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More information and news

can be obtained from these websites.
We suggest you have a browse.

UCU National Website:

<http://www.ucu.org.uk>

AgeUK: <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

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

National Pensioners Convention (NPC):

<http://npcuk.org>

Your branch has its own website at

<http://www.ucu-em-rmb.org.uk>

Follow your Branch on Twitter:

@ucu-em-rmb

Branch meeting and AGM Tuesday Nov 6th 2018

11.00 – 13.00
(Speaker at 12.00)

Speaker: Val Wood

“100 years of Suffrage”.

The Swan in the Rushes,
The Rushes, Loughborough, LE11 5BE



1. The Decline and Fall of Adult Social Care

Clang! That is the sound of a can being kicked down the road. What is written on the tin is clear: solution to adult care crisis. But what is in the can is still not clear. Cameron had promised a Green Paper on the issue before Christmas 2017. This was then postponed to February and then again to June 2018. Jeremy Hunt skilfully passed the hot potato his successor Matt Hancock who has said that the paper will be out this Autumn. We will see.

There have been at least 12 government green papers, white papers and commissions since 1998. All recommendations have been left on the shelf, as politicians dither between politically horrible options: either the Treasury spends much more, or it loads extra means testing and tax rises on exceptionally resistant groups who vote in high numbers. The “solution” is likely to be cheap and far from cheerful.

But the crisis of Adult Social care continues to grow. Care homes have been closing and the number of beds falling since 2015, despite soaring need. Four Seasons, one of the larger providers, has agreed to a restructuring deal, after making a £595m loss for its private equity owner.'

Costs have risen far faster than inflation, making some care homes unsustainable as austerity-hit local authority fees fall, the minimum wage rises and immigration rules tighten, with social care consuming a third of council funds. The full impact of Brexit on staffing is yet to be felt.

A devastating picture of the funding crisis emerges from a report by the King's Fund, Ipsos Mori, the IFS and the Health Foundation, which warns that many care homes now refuse to take state-funded residents. Despite a million more old people, social care cuts of £1.1bn mean 400,000 of those frail enough to qualify now get none at all, dumping many on the NHS. This in turn further turns the screw on NHS finances.

A new analysis by the GMB union has revealed that at least 166,835 people are trapped in debt for their social care. The findings, which are based on freedom of information requests submitted to every council in Britain, also revealed 1,178 people have been taken to court by local authorities for social care debts. The analysis also discovered that more than 78,000 have debt management procedures started against them by their authority for non-payment of social care charges.

The interim report of an independent review of health and social care provision has revealed the pressures on social care are 'even greater' than those faced by the NHS. The report, authored by Lord Darzi for the think tank IPPR, estimated the NHS will require £200bn by 2030 to meet increasing demand, while the social care system needs at a minimum £10bn just to maintain the current level of provision. It also found that even if the necessary funding was provided for health and social care, 'radical reform' would still be required to make it sustainable. The size of the bill explains the reticence of the Government to face up to this crisis.

The engine for the need to inject far more money into the Care system is understood. Age UK has produced a valuable analysis. Increased longevity means more people are living for longer with complex, long-term conditions. Dementia diagnoses are expected to reach 1 million by 2027 and 1.75 million by 2050 increasing pressure on both health and care services. The number of people over the age of 85 is expected to double over the next 20 years.

Funding has not kept pace with increased demand in either the NHS or Adult Care. Under current spending plans, the NHS budget will have increased by an average of 1.1 per cent a year between 2009/10 and 2020/21, compared to a long-term average increase of nearly 4 per cent a year since the NHS was established. Local authority spending on social care fell by 7 per cent in real terms between 2009/10 and 2016/17. As a result, councils have significantly reduced the amount of support available. Tightened eligibility criteria have led to an estimated 25 per cent reduction – more than 400,000 – in the number of older people alone accessing publicly funded care over that period. At the same time service users report being offered smaller packages of care and are being asked to contribute more in charges – including a growing number of people paying 'top-ups'. There has been a quadrupling, to £1.33 billion, of the NHS transfer to social care between 2010/11 and 2015/16.

As a result more than a million adults are now living with some level of unmet need with activities of daily living, including maintaining personal hygiene, assistance to eat and drink and using the toilet. Taking into account instrumental activities of daily living, such as managing medication, this figure rises to over 1.5 million.

Age UK updated the problems in Care homes. Last year 39 per cent of councils had had at least one home care provider cease trading in their area and 44 per cent at least one residential care home. Over the same period 37 per cent of councils had at least

one home care contract 'handed back' as providers withdrew from the local authority funded market.

The systemic crisis in care also impacts on the quality of services. Public satisfaction with services has declined sharply, 41 per cent of people reported being dissatisfied with care services in 2017, a 6 per cent increase since 2016 alone. Service users routinely report difficulties accessing service, concerns about quality of service provision and lack of continuity of care. 1 in 5 social care providers were rated as either inadequate or requiring improvement by the Care Quality Commission in 2017.

The Government Green Paper is urgently required. But the initial kite flying from Matt Hancock is not reassuring. Neither the setting up of a Care ISA nor some future insurance scheme scratches the surface of this unfolding disaster.

[Julian Atkinson.](#)



Chesterfield May Day March, 2018

2. Closures, cuts and chaos in FE.

The financial and ideological degradation of further education in the Nottingham region continues to erupt as a symptomatic rash. Nottingham College's decision to close its Basford Hall nursery is just one indication that the notion of further education as a community resource now seems to belong to a bygone era. The nursery, highly rated by Ofsted, was a popular resource for staff, students, and local parents but it was axed by a locally unaccountable Board of Governors in July who claimed that it was losing £100k pa. The figures have been strongly disputed by local MP's Alex Norris and Chris Leslie, Council leader Jon Collins, and a vigorous local campaign which was supported by local unions and the Labour Party. Despite face-to-face appeals the college Principal John van der Laarschot has refused to budge and even failed to attend a public meeting at which he could have listened to the

appeals of local people, despite promising to attend. The council itself is furious, especially as it has a large sum of money invested in the creation of the new college hub in the city centre and is itself a large user of the service. This sorry tale is one more sign of the increasing divorce from public accountability of billions of pounds of public money across the sector. In Nottingham city alone £80m is in the hands of an unelected Board which is clearly not minded to consider the local impact of its policies. Those involved in the campaign have now turned their energies to convene a summit or conference to discuss working with the City Council to shape how FE as a public service is organised and delivered and to feed into Labour Party manifesto policies on education.

During the summer, further redundancies were made at Nottingham College. In particular some A level subjects at the High Pavement sixth form centre were axed and some staff were made compulsorily redundant. The A level staff believe that High Pavement will only survive for a couple more years as a result of the change of priorities in FE, whereby only vocational courses are valued. As the curriculum offer shrinks, the college becomes less attractive to students. Many staff, especially science teachers have left for higher salaries in schools and HE. Across the whole of the college morale is low and staff again bemoan the lack of tools to do a professional job. For example UCU members have reported that a recent network outage (outrage!) left staff unable to perform basic functions such as printing and copying. These are not isolated stories but still regular occurrences. As one pithily noted, it is a relief to know that management have at least got the basics sorted - the logo and lanyards in site specific colours and, if you can get onto the network, someone has kindly drafted a helpsheet on how to write an email, including the typeface and print size you need to use to be brand-compliant!

Meanwhile, the college bosses' organisation the AoC seemingly has had an epiphany and finally started making big noises about FE funding - even to the point of calling for an FE campaign week from Monday 15 to Friday 19 October 2018 and putting out a joint statement with FE unions demanding increased funding, including additional money ring-fenced for pay. All welcome of course, though after years of docility and pay restraint it is tempting to speculate that the AoC is nervous that this year's pay round could get serious and leave them as piggies in the middle. Interestingly, at the time of writing Nottingham College is absent from the list of supporting colleges on the AoC campaign website. We don't suppose JvdL loses too much sleep on his inflated salary but we can only hope

that he gets a wake-up call this autumn as UCU ballots its FE members over national strike action.

Just 12 miles up the road Vision (!) West Notts College has just lost its Principal to a debt crisis. Shortly after an announcement in June of over 80 redundancies the college announced it had debts of £4.5 million, which has left it going cap-in-hand for a bail out. It is not clear at this point what the precise cause of these huge losses has been, but even if financial mismanagement is an issue it is mismanagement in the context of severe cuts. 100+ FTE posts are currently at risk of redundancy and the retiring Principal is quoted as saying that “job losses are unavoidable” as a result of fall in numbers of 16-18 year old students and the change in apprenticeship organisation and funding, which allows training organisations to access funding directly from the Education and Skills Funding Agency, thus further undermining the role of FE colleges in the community. Meanwhile the Education Select Committee has very recently hammered the quality of apprenticeships from pretty much every angle UCU could have predicted. Poor quality, opaque contracting out, rip-off management fees, lack of scrutiny, a poor record on equality, low wages, a lack of bursary support and little in the way of planned progression routes. We'd like to say we made it all up, but.....

Paul Wilkinson and Margaret Davies

3. National Pensioners Convention



One of the Branch's stated roles is to “represent the interests of retired members within the union”, which we do by sending delegates to Regional Committee, the Retired Members Conference, the Equalities Conference and the annual Congress. However, we also “represent the interests of retired union members within the wider union and pensioner movements”. As well as participating in Chesterfield, Nottingham, Mansfield & Notts Trades Councils and the Midlands TUC Pensioner Network, we are also affiliated to the East Midlands National Pensioners Convention (NPC). UCU nationally also maintains links and one of our past presidents, Norman Jemison, is currently a Vice President.

The NPC was initiated by Jack Jones, retiring General Secretary of the T&GWU, who saw the need for an umbrella organisation of affiliated groups, as well as trade union retired branch members, to co-ordinate and campaign. With the backing of the TUC, the first convention took place in June 1979 and adopted a declaration of intent that, “...every pensioner has the right to choice, dignity, independence and security as an integral and valued member of society”. It has grown to cover about 1.5 million older people in over 1000 different UK organisations.

The NPC stages an annual Pensioners Parliament in Blackpool, attended by up to 1000 representatives. This year it will help launch a counter-campaign against the lies that “pensioners have never had it so good” and to expose the real causes of so-called generational inequality.

It runs national campaigns on a wide range of issues affecting older people, for example on: decent state pensions (a major struggle given that the UK has some of the lowest state pensions in the 27 OECD countries); universal benefits; a national care service (integrating medical and social care services); accessible transport (including defending the bus pass); ending fuel poverty; uniting the generations. There is a monthly activists' bulletin, “*Campaign*”, which is available on the website.

Such campaigns are supported by a superb range of research and policy papers. These are also the ammunition that the NPC uses to back up its lobbying activities. It regularly responds and submits evidence to consultations from the government, select committees and inquiries. They are too comprehensive to list here, but this link enables access to all of them - <https://www.npcuk.org/research-and-reports>.

Much of the strength of the organisation comes from the work of affiliated organisations, members of which work locally to promote NPC campaigns. The regular regional meetings of the NPC are currently held at the Mechanics Institute in Nottingham at which reports of local and national activity are taken and discussed. For example, the last meeting in July was addressed by Dr Sally Ruane of De Montford University and Save our NHS Leicestershire and led to a healthy debate about how we can best raise public awareness and challenge the NHS cuts and privatisation. There was also a discussion of positive activities that had taken place during the Bus campaign.



The NPC has managed to establish itself as a body that cannot be ignored by national and local government and it is unique. In its own words, it is “...the only national campaign group in the country which is run by pensioners for pensioners.” It needs our support and we should think of how we can do so in our own localities and social networks, for the sake of each other and tomorrow’s older people.

Angus McLardy

4. An update on the USS dispute

As colleagues will be aware pensions details, while being pivotal to our members, both in work and retired, are complex and technical once one goes beneath the surface. In this article, through careful quoting from USS briefs and UCU, I have attempted to provide a reasonably concise and objective summary of the current situation.

The USS Joint Expert Panel (JEP) was established in May 2018 by UCU and Universities UK (UUK) after sustained strike action, with each side appointing three panellists and agreeing mutually on an independent chair. UUK and USS had argued for months that the Scheme was seriously in deficit and significant changes to member benefits and/or contributions were unavoidable. UCU and many outside observers argued that the projected deficit either did not exist or was much smaller than USS and UUK claimed. On 13th September 2018 the JEP

published its first report on the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), dealing with USS’s controversial 2017 valuation.

The Panel unanimously recommends four areas where adjustments to the valuation should be considered:

1. A re-evaluation of the employers' attitude to risk, which would result in a re-evaluation of the reliance on the sponsor covenant.
2. Adopting a greater consistency of approach between the 2014 and 2017 valuations, which affects the scale and timing of deficit recovery contributions.
3. Ensuring fairness and equality between generations of scheme members by smoothing future service contributions.
4. Ensuring the valuation uses the most recently available information which means taking account of recent market improvements, new investment considerations and the latest data on mortality, for example.

In addition, greater weight should be given to the unique features and strengths of the higher education sector. The Panel believes the combined effect of these changes would satisfy the employers' overall appetite for (lack of) risk as well as members' desire to maintain broadly comparable benefits and would provide a constructive negotiating space for the stakeholders to reach a consensus on the way forward. It is the view of the Panel that the changes proposed are consistent with the Trustee's fiduciary duties and the objectives of the Pensions Regulator and provide an opportunity to resolve the dispute.

Adjustments in each of these areas would have a material impact on the valuation and resulting contribution increases. The level of benefits is a matter for the stakeholders to negotiate. However, it is the Panel's belief, based on independent actuarial analysis, that the full implementation of these adjustments could mean total required contributions estimated at 29.2% to fund current benefits (minus the 1% match). This compares to the current rate of 26% (18% of salary paid by employers, 8% by employees) and the rate of 36.6% from April 2020 which is proposed by USS, based on the valuation as it stands.

The JEP also looked in detail at the methodology, assumptions and tests employed by the Trustee, and particularly at USS's 'Test 1' which underpins the 2017 valuation. In the Panel's view this test has assumed too much weight in determining the valuation.

Although its cautious headline conclusions imply that there is still a small deficit in the Scheme, the JEP's report overall shows that a zero-deficit assessment of USS could easily be reached within the current regulatory framework. In that sense, it not only vindicates but for the most part surpasses positions taken and offers made by UCU during the industrial dispute. It also implies that new valuation regimes do not have to spell the demise of Defined Benefit (DB) pension schemes.

In order to achieve genuine change, employers will have to be prevailed upon to do several things: first, to help UCU convince the USS Trustee to adopt the JEP report's modest recommendations. Employers caused the dispute, and the JEP has not asked them to take responsibility, much less compensate members: they could consider themselves fortunate to escape with some lightly modified risk parameters and a cheaper valuation. Secondly, and more importantly, UCU must press UUK to create new checks and balances that bolster member representation while limiting the autonomy and influence of the Scheme Executive, the Trustee, and the sponsors. For now, we must remember that the JEP's first report is the first step in this stage of the process. UCU will need to continue to fight hard for the principles which the JEP has outlined, in both the shorter and the longer term.

UCU's superannuation working group (SWG) met on 18th September 2018 to consider the JEP report. After a wide ranging discussion the SWG welcomed it as a significant and impressive piece of work. The SWG has thanked the chair of the JEP and members of the panel for the speed with which they undertook the task and for the report's findings and unanimous recommendations.

The SWG agreed the following position in regards to the JEP report and recommendations. SWG:

- endorses the JEP report and its recommendations as basis for negotiations
- looks forward to UUK and USS making the same commitment
- encourages UCU branches to consider the report and recommendations and to seek the views of members
- encourages branches to raise the report with their vice-chancellor or principal and encourage them to support the report.
- looks forward to the JEP continuing its work on phase two of the agreed process.

So, what do we conclude? There is much to welcome here and, in summary, it is "so far, so good" but there is still a long way still to go. For

more information, start at the UCU website and USSbriefs at ussbriefs.com.

[Rob Kirkwood](#)

5. Suffragettes Remembered, Deeds not Words

Modern feminism and the demand for the Rights of Women, has a long history back to and before the French Revolution. It has been suggested that this was strongly linked to the range of changes brought about by social and economic changes during and continuing from industrial revolution and urbanisation in the late 18th Century.

One hundred years on, after voting rights were secured for women Dr Helen Pankhurst, a prominent senior advisor with Care International, currently working around the world to save lives, fight poverty and help women and girls fulfil their potential, is a great-granddaughter of suffragette Emmeline. She is still fighting the continuing battle for equality.

Helen Pankhurst is passionate about continuing the legacy started by her great grandmother and grandmother (Sylvia Pankhurst). Growing up in Ethiopia and witnessing the strength and subordination of women, she formed her own feminist thoughts at an early age. She says, "I could have run away and done something different. I could have changed my surname on marriage, but I chose not to. We need to keep fighting; whether it's equality in the workplace, childcare, violence against women, abortion rights and girls not being allowed access to education, to name but a few. She sees them as all part of one battle: "I feel that progress on women's equality has gone into reverse, cuts are disproportionately impacting on women's lives." She also argues that there are more opportunities to do things in different ways in terms of women's work and personal lives and more female role models but that traditional sexist norms endure and often define women's lives:" the massive resistance to change remains"

In a new book, Helen Pankhurst explores the story of women's rights then and now. In her presentation at Wigtown Book Festival recently, she outlined ways in which she has written about important aspects of the struggle towards equality both in the past and today, exploring issues of politics, money, identity, violence and power, considering what has been achieved so far and what the future may hold. Relevant, and interesting quotes from real women both in the book and at the discussion following the presentation, illustrate the points she makes.



6. Mansfield, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Trades Council Report

4th September, GMB, Nottingham

Council discussed Alan Tuckman's book, "Kettling the Unions".

Council also expressed its support for the Nottinghamshire Mining Museum, 'By the People – For the People' coal mining nationalisation exhibition, which is at the East Unit of Mansfield Railway Station, NG18 1LP, on Fridays and Saturdays until Friday, 30th November. Schools have priority on a Friday, so Friday visitors should check the Nottinghamshire Mining Museum Facebook page before attending.

Support was given to the Barton's bus drivers' strike, which was taking place on a Monday each week. Council donated £50 to the strike fund. A general discussion took place on the need to oppose the growth of racism. Council agreed to support the Unity Demonstration against Racism and Fascism, which would take place in London on 17th November. This demonstration had the unanimous support of the TUC. Support was also given to the Basford Nursery closure campaign.

Council also sent messages of support to 4,500 shipyard workers in Croatia, on strike for non-payment of wages.

2nd October, Notts NUM Ex and Retired Miners Offices, Mansfield

Council discussed the Officers report regarding affiliations and future actions to be taken. Arrangements were agreed regarding a coach to the demonstration to be held outside the Tory Party Conference.

Council expressed its support for the campaign to oppose the closure of the Skegness Miners' Convalescent Home.

Further discussions were held regarding the 17th November Unity Demonstration opposing the rise of Racism and Fascism. Council agreed a donation of £100 to support a bus to the demonstration departing from Mansfield, as well as a bus from Nottingham. Council would seek funding for these coaches from donations from affiliates.

Agreed in principle to hold a Nottingham Anti Austerity protest on Saturday, January 26th. Delegates purchased raffle tickets for the International Brigades Memorial Trust. Mention

For example, in the section on Politics, she quotes Frances Scott calling for a gender-based parliament: "We cannot have men dominating the corridors of power for another century". Helen reminds us of the Women's Liberation Movement in the 1960s, whose demands included "equal pay, equal education and opportunities, twenty-four hour nurseries, free contraception and abortion on demand" and also suggests this movement led to further political activism and a "profusion of feminist writing ...", which "raised consciousness and fostered a language that remains current today".

On the EU she says "the EU has been good for women because of hard campaigning by women's organisations ... pushing for gender equality". Interestingly she also says "Writing about half the population of Great Britain over a century ... has been fascinating, but also painful."

"Deeds not Words, The Story of Women's Rights Then and Now"

By Helen Pankhurst

"English Feminism 1780 – 1980" by Barbara Caine

Rowena Dawson and Judy Wills

was made of Emily Thornberry's speech at the Labour Party Conference, invoking the heroism of the International Brigades in the fight against racism and fascism.

Barry Donlan

7. UCU Retired Members Branch

Our branch has been meeting since 2008 and now has over 300 members. Our aims are listed below. We meet three times a year, often in places of interest to make part of a day out. Meetings focus on important issues for UCU pensioners and provide a chance to talk with other retired members.

A termly newsletter with articles of interest to retired UCU members is e-mailed to all branch members for whom we have addresses and to UCU branch secretaries in the East Midlands and to other RMBs.

Please let us have your personal e-mail address and let us know if it changes.

RMB Roles and Functions

- To represent the interests of retired members within the union.
- To represent the interests of retired union members within the wider union and pensioner movements.
- To provide a forum within the union for retired members to come together to consider and debate matters of mutual interest.
- To provide a resource of collective memory, advice and expertise in support of the union, in particular to those still in active employment.

- To provide active support, where appropriate, by involving the broadest section of the branch in support of the wider interests of the union and its members, including support for those still in active employment.

For more information

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