only technically affect the pension scheme in England and Wales at this stage, and the Scottish employers have stated that they do

tribute by 1% on 1 April 2006 and 2007.

- An Increase in the minimum benefit age from 50 to 55.

UNISON and the other unions have rejected these proposals.

The official reason from the employers is the cost of revoking the regulations. UNISON challenges their estimate of the cost and is pointing out that employers contributions were reduced by 1.5% this year and there is no evidence that the 'rule of 85' is discriminatory.

The LGPS is already the poor relation of public service pension schemes and to increase contributions and



**PENSIONS CAMPAIGN**  
Find the model letter and other advice and campaigning information at [www.unison-scotland.org.uk/pensions](http://www.unison-scotland.org.uk/pensions)

not agree with some of these proposals, we are aware that the Scottish Public Pensions Agency has previously indicated that changes in Scotland should substantially follow what is agreed down south.

Joe Di Paola, Scottish Organiser, Bargaining said "It is important that we revitalise the campaign we put on hold after the success earlier this year.

"Despite the huge solidarity from members then the employers down south want to reintroduce the draconian changes that were revoked - and then more!"

The employers proposals include:

- Removing the 'rule of 85'
- No transitional protection for existing scheme members
- Increasing the employees con-

tribute benefits will only serve to worsen the position.

Scotland's employers have also said they do not see the Rule of 85 as discriminatory, and of course there is no cost of revocation as no amendments to the Scottish scheme were made to be revoked.

Joe Di Paola, however, says this must not lead to complacency.

"Whatever the employers believe, there will be huge pressure to ensure that the schemes North and South of the border are not hugely different.

"It is important that members in Scotland increase pressure on their MPs to deliver the same deal for local government staff as other public sector staff. We have produced a model letter to use to get support from their MP, and we are urging Scottish MPs to sign Early Day Motion no 787".

## 2,000th member for Scottish Electricity



by Janet Stewart  
Branch Development Officer

Ashleigh receives her presentation from Administrator Sheila McGeoch

**L**ast week Scottish Electricity Branch reached an important milestone when they recruited their 2000th member.

Ashleigh MacKissack who works in Scottish Power's Customer Sales and Services Department (CS&S), was delighted to discover she was the 2000th member when she visited the UNISON recruitment stall on 2 November.

"Being the 2000th member is an added bonus to joining UNISON!" She said.

"I only started work with Scottish Power a few weeks ago and while I absolutely love my new job I know it's important to join the trade union just in case!"

"My mum also works here and she's always been a member so I suppose I'm just keeping up the family tradition."

In March the Branch membership looked considerably different. Concerned about density

and with membership fluctuating around 1250, Branch officials met staff, to plan the recruitment campaign.

The initial focus was to be in CS&S and developing a long term organisational plan was to follow. Branch Secretary, Tony Grieve said, "Back then I'm not sure any of us thought we'd hit the 2000 mark this year. It's a great result. We have our development weekend shortly and hopefully we can build on this good start"

Regional Organiser Gerry Crawley commented, "This shows what can be achieved

when staff and lay members work together to a focussed plan. The employer provided us with up to date details of where our members were so we identified ongoing and local issues to recruit around.

"We also agreed a UNISON presence at induction courses. Along with CS&S Convenor, Janice Paterson, many staff attended the recruitment events"

Even more commendable, since Ashleigh joined, Branch membership has continued to grow reaching 2033 as we go to press. Maybe 3000 now looks achievable!

### More inside

- Cuts mean services 'on the cheap' - p2
- £1500 regrading - p2
- Giving the boot to racism - p2
- Kerr report - p2
- H&S qualification - p2
- OTs' campaign - p3
- Nursing home votes for recognition - p3
- Common agendas for central pay - p4
- No Place for Racism - p4
- GPF backs housing fight - p4
- NHS roles - p4

# NHS payroll officers win £1,500 regrading

by John Gallacher  
Secretary A&C Committee

**NHS Payroll Officers in payroll offices across Scotland have won a re-grading of nearly £1500 at the top of the scale thanks to UNISON.**

The claim was resolved following intensive negotiations in a sub-committee set up by the NHS Scotland Terms & Conditions

Committee. The deal was endorsed by branches in a series of delegate meetings in West Campbell Street over the past month.

It extends the Whitley A&C 4 scale into the mid-point of A&C 5, adding £1,445 to the top of the scale.

All staff get two additional increments, backdated to 22 September 2004.

Aileen Stewart, Chair of the A&C

Committee said: "Payroll staff deserve this award, and UNISON is pleased that we could."

"Now that this issue is settled, we will support payroll staff in achieving the best possible grade under Agenda For Change and also in the challenges they face in delivering A4 assimilation and the move to Shared Services across Scotland"

## Award winning trainee gains health & safety qualification

Kevin Findlay, a UNISON steward and safety rep working for Fife's transportation services, has become a full corporate member of the Institute of Occupational Safety and Health - four years after completing the TUC certificate in OSH.

Kevin said "The TUC certificate was the starting point for this qualification. Completing it allowed me to gain membership of the Institution of Occupational Safety and Health and was an entry qualification for the Diploma of the National Exam Board in OSH."

Most safety reps don't take this road as it requires considerable commitment - both in study time and financially. However Kevin passed his diploma, and due to his experience, was confirmed as a full corporate member in September.

Eleanor Haggart of Fife Branch said, "We are proud of Kevin's achievement, and pleased that it was a UNISON/TUC initiative that gave him the initial step onto the qualification ladder. An excellent example of lifelong learning!"

# Voluntary sector funding cuts mean services 'on the cheap'

**UNISON members are angry that funding has not been given to provide pay increases in the Community and Voluntary Sector similar to those in the local authority or healthcare sector.**

The union represents 6,500 workers in the Community and Voluntary Sector, and is angry that Scottish councils have cut funding to social care providers in the sector, whilst funding to private care homes increases by 10%.

Speaking at a Quarriers staff conference in Paisley, Community and Voluntary Sector Regional Organiser, Matt McLaughlin said,

"During this years pay talks community and voluntary sector providers across the board have told us that local councils have either cut budgets or expect them to deliver more services for the same money. One council has apparently told a provider that they should deliver 4% more care for no more money."

Commenting on the outcome of such actions Matt said,

"Put simply it can't go on. Staff in the sec-

tor are amongst the worst paid and this years pay round will do nothing to bring them onto a level playing field with their local authority and NHS colleagues.

"We recognise that local councils have themselves been the recipients of less than adequate grants in the last allocations, but providing services on the cheap by not funding other providers fairly is not the answer."

"It has been suggested that some providers are subsidising the provision of statutory care from reserves and surpluses on other con-

tracts. In short, money that should be used for staff training and for the development of new services for service users is being used to underwrite Scotland's councils, whilst private sector care homes get a 10% increase in their funding."

Matt ended by saying,

"For our members in the Community and Voluntary Sector this is a real slap in the face. Despite their work and effort, if this continues they will be destined to subsidise local councils and now the private sector."

# South Ayrshire gives the boot to racism



Winners Declan McClymont, Callum Connoughton and Chloe Davidson with UNISON's Campbell Peden and John Kerr



Ayr United girls football team, ball girls for the day, show off the SRTRCT Shirts.



Alloa Athletic player Jose Manuel Quitongo and team mates pose with UNISON.

## WHO KERRS... DAVID AND ANDY

**Professor David Kerr, Partick Thistle fanatic, high flying cancer specialist and research scientist produced a vision for NHS Scotland earlier this year.**

His review was well received. It avoided importing such 'bad medicine' from England as increased competition, excessive patient choice, foundation hospitals, privatisation of ambulance services and much else besides. UNISON's response to the report said as much.

The Scottish Executive has spent the summer developing a plan to transfer the 'academic' proposals into an operational plan of action. Health Minister Andy Kerr delivered the report to the Scottish Parliament on October 27.

There was little political controversy in the debate, although local concerns around centralisation of services was a focus for some MSPs.

The task now for UNISON is to use the 'partnership' agreement to shape the delivery of this action plan.

There is much to do (ten years' worth!) and big issues for all groups of UNISON members: nurses, allied health professionals, admin & clerical, managers, ambulance and ancillary staff.

John Gallacher (RO) said: "UNISON is the only union with the level of branch organisation, full-time and lay resources to respond effectively to an agenda of this complexity and breadth. We will all make sure the interests of UNISON members are well served in the ever-changing world of NHS Scotland"

**To coincide with Show Racism The Red Card (SRTRC) fortnight of action UNISON South Ayrshire branch decided to get active in the local community and vigorously promote the anti racist message across the county.**

The Branch Communications Sub-Committee decided to make their target audience the youngsters living within South Ayrshire.

"The main aim was to help promote the message as early as possible to our youngsters and keep it fresh in their minds", said South Ayrshire UNISON's Campbell Peden.

A competition to be the Club Mascot at the Ayr United v Alloa Athletic was organised via the local

**"We may all look different but we are united and breathe the same Air"**

*Under 7 Winner Callum Connoughton*

radio station, local newspapers and internal email within South Ayrshire Council. The kid's task was to make up an anti racist slogan.

The response and standard of entries was fantastic with over 150 replies.

Under 7 Winner was Callum Connoughton. "We may all look different but we are united and

breathe the same Air".

Chloe Davidson won the 7 to 10 years group with "It doesn't matter black or white football players shouldn't pick a fight."

And in the under 13s, Declan McClymont won with "Ayr unite black and white."

The branch also commissioned three advertising boards enforcing out anti-racist message.

The boards are sited at Somers Park, Ayr, Portland Park, Troon, and Beechwood Park, Auchinleck, as well as Sponsoring the Ayr United v Alloa Athletic match and ball.

# Public expenditure drives Scotland's economy

**UNISON Scotland chief Matt Smith slams the myth that the economy is dependant only on private sector**

**UNISON** Scotland has recently agreed to commission research to back up our view that public expenditure makes a vital contribution to the Scottish economy.

This applies not only in the provision of services but in the indirect impact they have in driving much of the rest of the economy.

Earlier in the year at the STUC we were instrumental in establishing this as STUC policy. In the interim we have been further examining this issue, particularly in view of some of the pressures on public expenditure - such as Efficient Government - that are now being raised.

To listen to some of the business organisations - and some members of the media - one would think that the economy was purely dependent on the private sector and all else flowed from that.

*The truth is quite different and UNISON needs to expose this.*

Recently the STUC met with senior civil servants to consider this matter and from some of the statistical information made available to us it is clear that the arguments we have been making are valid

These are some of the reasons we have agreed to commission research on the impact of public expenditure on the economy.

We anticipate that this will help build our argument for sustaining current levels of expenditure and ensuring that when arguments about efficient government are made, we can prove that the areas where most of our members work help generate much of the rest of the economy.

In particular we need to expose



**Those who argue that we need to cut public expenditure should remember that when Thatcher tried this in the 80's the resultant loss of employment across all sectors was massive. 9**

the argument that the public sector 'crowds out' the private sector.

There is no evidence of this. Indeed, although there has been substantial growth in employment in the public sector it has not matched the growth in employment in other sectors of the economy.

This is a debate that it likely to become more important as we head for Scottish Parliament elections in 2007.

For that reason UNISON will be making this a key element of our campaigning and we will ensure that the argument is not hijacked by those whose aim is merely to cut taxes and see a reduction in public sector provision.

Those who argue that we need to cut public expenditure should remember that when Thatcher tried this in the 80's the resultant loss of employment across all sectors was massive.

Public expenditure assists growth in the economy and generates jobs in all sectors.

## Welfare challenges net £3,000 plus for Bucket and Spade



Top: Kevin O'Neil on top of the world in Georgia.

Right: Doreen Kean and Eileen Dinning take time out of the saddle in the Pyrenees



The walking and cycling brigade in UNISON's Scottish office (and the STUC) have successfully completed two challenges in this summer's welfare fundraisers. (see Scotland In UNISON no 55 June)

Equalities Officer, Eileen Dinning and former Welfare Officer, Doreen Kean (below) successfully raised over £1,000 each for the UNISON Welfare Bucket and Spade Appeal.

They took part in a sponsored walk in the Pyrenees, walking 30 miles for the cause! Member, Mary Smith from Airdrie and Olivia Dewar, Falkirk Branch Welfare officer also took part.

Information Development Officer, Kevin O'Neil (left), tried something a little more adventurous, cycling 250 miles across Georgia in the USA for the same charity.

Also taking part in this challenge was Alison McGimpsey from Lothian Health Branch. Kevin raised £1,500. Obviously the bug has bitten him, as he is now planning a cycle ride from John O'Groats to Lands End - this time to benefit Cancer Research, and an AIDS charity as well as UNISON Welfare.

## Nursing home votes for recognition

**One telephone enquiry led to full trade union recognition for one Ayrshire private nursing home when 52% of the staff voted for UNISON to be their recognised union in July. Further negotiation sealed the deal with the final agreement in September.**

An enquiry from a local branch regarding membership at Seabank nursing home in Saltcoats was passed to West Team Branch Development Officer, Pauline Campbell, who assessed the potential for organising a union in this workplace.

Once it was agreed that this would be possible UNISON offered a meeting for members of staff - outside the

workplace if staff were worried about repercussions.

UNISON approached the home and arranged a workplace meeting. 11 members of staff attended the meeting and they all signed up.

Tracey Dalling - Regional Officer said "I outlined the benefits of UNISON membership, emphasising the need for union recognition in the workplace. The issues were pay, rotas and holidays, all of which require formal recognition to make a difference".

Since then UNISON has kept in touch with staff in the home. Every issue that arises is an organising opportunity.

An attempt was made to make

deductions from wages: UNISON advised this was not legal, and resulted in the employer thinking again.

A point Pauline reinforces, "It's important to build confidence in UNISON, so we chose an issue which UNISON successfully took up with the employer, demonstrating immediately the benefits of union membership to the staff.

Despite earlier promises of a voluntary agreement, the employers eventually forced UNISON to go for a ballot.

The ballot was run by ACAS in July, and the rest is a successful example of organising and setting up a union - even in an atmosphere of initial hostility.

## OTs campaign for more involvement

Local Government OTs have mounted a campaign to get more of their members involved in UNISON as stewards and contributing to OT issues in the union.

"We have produced a leaflet with the Communications & Campaigns Committee and we want to urge Local Government OTs to make their voices heard in developing our role and responding to consultations and government papers", said Kirsten Hey, Edinburgh steward and a driving force behind OT issues.

As a start, the Scotland website now has new OT pages at [www.unison-scotland.org.uk/localgovt/ot](http://www.unison-scotland.org.uk/localgovt/ot)

## Common Agendas dictate central pay negotiations

**Branch Representatives from the Non Departmental Public Bodies (NDPB) Branches recently met to discuss common areas of work.**

Despite being completely separate employers it soon became apparent how similar their pay and bargaining issues were.

"We knew the Chief Executives and other senior officers met regularly, said Rebecca Noon Branch Secretary SEPA, but we were all amazed at how the same issues

were being pushed in a similar fashion."

Pay being top of the agenda, negotiated annually, it's the most problematic. Although negotiations are technically with each NDPB management team, the Scottish Executive are the pay masters and set strict pay guidelines annually.

"We feel UNISON should be pushing the Scottish Executive to talk to us on pay. It's extremely frustrating trying to negotiate a pay award with a management who claim they have no room to negotiate but

must adhere to the strict pay guidance", said Peter Ritchie Branch Secretary Care Commission.

NDPB Branches will continue to hold regular NDPB group meetings, share common issues and agree joint strategies. As part of that agenda Joe Di Paola, Scottish Organiser - Bargaining, has asked the Scottish Executive Pay Unit for a meeting to discuss pay agendas in NDPBs. Both to influence and understand the Scottish Executive's position on pay agendas.

## UNISON takes key roles in Scottish NHS Partnership

by John Gallacher  
Regional Officer

**A major report was launched at the Scottish Partnership Conference on 25 October following a detailed review over the summer on Partnership working in NHS Scotland. Three key Scottish bodies have been created and UNISON has a significant role in each:**

**Scottish Partnership Forum** - a tripartite body comprising, the Health Department, NHS Scotland, trade unions and professional organisations. This will advance the strategic agenda in NHS Scotland, and be a key sounding board for policy formulation and priority setting by the Minister and Department. Aileen Stewart (NSS), Eddie Egan (Lothian) and I will sit on this. UNISON has the secretaryship.

**Scottish Workforce and Governance Committee (SWAG)** - oversee staff governance standard (which has legislative force in NHS Scotland); ensure exemplary employment practice; workforce planning and development. Mandy Robertson (Argyll & Clyde), Mick McGahey (Lothian), Lil Macer (Lanarkshire) and I will sit on this. Again UNISON will hold the secretary position.

**Scottish Terms & Conditions (STAC)** will deal with local agreements and key negotiations in Agenda For Change on a Scottish basis. Tom Watson (Chair, Health Committee), Lil Macer (Lanarkshire, and member of the NHS UK Staff Council); Catherine Mackay (Highland); and Glyn Hawker (Head of Health) will be on this.

Glyn Hawker said: "These new structures will enable UNISON to represent the best interests of all UNISON members throughout NHS Scotland. We have a key voice in all matters affecting NHS services and our members jobs. The NHS is a highly successful organisation. Working in partnership we will make things even better for our members and patients".

"A key early issue will be discussing the Executive's 10 year plan for NHS Scotland "Delivering For Health". Having submitted a comprehensive response to the original Professor David Kerr report, UNISON is well placed to take forward this agenda."

# NO PLACE FOR RACISM

by Kevin O'Neil

Information Development Officer

**It is that time of year when we march through the streets of Glasgow to say no to racism and fascism.**

The theme for this year's STUC annual St Andrew's Day March and Rally against Racism and Fascism is No Place for Racism.

The date for this year's event is Saturday 26 November, meeting at 10:30am at Blythswood Square for an 11:00am start.

The March will close with a celebration at the city's Trades Hall in Glassford Street. The event will include guest speakers, live entertainment, food and beer stalls and solidarity and craft stalls.

UNISON Scotland has been at the forefront of combating racism during 2005. Earlier this year saw the launch of the "Asylum Myths" book and leaflet. This outlines and demolishes the misconceptions put about by racist parties like the BNP, and unfortunately sel-



UNISON's Fiona Montgomery and Kay Sillars at the Edinburgh Mela UNISON stall

dom challenged in the UK media.

UNISON Scotland was also at a two multicultural festivals. At the North Glasgow International Festival on Saturday 4 June, we had a stall with our *Many Cultures Working in UNISON* and *Asylum Myths* materials. We also sponsored a food prepara-

tion workshop, which fifteen asylum seekers were able to participate in. This six week course brought them a Scotvec qualification.

The Edinburgh Mela, which in September in the capital's Pilgrim Park, saw UNISON Scotland staff and activists distribute our anti racist materials.

The Edinburgh Mela is

Scotland's biggest multi cultural festival with an attendance of over 20,000 people passing through on both days.

If you would like to assist at St Andrew's Day March and Rally Against Racism and Fascism, then contact Kevin O'Neil on 0870 7777 006 k.oneil@unison.co.uk

## GPF backs Edinburgh's stock transfer fight

**Edinburgh Council is spending thousands of pounds of tenants' money to convince them to privatise their housing.**

But now, to combat this, UNISON's General Political Fund has backed the City of Edinburgh Branch in a campaign involving 25,000 colour broadsheets for tenants, advertising and a range of other initiatives working with tenants' campaign groups.

"Most tenants do not believe they've been given enough information and UNISON is urging them to Vote No, and If You don't Know, then Vote No", said John Stevenson, UNISON Edinburgh Branch Secretary. "But this is also about jobs. The Business Plan envisages cuts in support services from day one - and that means staff".

A recent report by the independent Tenants Information Service (TIS) confirms many of the fears tenants across

Edinburgh have expressed.

While it states that some of the City of Edinburgh Housing Association (CEHA) plan is realistic, it exposes huge problem areas like:-

- The new landlord does not actually have the 'promised' money for the major demolitions and improvements. Instead all this work is dependent on future funding bids.

- Unless CEHA can find £70 million to plug a hole in their finances, rent rises are likely after the 5-year period. The promise is for rents to rise at no more than inflation. But the report warns "beyond that time CEHA's capacity to continue with that level of rent rises is an aspiration, not a promise".

- The report says predictions of higher rent rises after five years are 'realistic'.

- The council has over-estimated the income for CEHA. Unrealistic occupancy levels and failing to take into account increased building costs mean



that there are further holes in their finances.

- TIS says that £38 million is needed for structural repairs but CEHA has only set aside £9 million.

- The business plan states that there is an estimated £90 million for neighbourhood improvements. TIS say that this is "insecure" with its availability depending on the decisions of others.

- CEHA expects to reduce staffing costs (e.g. cut jobs) in caretaking, concierge staff and anti-social behaviour staff. TIS says these plans are "very ambitious" and would entail plans not contemplated so far.

It has to start cutting 'housing management' costs in the very first year if it is to keep on target financially.

But, more worryingly, the business plan is only an intention on day one. After that it can change. The report says,

**"By its nature a business plan will change, through systematic updating."**

"It will always be possible to vary these things to ensure viable finances year on year", the report explains.

"That could mean there would be more job losses less repairs, higher rents and fewer improvements than the business plan promises", said Barbara Foubister, UNISON Edinburgh Branch Chair.

See more at [www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.unison-edinburgh.org.uk)

## We want to hear your news

Won any deals or cases for members? Any 'people' stories we could use? SiU is your paper, we want to hear your stories.

Your SiU contacts are:  
John Stevenson (Editor) 0131 220 5655, Chris Bartter 0870 7777

006  
**FAX PRESS RELEASES to 0141-331-1203**  
E-mail: [webmanager@unison-edinburgh.org.uk](mailto:webmanager@unison-edinburgh.org.uk)

Published by UNISON Scottish Council, 14 West Campbell Street, Glasgow G2 6RX. Origination by FLESH Ltd 7 Barclay Terrace Edinburgh EH10 4HP

EH9 1JH Printed by Centurion Press Ltd, 17 Manchester Street, London, W1M 5PG