

Welcome to the Barnsley There for You newsletter

April 2020

In this edition

- Latest news from your branch welfare officer
- How There for You helps members
- Get involved
- Join the UNISON lottery
- UNISON Debtline
- Employability Support
- Let's talk

Latest news from your branch welfare officer



Hello to you all, a little message of support from Catharyn Lawrence your new Branch Welfare Officer.

I am so delighted to be working with our branch. I have been an active member of UNISON since it was established in 1993, I was a member of NALGO before that. I currently teach at The Northern College as Trade Union Studies Organiser.

I have so many fabulous experiences to share with you. I have been employed by UNISON many times as a member of staff nationally and also for our Yorkshire & Humberside Region. I started out as a member working as a Nursery Nurse, becoming very active as a lay member, chair of UNISON National Womens Committee, chairing endless conferences latest one in 2000! Time flies when you are having fun.

I really believe in UNISON I am a product of its success. I really believe that if I hadn't got involved all those years ago I would still be a Nursery Nurse, thanks to UNISON & TUC Training I do what I love, teaching my Trade Union Representatives, empowering others to get involved and be proactive.

As your Branch Welfare Officer you can trust me, please do contact me if you want to find out how UNISON Welfare can help you! We have There For You, which really does make a difference by guiding you through what you may consider to be difficult times. "Remember it's not just words! It's our own charity to actually do what it's says - be there for you!"

I knew at the Annual General meeting that this role should NOT remain vacant, little did I know then how much some of you will really value and benefit.

Take care and you can contact me at 07540 766350 or catharynlawrence@unisonbarnsleylg.org

How There for You helps UNISON members

Cath applied for help with funeral costs for her partner.

The current coronavirus restriction mean there will only be a private cremation.

But Cath is hoping to have a memorial service at a later date so that her young son can say goodbye properly to his dad.

There for You has made a grant to cover cremation costs, and an additional grant to help with living costs.

Anika lives with her two adult children in a housing association property.

there for you

supporting UNISON members
when life gets tough

She was already struggling after her benefits and child maintenance were stopped when her youngest turned 20. Her income just about pays bills and everyday costs.

She recently returned from her first trip abroad in years and was in self isolation, having been told by employer not to return to work for 14 days.

She is now back at work but has lost two weeks money which will hit her April pay.

Anika is afraid of falling behind with household bills, which is giving her anxiety, because of a monthly shortfall of around £328.

There for You has been able to help with an immediate financial grant.

Get involved – it's your charity after all

Your Barnsley branch committee has recently donated £1,000 to There for You to help members like yourselves who are going through difficult times. Although we recognise that opportunities for fundraising are limited at the current time, we will update you throughout the year.



Join the UNISON Lottery

Show your support for There for You and make a huge difference to the lives of members who through no fault of their own are struggling. Join the UNISON Lottery today and be in with the chance of winning a great cash prize. Join online unison.charitylotteries.co.uk



UNISON lottery
supporting our charity **There for You**

Check your benefits

Billions of pounds in welfare benefits go unclaimed every year. Check your benefits TODAY. The UNISON online benefits checker is an easy to use tool that could make all the difference www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/tax-credits-and-universal-credit/

UNISON Debtline

Managing your finances can be tough. No one plans to get into debt but when the unexpected happens, making ends meet can suddenly become much harder. You can get back in charge by contacting UNISON Debtline, our confidential debt advice service operated through our partners at Payplan. Advisers understand the impact that debt can have on your life and will talk you through the various options available to help you as well as advise on budgeting.

For immediate debt advice call free on 0800 389 3302 today. UNISON Debtline is open 8am-9pm weekdays and 9am-3pm Saturdays.

Employability support

During these difficult times, many people in Barnsley are unfortunately facing uncertainty about their current and future employment. To address this and to support the community, the employment and skills team in Barnsley Council have developed a simple, single point of contact to make it easier to speak to someone and access the free support available to residents who may have been:

- Furloughed
- Laid off/unemployed
- Are at risk of redundancy
- Looking to develop or grow skills

Barnsley Council's Employment and Skills service has joined forces with Enterprising Barnsley and other employment support providers to make it easier for residents in Barnsley to access employment and skills support. The **Barnsley Employment Helpdesk** provides a simple single point of contact for all residents of Barnsley who would like to speak to someone and access support. The aim is to respond to enquiries on the same day with a referral to support within 24 hours.

- Support can be accessed through the website and its webchat function: <https://www.enterprisingbarnsley.co.uk/support-for-employment/>
- Or, directly through the email address: employmentsupport@barnsley.gov.uk

Let's talk

If you or someone you know is in need of help or support please call for a confidential chat:

- Catharyn Lawrence – Branch Welfare Officer Tel: 07540 766350, email: catharynlawrence@unisonbarnsleylg.org
- Branch Office – Tel: 01226 772988 email: branchoffice@unisonbarnsleylg.org

If I'm not available, leave a message – I'll normally get back to you within a couple of days.

Alternatively, call or email There for You



020 7121 5620



thereforyou@unison.co.uk

