



*Monmouthshire County Branch  
Cangen Sir Fynwy*



**All meetings will be held via TEAMS**

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026 @ 10.00**

**Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026 @ 12.30pm**

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2026 @ 5.00pm**

# AGENDA

Apologies

Minutes of the 2025 Annual General Meeting

Matters Arising from the Minutes

Officer Reports

Honoraria

Approval of the Accounts

Election of Branch Officers and Stewards

Employment Rights Bill

Motions

# Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2025

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2025 @ 10.00am  
via Microsoft Teams

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2025 @ 4.00pm  
in The Choir Hall, Mill Lane, Caldicot NP26 4BN

Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025 @ 12.30pm and @ 5.00pm  
via Microsoft Teams

## PRESENT

Jan Davies (Branch Secretary)  
Joanne Davies (Branch Chairperson)  
Robin Grant (Treasurer)  
Sandra Rosser (Assistant Branch Secretary)  
Marie Bartlett (Retired Members Officer)  
Richard Garner (Health & Safety Officer)  
Hazel Clatworthy (Environment Officer)  
Jan Robson (Membership Officer)  
Diane Flynn (Auditor)  
Marc Fennessy (Steward)  
Mandy Stone (Steward)

TOTAL - 45 Members of the Branch

Ffion Thomas (Unison)  
Tanya Bull (Unison)  
Karen Vaughan (Branch Admin)

## APOLOGIES

Jennifer James

Our Branch Chair, Joanne Davies opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and extended a special welcome to any new members who have joined during the last 12 months.

## **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2024**

These were received and approved by a show of hands.

### **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

No matters arising.

### **Officer Reports**

The Officer reports received were included in the pack. These reports give members an update on what has been happening in the past 12 months. The Chairperson took this opportunity to thank all activists for their hard work during the year, stating that the branch could not run without them.

The meeting was given an opportunity to raise any questions arising from these reports. Nothing was raised.

No reports received from the sub-branches.

The Chair handed over to Marie Bartlett, Assistant Branch Treasurer to go through the branch final accounts.

### **Honoraria**

Every year the AGM receives a request to approve the Branch Honoraria for the previous year, these discretionary payments are awarded to elected branch committee members in recognition of the work they do on behalf of members. This often involves work outside of normal hours including time spent away from home representing the branch at various committees and conferences.

The table in the report shows the recommendations made by the Honoraria Committee, which included a representative from our Regional Office. No honoraria can be paid unless it is approved by the branch and the AGM, no person that may receive a payment can vote on this matter.

The Treasurer requested the meeting approve the recommendations made in the table by a show of hands.

The payments were unanimously approved by those present.

No potential recipient took part in the vote.

### **Approval of the Accounts**

The Treasurer then presented the Annual Statement of Accounts to the meeting, copies of which were included in the Final Accounts document.

## **General Fund Income and Expenditure Account for 2024**

On the income and expenditure account it's very much as we expected for the year, we have a small surplus which will increase our surplus slightly. There are no significant changes from last year. A couple of more expensive items are staff salaries to cover the branch administrator and the amount we spend on conferences and group meetings.

## **Balance Sheet**

This shows that we have about £80K in the bank, £19,110.00 is our general reserve which we can use if we need to. The other item, the industrial action fund remains at £61,779. This reserve has not been utilised for a long time and can only be used to support industrial action under strict rules and guidelines.

## **Budget**

We have set a balanced budget this year as we always try to do, to use all our income to fund our everyday expenses. Our attention was drawn to the staff salaries, which seem to have gone up significantly, but that's because of the impact of the National Insurance payments.

That concluded the accounts for 2024 and the Treasurer asked if anyone had any questions, there being none, the participants were asked to formally accept the accounts by a show of hands.

All participants accepted and approved the accounts.

## **Election of Branch Officers and Stewards**

The AGM document included a list of proposed officers and stewards; the list includes all the nominations that were received by the deadline.

There are a couple of changes to note:

- Jan Robson is our Membership Officer but has also recently been piloting a new role as Schools Officer, because we've seen increased demand for support in that area. What we want to do is make this a formal addition to our Branch Executive going forward.
- Hazel Clatworthy is our Green Rep currently, she's now got an opportunity to take on a new role as Environment Officer meaning she would have greater access to Regional information and networking, therefore we are proposing that she double up on her roles to become the Environment and Green Officer.

All the nominations listed were received by the deadline, so those named are deemed elected unopposed and for approval at this meeting.

The meeting was asked to approve these nominations and the changes by a show of hands to elect the officers and stewards presented - all participants accepted and approved the elections and changes.

The AGM also granted the Branch Committee the ability to fill any vacant posts and approve new officer and steward nominations throughout the year.

Joanne explained if anyone feels they might be interest in finding out a bit more about getting involved with the branch in different roles, we would be delighted to hear from you. We have opportunities and vacancies throughout all areas of the authority. There's more information available about the roles on Unison's website, and the different training available.

Free training is available with a right to paid time off to undertake these courses. Anyone becoming more involved will also have the backup and support of more experienced officers.

### **Motions**

None received.

Our Chairperson closed the formal part of the meeting and on behalf of the branch thanked everyone for attending and for all contributions. Before the meeting was closed Joanne asked if there were any questions or queries anyone would like to raise. There were none.

### **Jan Davies, Branch Secretary**

Gave an update on the proposals to change the way Unison negotiate for support staff in schools, a ballot has been sent out to all school members asking for their opinion. There were three options:

1. To join with England, who is already going down that road
2. To use the same framework, but for Wales only
3. To stay as we are.
- 4.

The ballot closed last week and the steer we've got is to move to the change of the negotiating body, but as Wales only. Unison will now be campaigning with the Assembly and the relevant bodies to try to achieve this.

### **MUST Sessions**

Before finally closing the meeting the Chair, Joanne, reminded everyone that we will be running our Monmouthshire Unison Small Talk (MUST) sessions again during the year and reminded members to look out for those. If there is a topic anyone would like us to cover as part of these sessions please let us know and we will try to set one up, as we strive to make these as relevant and interesting for members as possible.

The Chair asked if there were any questions, there being none, she thanked everyone for attending and wished them well before closing the meeting.



Monmouthshire County UNISON

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# Branch Chairperson's Report

Thank you to you all for your continued support for the Union over the last 12 months. We're living in very interesting times and the many and varied challenges we're all facing don't seem to be letting up so it feels more important than ever to be part of a Union where colleagues are looking out for and standing up for one another.

We've continued to welcome new members from a range of services, and it's been wonderful to meet and speak to many of you at our online MUST events and when out and about in the County. Hearing your views and understanding your experiences is vital to our work and ensures we are representing you to the best of our ability.

As ever, a huge thanks must be given to our dedicated Branch Stewards, Executive Members and Office colleagues who have continued to work extremely hard and give their time to support our members and keep the Branch running.

After 3 years in the role, I will be stepping down as Chair in 2026, but I know the Branch is in safe hands going forward and I look forward to seeing where the next 12 months takes us as we enter the Year of Green Activity and look to grow the Branch further. It's been an honour to hold the role and a pleasure to work alongside and learn from our experienced and passionate Branch colleagues.

If you think you'd like to get more involved with our work please don't hesitate to contact the office or talk to your workplace rep. There are a range of opportunities available with varying levels of commitment, and full training available. We'd be delighted to welcome you to the team.

# Joanne Davies



# Branch Secretary's Report

Welcome to 2026, I hope you all had a good Christmas & I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very happy & healthy new year. I'm starting to sound like a stuck record, but we are facing yet another very challenging year. The continued lack of funding & dire budget position has consequences for UNISON members, the services they provide, and for the union.

The financial picture for Monmouthshire, and for Wales in general, is bleak. I know I said this last year, and I hoped I wouldn't be saying it again, but, in the 48 years that I have worked here I have never known anything on this scale, and it doesn't look as if things will improve anytime soon.

Monmouthshire managers, leaders & politicians have had nothing but praise for the way in which you have continued to rise to the challenges we have already faced. Especially the officers and volunteers that turned out to help during the very significant challenges we faced at the end of last year with the floods.

However, the budget position does mean that there will be more significant and long term changes to the way we work, both in the public & private sector. If you have any concerns about what this means for you, please get in touch.

Efficiency savings, restructures, collaborations, shared services, projects that are externally funded & various pilot schemes are now deemed an essential element to maintain MCC's financial future.

We appreciate that this situation will be extremely unsettling for all staff, if you require any additional help, support or advice, please do not hesitate to contact us. We have a number of options to help / support our members please contact us for more details

The Leadership Team has assured us that they will keep Unison informed and want to work with us to ensure the best possible outcomes for staff. If there are proposed changes to your sections / departments or to yourselves, as individuals, please contact us. As Unison members you are entitled to our support.

If there are any teams / sections that would like to meet with us, either individually or on a group basis, we are happy to facilitate that. Just give us a call.

All things considered I believe the Monmouthshire branch has been very creative in the ways that we are now able to help and provide support to our members. If you feel that there are other ways that we can help / support our membership please, do not hesitate to contact me to discuss.

Our membership figures are increasing, but more needs to be done to ensure that those who work for Monmouthshire, and are not members, join up! This is not a time to be fighting alone, with all the changes on the horizon there has never been a more important time to be a Unison member.

I also have the privilege of representing Monmouthshire Unison at Local Government Committee Wales and I was re-elected as Chair from May 2025. As Chair of Local Government Wales, I also attend Joint Council Wales, Joint Council Wales Executive and the Local Government Service Group Executive. I also attend South East Wales Joint Consultative Committee. Keep an eye on the Monmouthshire Unison website for regular updates.

We are still desperately short of stewards. If anyone is interested, please contact me. There is plenty of training available & I would be happy to provide any advice / guidance / support you may need.

**PLEASE COME FORWARD - YOUR BRANCH NEEDS YOU !!**

**Jan Davies**

The logo consists of the words 'UNISON', 'SPEAKING', 'UP FOR', 'PUBLIC', and 'SERVICES' stacked vertically in a bold, sans-serif font. 'UNISON' and 'FOR' are in dark blue, while 'SPEAKING', 'UP', and 'SERVICES' are in green. 'PUBLIC' is in dark blue. The text is set against a white background with a subtle, light green circular pattern.

**UNISON  
SPEAKING  
UP FOR  
PUBLIC  
SERVICES**

# Assistant Branch Secretary's Report

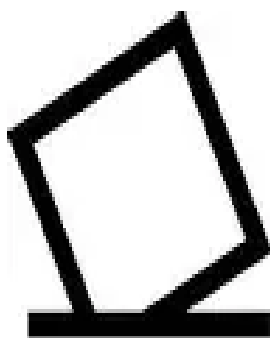
My role as a Steward takes me in all sorts of directions and to a variety of workplaces. We have members that cover a wide breadth of employers within the county now, from private care providers to education establishments and all levels of local government from town and community councils to the unitary authority itself. As someone who started out in the unitary authority, and now working 'at the coal face' within a town council, I can see how crucial every level of local government is to the wider community and the function and delivery of those vital front-line services so many rely upon.

I'd like to take this opportunity to encourage all members to recognise the importance of participating in voting when ballots arise, asking for your say in what action you want to see when things like pay talks are being negotiated on your behalf. It is imperative that you all return your ballot papers - no matter how you decide to vote - because this is **YOUR UNION**. Without your input, we will not know how to steer the ship, so please, make sure you engage with these campaigns, and make sure your voice is heard.

It is your opinions and voices that help formulate our thinking and guide our voting practices when we represent you at Local Government and National Delegates Conference each year. These events help to shape and evolve the union for the future, and it is vital we understand what matters most to you, our members, when we go to these events. We are here to represent your voice and opinion. We hope this year - the Year of Green Activism - you will help guide us on what matters. Whether it is taking part in local litter picks, encouraging sustainable buying practices, making the most of local public transport where possible to travel to events or meetings, or utilising modern technology where we can minimise unnecessary travel and lower our impact on the environment.

We want to hear from you, so make sure you watch out for our online **MUST** sessions and social media posts and be part of our Year of Green Activism!

**Sandra Rosser**



**#USE  
YOUR  
VOTE**



# Welfare Officer Report

I was contacted by several of our members who required assistance through "There for You", I found that many of the cases could be resolved by using the online application forms and guidance provided by the There for You team.

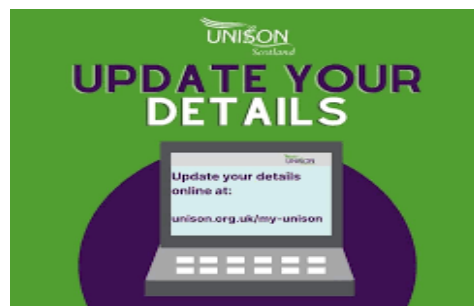
It has also been highlighted this year that some people may not be paying the correct subscriptions, especially those paying by Direct Debit (anyone paying through Payroll should not be affected). It is the responsibility of the member to make sure that when they receive an increase in their salary, they check that this hasn't taken up to the next subscription bracket. It will affect the help members can receive from Unison.

There for You explained that they are struggling like many organisations and paying the correct subs has a detrimental effect on the help they can offer members. Monmouthshire Unison will be releasing information via their website and social media sites to help you check that you are paying correctly.

I attended two Regional Council meetings in 2025 both of which did acknowledge times are hard for many Unison members, along with their concerns with the Local elections looming, they are working hard to hopefully prevent "Reform" becoming elected. Reform is not supportive of Unions or our many Healthcare migrant workers. Further information can be found on the main Unison Website.

I will continue to support many of the staff experiencing difficulties at this time. 2026 will bring many challenges for many families and our members as the next few years are going to be difficult as we all try to cope with the ever-increasing cost of living.

**Laura-Jane Marchrones**



there  
for you supporting UNISON members  
when life gets tough

# Health & Safety Officers Report

Another year and a raft of changes ongoing across Monmouthshire, corporately there has been a number of directorate changes, with the subsequent forums being rejigged. Also, there is continuing movement updating policies and reinvigorating health and safety across the authority.

We are always looking for new reps, especially in health and safety, also any ideas you may have for recognising Workers Memorial Day, which is an internationally recognised event that takes place each year on the 28<sup>th</sup> April, please forward on.

Finally, as usual, don't become another figure in the health and safety report: laptops users, please make sure you take regular breaks, that your workstation is set up correctly and has the right equipment, especially if working for more than a couple of hours in one place.

If you don't have the above or would like further information, initially discuss this with your manager, failing that, contact me or the UNISON office where we can put you on the right track.

**Richard Garner**



# Environmental Officer's Report

This is the first Environmental Officer's report that Monmouthshire branch has had, as this is a relatively new role.

I think sometimes members think that Unison is just about pay and conditions and so on, but it is important that members realise that we are working hard to look after the environment and prevent and prepare for the impacts of climate change. Over 90% of members surveyed by Unison said they were concerned about climate change and many of our members are directly involved in preventing, preparing for and protecting against the impacts of climate change. The recent flooding in Monmouth and elsewhere has brought home to us how extreme weather is affecting us in Monmouthshire, both as residents and as public servants working to respond in very challenging conditions.

In August 2025, some of the Grounds and Waste teams went on an Adapting to Work Safely in Extreme Weather course organised through Unison Cymru. This course is available to teams at other times of the year, so it might be worth considering whether you or your colleagues would find this useful.

I also run a full day face to face Carbon Literacy course which is accredited and free to attend, so if you would like to learn more about the causes of climate change and how we can reduce our carbon footprint, both personally and professionally, then it would be great to have more Unison members attend. Booking is via Thingi or drop me an email if you aren't on Thingi.

Unison has designated 2026 to be a Year of Green Activity, so look out for events, opportunities to campaign, training and more. I attended Unison's first ever Environmental Officers conference in London in September, and it was great to meet other colleagues across the UK and hear about some of the work they are doing, as well as Unison's plans for next year.

Unison Green Week was in September 2025, and we held two drop-in MUST sessions to hear from members about what their environmental concerns are, and how they think Monmouthshire branch should be responding to the climate crisis. Some of their suggestions are being taken forward in 2026 as part of the Year of Green Activity.

We also had a Lunchtime Walk and Talk to learn about the good work going on in the Community Garden at County Hall, Usk and explore local footpaths - thanks to Nigel Leaworthy for this.

It would be good to hear more ideas from members about what they are interested in and if they would like the opportunity to meet face to face to talk about the environment or do practical conservation projects, so if that is of interest, please let me know. The model that Unison uses is that each branch has an Environmental Officer and then Green Reps across the organisation in different departments. It would be great to have more Green Reps, so again, have a chat if that is something you would be interested in.

I think that is it for now. I'm looking forward to a busy Year of Green Activity in 2026, so keep your eyes open for events coming up, share your thoughts and ideas and above all, get involved!

**Hazel Clatworthy**



# Schools Officer Report

As we've said goodbye to 2025 and look forward to 2026 it is an ideal time to reflect on the challenges faced by many school support staff members and recognise the great work that is being done by you all.

I don't think that any of you would deny that 2025 was a challenging year. Many have faced redundancy, staff shortages, changes in working practices and frustration at the financial constraints that you are bound by. You have faced these challenges with a resilience that can only be admired. You have done everything in your power to ensure that the impact on the students and schools you support is kept to a minimum, going above and beyond to keep your schools functioning effectively.

Support staff are the backbone of schools, without you the schools could not function, you do not receive the appreciation you deserve.

So, what has your Unison branch been doing for you?

- We have been involved, along with Unison Cymru, in negotiating your pay deal and fighting for the Wales SSSNB that you voted for.
- We have been working behind the scenes to change MCC policies to better reflect your needs, attending meetings to ensure your voices are heard.
- We have been attending consultation meetings regarding redundancies, fighting to keep the jobs of support staff and limiting the impact on our members. We also have been meeting with the support staff involved to answer their questions and address their concerns.
- We have been working with the senior leadership teams in schools to challenge unfair work practices each time you highlight them to us.
- We have been supporting members during disciplinary investigations.
- We have been supporting members during disciplinary hearings
- We have been highlighting the issue of violence in schools with headteachers and MCC to ensure that there is a consistent approach in reporting and dealing with incidents that have a huge impact on members. This is an ongoing process, I would appreciate any input from members, please feel free to contact me if you have a story to share.
- We have been attending return-to-work meetings with members who are returning from long term absence due to illness or mental health issues, negotiating phased returns that work effectively for the member.

- We have been promoting training opportunities for members. Unison provides so many training opportunities, please contact me if you'd like more information on this.
- We have been supporting members via email or telephone who need advice regarding specific issues. I would like to thank Karen who is more often than not your first point of contact.

So yes, we have had a challenging 2025 but between us, members, Unison stewards and officers, we are a great team. We fight together to ensure that you have a safe and rewarding workplace. Keep doing what you are doing because you really make a difference to the students in your care.

Onwards and upwards into 2026

**Jan Robson**

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£2,001 - £5,000	£3.50
£5,001 - £8,000	£5.30
£8,001 - £11,000	£6.60
£11,001 - £14,000	£7.85
£14,001 - £17,000	£9.70
£17,001 - £20,000	£11.50
£20,001 - £25,000	£14.00
£25,001 - £30,000	£17.25
£30,001 - £35,000	£20.30
over £35,000	£22.50

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# Officer Nominations

**At the closing date the following nominations were received:**

Branch Chairperson	Sandra Rosser
Branch Secretary	Jan Davies
Branch Treasurer	Andy Venn
Branch Auditor	Sian Hayward
Branch Auditor	Diane Flynn
Health & Safety Officer	Richard Garner
Environment Officer	Hazel Clatworthy
Equalities Co-ordinator	Vacant
Welfare Officer	Laura-Jane Marchrones
Young Members Officer	Brandon Jones
Education Co-ordinator	Undertaken by Branch Admin
International Relations Officer	Vacant
Lifelong Learning Co-ordinator	Undertaken by Branch Admin
Communications Officers	Richard Garner & Sandra Rosser
Membership Officer	Jan Robson
Schools Officer	Jan Robson
Retired Members Secretary	Marie Bartlett / Tracy Finnis
Labour Link Officer	Vacant

**The above-named Officers are nominated unopposed and are deemed elected, subject to AGM approval.**

# **Steward Nominations**

## **Monmouthshire County Council**

Mandy Stone	Adult Services
Marc Fennessy	The Compass Project
Dave Padmore	Monmouth PTU
Sarah Clubb	King Henry VIII 3-19 School
Andy Venn	ACT Team, Children's Services
Joanne Davies	Place & Community Wellbeing
Robin Grant	Children's Services

## **Capita Symonds**

None Received

## **Haberdashers Monmouth Schools**

None received

## **Monmouthshire Housing Association**

Peter Stephens (Contact only)

The above nominations were received and are therefore elected.

**The Branch reserves the right to fill any vacant posts and approve new officers and steward nominations throughout the year.**



We still have vacancies for Stewards across all workplaces so any nominations or volunteers would be very welcome. Full training will be offered to anyone volunteering.

Officers of the union take the lead on specific areas of activity and work in close liaison with our Stewards and Workplace Contacts to ensure that we deliver effectively for our members.

Specific training is available for many of these positions so don't feel that you will be on your own if you stand or persuade a colleague to stand. There is only one qualification for officers, they need to be a member of the union; having an interest or experience of the specific areas of activity would of course be welcomed.

Stewards are the backbone of UNISON; they act as a link between members and the union in our workplaces. All new stewards have the right to paid time off for training which UNISON provides. New stewards also have the backup of more experienced officers should the need arise.

Workplace contacts act as a contact between the branch office and the workplace to make sure all information gets to members in that workplace. Members then also have a person to go to who is a link to the branch. Workplace contacts don't pick up issues, rather they are a conduit between their own workplace and the branch.

Your workplace will be a much stronger place should you nominate someone to act on your behalf, either as a steward or a workplace contact.

If you are interested, please contact Karen in the UNISON Office:

**UNISON Office, 18 Maryport Street, Usk NP15 1AE**

**Tel:** 01291 675502

**Email:** [unisonmon@btconnect.com](mailto:unisonmon@btconnect.com)

**Website:** [www.unisoningwent.org.uk](http://www.unisoningwent.org.uk)



## **Monmouthshire UNISON Small Talk (MUST)**

With so many workplaces being heavily dependant on staff working from home or remote locations, the concept of a catch up over a cuppa in the workplace seems a distant memory.

We at Monmouthshire UNISON are keen to ensure we nurture and maintain those important connections with you, our members, so we offer **MUST** sessions throughout the year which are open to all UNISON members to dial in and join via Microsoft Teams.

Previous session topics include:

- Health and Safety in the workplace
- Money Matters
- UNISON's Green Week
- NJC Pay Claims

Sessions run for 30 minutes and are held at 12:30pm and 5pm to allow staff in different environments to be able to join us from wherever they may be.

We are keen to hear what you would like to learn more about in 2026. With huge changes to Employment Law, the Trade Unions Bill, and the most recent round of NJC pay offers all up for discussion, please let us know what you would most like to see come up next.

So, grab a cuppa, set up your laptop/mobile/tablet, and join us for a **MUST**! As with all things digital, cookies are optional . . . . !



## **LET'S TALK**

# THE ADDED VALUE OF MEMBERSHIP



## Great deals for everyday life

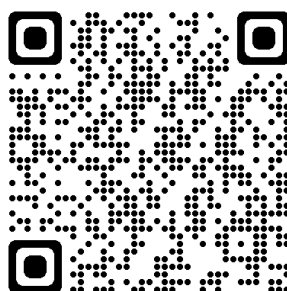
Unison is always looking out for you when you're at work,  
but there's much more to life.

So, UNISON Living is here to help you get the most from your own time too. From family healthcare to a family car, from fun days to holidays, UNISON Living can connect you with a trusted partner who can help. We've used the huge power of our 1.3 million members to secure some of the best deals exclusively for you.

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**[www.unison.org.uk/thereforyou](http://www.unison.org.uk/thereforyou)**

Registered charity number 1023552 Scotland SC038305

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*To be eligible to apply for financial assistance, you must have been a member of UNISON for at least four weeks and are up to date with your subscriptions. Also, the financial difficulties that led you to apply occurred after you joined. Partners or dependents can also apply.*

# Unison Grant Programmes 2026



**Step into Spring Grant**  
opens for 24 hours from 12 noon on  
19<sup>th</sup> March 2026



**School Uniform Grant**  
opens for 24 hours from 12 noon on  
27<sup>th</sup> May 2026



**Seasonal Food Fund**  
opens for 24 hours from 12 noon on  
30<sup>th</sup> September 2026



**Winter Essentials Grant**  
opens for 24 hours from 12 noon  
December 2026  
(the exact date to be confirmed)

*Please be aware these funds are limited and allocated on a first come first served basis, therefore be ready on the website: [www.unison.org.uk](http://www.unison.org.uk) at the allotted date and time for each grant.*

# Welfare Benefits



**Financial Assistance**



**Check your benefits**



**Budget Planner**



**Wellbeing Breaks**

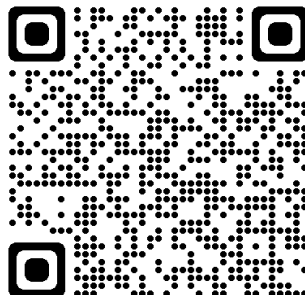
These are just some of the benefits of your membership, please check out Unison's website for more information on these and other benefits available to Unison members:

[www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you](http://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you)

# Legal Services



UNISON provides high-quality legal services to members and their families across a wide range of issues. We work with our specialist legal services provider, Thompsons Solicitors, to provide access to high-quality employment, personal injury, and criminal law advice. Thompsons are committed to the trade union movement as a whole and we work closely to monitor their work in line with our agreed standards of service.



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# Need help?

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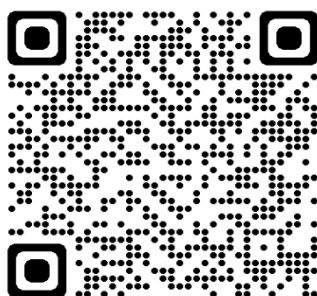
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