

Barnsley Social Care

Summer 2018
www.unison-barnsley.org.uk

matters

for UNISON members in Social Care

UNISON Campaign - Scrap the National Accreditation and Assessment System

UNISON is campaigning for the Government's controversial National Assessment and Accreditation System (NAAS) to be scrapped. The system is being rolled out in 3 phases. Barnsley is in the third phase roll out in 2020.

At the UNISON local government conference in June, speakers called for a boycott of the government's controversial plans. At a time when children's services are experiencing a funding shortfall of £600m, the government is giving £23m to private companies – including private construction company Mott MacDonald – to devise, carry out and oversee tests.

Delegate after delegate spoke out against the assessments, which they said would add to the pressures faced by social workers without bringing any benefits.

Members can support UNISON's campaign by:

- Watching and sharing the campaign video
<https://unison.org.uk/our-campaigns/stand-social-work>
- Sign our online petition www.unison.org.uk/naas

Social Work England

The Government is moving ahead with the development of Social Work England as the new independent regulator for social workers. As well as maintaining a fitness to practice register the new body will have a major role in career development and education. Attached is information about the new regulator. UNISON is working with the shadow body to ensure members' interests are represented. Please see attached fact sheets.

Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Social Care Forum

We are looking for a member to attend the UNISON Regional Social Care Forum on behalf of the Barnsley branch. The main purpose of the forum is to provide a focus for discussion on matters that affect staff working in the broad field of social care. As such, important issues are covered on the agenda. The branch already has a delegate from adult social care, we are also entitled to send a member employed in children's social care. The forum meets three times a year, the next meeting will be on **7 November** at the UNISON Regional Office in Leeds.

If you are interested in attending or would like more details, please do get in touch, our contact details are:

CONTACT US

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Recruit a Friend Scheme

How would you like to earn £15 to spend at the shops every time you help strengthen your union's voice? With the branch's 'Recruit a Friend' Scheme, you can earn £15 for every new member who joins UNISON on your recommendation.

Application forms should be available on the noticeboards in your workplace for you to pass to friends or colleagues. Extra forms and freepost envelopes can be requested by emailing the Branch Office. Please write your name and membership number clearly on the top of all completed application forms so we can tell who you have recruited and ensure all forms are returned to the Branch Office address on page 1.

The more people join UNISON, the stronger your union becomes. Research shows the biggest reason people don't join a union is "No one asked me". A union is only as strong as its membership. The more members we have, the stronger we become, the more protection we can offer to you, your colleagues and your family.

You might find the following helpful when recruiting and organising social workers:



UNISON has long been the principal trade union for social workers and social care staff and is affiliated to the TUC

UNISON has over 40,000 social workers in membership working across the whole range of social work employers, including local authorities, NHS Trusts, the voluntary sector, agencies, CAF/CASS and the care regulators. So we understand the particular issues you face

Our 1200 branches and 25,000 trained local representatives provide individual advice and representation to social workers. They are backed up by UNISON officials in our 12 regional offices and negotiating and specialist staff at head office. We have a **professional registration unit** to represent you on professional registration issues with your regulator

UNISON is recognised for collective bargaining purposes within local government, the NHS or the voluntary sector. This means we negotiate your pay increases, pensions and your conditions of employment at national and local levels. The British Association of Social Workers and its offshoot the Social Work Union - has been the 'professional' social workers' organisation. The Social Work Union is not affiliated to the TUC or recognised for collective bargaining purposes within local government, the NHS or the voluntary sector

UNISON is a leading campaigner in promoting and defending social work. Current issues include: the new National Assessment and Accreditation System, the establishment of Social Work England and privatisation of social work

We believe it's important that social workers are part of a trade union which also has the broader social work and social care 'team' in membership. Many of the issues affecting social workers are derived from austerity and broader local government changes and are impacted by the treatment of a wide range of employees, including admin, care assistants, home care workers and occupational therapists. All of these are represented by UNISON

We're also experienced in representing students, whether they are student youth workers, student social workers or student nurses

Sleep-ins and Commissioning

As you may be aware, the Court of Appeal recently overturned previous legal decisions and found that those workers engaged on 'sleep in' shifts are to be treated as being 'available for work' as opposed to working time. There is more background on this decision here:

<https://www.unison.org.uk/news/press-release/2018/07/sleep-shifts-judgment-huge-mistake/>

Consequently, there is concern among the care workforce that some councils will use this ruling as an opportunity to return to previous practice of paying care workers a nominal lump sum for sleep-in shifts. UNISON believes that doing this carries serious reputational risks for councils and would be an irresponsible attack on the incomes of already low paid care workers. Taking such a step also presupposes that the matter has been settled legally, which it has not.

UNISON has made an application to the Supreme Court for permission to appeal the decision in the sleep-in case. Whilst we await a definitive legal decision UNISON Barnsley, as a local government branch, will be vigilant to any changes in commissioning practices at the council. In particular, any moves to return to lump sum payments which do not take account of National Minimum Wage payment for sleep-in shifts will be strongly resisted.



Maintaining pay levels is important, not least because of increasingly high levels of turnover in the care sector fuelled by a failure to pay and treat staff fairly. These turnover rates are having a significant impact on the quality of care that is being delivered.

UNISON is aware that many councils are experiencing significant financial difficulties which is why we are lobbying the Government, alongside the LGA, ahead of the November budget for more money to be given to local councils.

Workplace Representatives needed in Social Care

Currently in Barnsley Council there is no UNISON workplace representative within Children's Social Care (Business Unit Three) or Adult Social Care (Business Unit Two). The Branch has been providing representation and advice from the branch office and will continue to do so, but there is no substitute for a workplace representative as naturally you know the job and the issues better than anyone.

UNISON has high membership density in the People directorate and there is potential to have several representatives with paid facilities time to receive training and carry out Trade Union duties. Where there is an organised workforce there is a healthier, happier workforce. We know that Social Workers already have a demanding role, but being a UNISON representative is a voluntary role, full training is provided and you will receive support from experienced branch officers and reps.

If you are interested in becoming a representative, please give the Branch Office a call or an email (see page 1) and we can provide you with more information.

Rest Breaks - Know your Rights

Workers over 18 are entitled to 3 types of break – rest breaks at work, daily rest and weekly rest.

Rest breaks at work

You have the right to a 20 minute rest break during your working day, if you work more than 6 hours a day. This could be a tea or lunch break. The break doesn't have to be paid – it depends on your employment contract.

Daily rest

You have the right to 11 hours rest between working days, e.g. if you finish work at 8pm, you shouldn't be asked to start work again until 7am the next day.

Weekly rest

Workers have the right to either:

- an uninterrupted 24 hours without any work each week
- an uninterrupted 48 hours without any work each fortnight

If there are instances where you are unable to take your break, then you should be given the time off at a later point as compensatory rest.

UNISON's Ethical Care Charter

UNISON's Ethical Care Charter is a simple way for councils to improve homecare for the vulnerable people they are responsible for. It is a set of commitments that councils make which fix minimum standards that will protect the dignity and quality of life for those people and the workers who care for them.

Here are some very simple reasons why councils should sign up to the care charter

- It will save money
- It will reduce staff turnover rates
- Vulnerable people deserve dignity and respect
- Care workers deserve dignity and respect

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