



# Member's Guide

## Nottinghamshire County Branch 2016-17

your friend at work



### **Notts UNISON**

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West Bridgford

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Nottinghamshire UNISON

## Introduction

This is your Guide to who's who and what's what in Notts County UNISON. As a Branch, we are totally committed to the principle of the "member-led union", so it's important that everyone knows where they fit in and feels at home – it may not seem like it sometimes, but this really is your union!

If the Branch is going to operate efficiently and be truly representative of our membership, everyone needs to play their part, whether it's by volunteering to become a UNISON steward or just by attending members' meetings and voting in elections. After all, if you don't, why should anyone else ... ?

While we represent members and deal with emergencies at work, we are not a firm of solicitors or the AA. Besides myself, and other than Mick Alderson, who represents our members in the Private and Voluntary sector, all of our activists are volunteer stewards and Branch Officers who have been elected to a union post while also doing a job for their employer. Without a steady stream of new volunteers – as others leave or retire – the union could not do any of the things it needs to.

UNISON is a democracy in which every member plays an equal part – and unlike Parliament or the Council, you are the ones who can make or change policy. Whether you enjoy your job or not, it is an important part of your life and you will have an opinion on it. We want to hear it, so come along and Make A Difference!

*Jo Myers*  
**Jo Myers**  
**Branch Organiser**

## Who's in the Branch

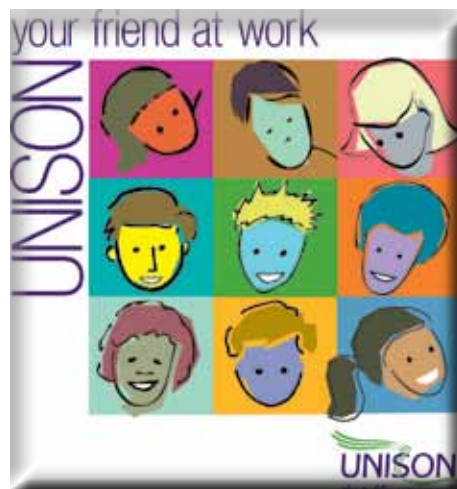
Our Branch is one of the biggest – and strongest! – in UNISON. We have almost 9,000 members, of which the majority work for Notts County Council. The second biggest sector is Education, with members in Academies and FE Colleges, followed by the Private and Voluntary Sector, and the Fire and Rescue Service.

## Departmental/Local Organisation

Most questions and problems relate to members' own jobs or workplace, so our organisation is concentrated at Departmental and local level. We aim to recruit a Steward (ie local representative) in each workplace and one per 20 members in larger workplaces. Included with your membership pack and this guide is a separate list with the names and phone numbers of all the Stewards in your Department or Sector.



Each Steward attends a Stewards' Committee, which discusses issues particular to her/his Department or Sector and each Stewards' Committee elects a Convenor and Senior Stewards to make sure that members are represented and negotiations are pursued with management as necessary. If you can't contact your Steward (or don't have one) these are the next people in line.



# Central Branch Organisation

With such a big Branch, there is lots of work to do and we have our own Branch Office. The address is:

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E-Mail: [branch.office@nottsunison.org.uk](mailto:branch.office@nottsunison.org.uk) Branch website: [www.nottsunison.org.uk](http://www.nottsunison.org.uk)

Based at the Branch Office are eight Branch Staff and the majority of the “core” Branch Officers and Convenors – these are also listed below.

### **Branch Officers**

|                                      |                                   |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Branch Secretary -</b>            | Rosie Bartram                     |
| <b>Branch Chair -</b>                | Brian Fitzpatrick and James Minto |
| <b>Service Conditions Officer -</b>  | Tina Carnachan                    |
| <b>Asst Secretary -</b>              | Gail Flack                        |
| <b>Vice Chair -</b>                  | Everton Lewis-Gordon              |
| <b>Equalities Officer -</b>          | James Minto                       |
| <b>Health &amp; Safety Officer -</b> | Everton Lewis-Gordon              |

### **Departmental Convenors**

#### **County Council**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Adult Social Care, Health &amp; Public Protection</b> | Brian Fitzpatrick  |
| <b>Children, Families &amp; Cultural Services</b>        | James Minto - Social Work<br>Hazel Allister/Lorraine Maddison<br>- Schools                 |
| <b>Place</b>   | Everton Lewis-Gordon   |
| <b>Resources</b>   | Gael Ellis - Catering Cleaning and Landscapes<br>Richard Downing - Highways                |
| <b>Further Education -</b>                               | We have stewards in all the Colleges, supported by Jo Myers, (Branch Organiser)            |
| <b>Fire and Rescue Service -</b>                         | We have stewards at Bestwood Lodge and elsewhere, supported by Jo Myers (Branch Organiser) |
| <b>Private and Voluntary/Charity Sector -</b>            | Contact Mick Alderson (Branch PVS Officer)   |
| <b>Fighting Fund Local Organiser -</b>                   | Debbie Kitt Geraghty   |

Nottinghamshire UNISON

## What does UNISON do?

The union may take up any issue to do with your work or affecting your work – it's as wide as that. We can't guarantee to solve every problem, but you will get expert advice. Below are some examples:

- \* Disciplinary/criminal allegations relating to your work
- \* Sexual/racial harassment or bullying
- \* Grievances over work-related issues
- \* Grading of posts and Job Evaluation
- \* Health and Safety issues/accidents/stress
- \* Unreasonable demands by managers
- \* Financial and other Welfare problems

As well as representing individual members, UNISON also negotiates your Conditions of Service at local level and pay at national level. Your HR policies contain the results of these negotiations.

UNISON is the key union on the negotiating panel with every employer where we are recognised. We also have face to face negotiations with smaller employers over particular issues.

We can obtain expert legal advice as necessary and will provide free legal representation when the situation requires.





# Equality and Self-Organisation

Ever since it was formed, UNISON has had equality squarely at the top of its agenda – and our organisation reflects this.

About 75% of our members are women and our “Proportionality” policy is designed to get us to the position where women play the major role in the union. As you will see from the list of Branch Officers, Convenors and Senior Stewards, there are a lot of women’s names – but we still have some way to go to achieve our aim.

There are a number of groups of members within UNISON who feel at a disadvantage in getting involved and, to combat this feeling of exclusion, there are four “Self-Organised Groups” operating at Branch and/or Regional and National level. These are for:

**Black Members.....**

**Disabled Members.....**

**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Members.....**

**Women Members.....**

The groups decide for themselves what they are going to do and feed ideas and proposals into the Branch Committee as they wish. Each group has an Officer to co-ordinate activities (see next page).



# Branch Equalities Officer

**James Minto**  
Tel: 0115 981 0405



## **Black Members Officer**

James Minto  
Tel: 0115 981 0405



## **Disabled Members Officer**

Brian Fitzpatrick  
Tel: 0115 981 0405



## **Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Members Officer**

Phil Smith  
Tel: 0115 981 0405



## **Women Members Officer**

Natalie Bryan  
Tel: 0115 981 0405

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## PS.....

This, in a nutshell, is your UNISON Branch. As it says above, the Branch is run by volunteers who feel strongly about right and wrong and believe that everyone should be treated fairly and with respect.

The most experienced Branch Officer started off as an ordinary member like you. For those who are interested in getting involved, we have a programme of training and time off with pay is allowed for union activities. **Many of the 1,500 or so workplaces we cover do not currently have a UNISON Steward and your Convenor or a Branch Officer would be happy to discuss what becoming more active in the union would mean to you. Alternatively you could 'phone the Branch office for an information leaflet.**



Whether you're part-time or full-time, a woman or a man, you shouldn't underestimate what you can contribute: this really is your opportunity to Make A Difference!

