

Branch Retired Members Officer - Report to AGM 2018

The Dundee City Unison Retired Members Section has in excess of 250 members. Between 20 and 30 of these members attend our monthly meetings.

Our section has been in existence for nearly 30 years. It began during the old Tayside Region and when this converted to district councils the retired members from Dundee City, Angus and Perth remained as one section. Perth eventually broke away, leaving Dundee City and Angus Retired Members Section. This has been the set up for the last twenty years. The section had a difficult year in 2017. As reported at the last AGM we still have problems with both attendance at our monthly meetings and lack of volunteers to serve on our committee. The situation was improved by members from Angus and NHS Tayside Unison, who do not have active RM Sections, starting to attend our meetings and serve on our committee. However, last year we were advised by regional office that only Dundee City Unison members can serve on such a committee. The result was that our last AGM was not quorate and there were only three nominees for our committee. These three volunteers have agreed to continue to run the section while we try to recruit more members and committee members. Thanks go to Angus members who are still assisting us on an informal basis.

In spite of these difficulties we, with a great deal of help from the branch office, produce eight editions annually of a newsletter which is collated/ partly written by our editor and is then printed and mailed out to 250 plus Dundee City members.. Angus branch receives an e-copy which they distribute to their 72 retired members. Dundee City Archivist and Unison Scotland Website are also copied into this publication.

Another service the section provides is to visit Dundee members who are ill in hospital and/or at home. We also organised a successful trip to Edinburgh in June 2017 and a Xmas Party in December in the Queens Hotel. Member feedback indicates that they greatly value what our section provides. Our committee see this work as complementing the community support the Branch gives to, for example, to the food bank, women's organisations, anti racism campaigns and Dundee Together. Our section also tries to support the branch in its campaigns, demonstrations and lobbies.

Our monthly meetings consists of a guest speaker followed by information sharing on issues affecting retired people, ending with tea and biscuits and good conversation. We try to get a variety of speakers to suit all tastes. I hope we achieved this with our speakers in 2017. These included Moira Foster on Dundee Women's' Trail, Lorcan Mullan on The Challenges Facing Working Unison Members, Peter Nurik on the V&A, Fraser Crichton on the Development of Electric Vehicle use in Dundee and Dr Sarah Browne on her research into the History of Women's' Liberation in Dundee. In addition we visited the Kelly Richardson Exhibition in the DCA.

New speakers for 2018 include Ken Kennedy of the British Astronomical Society: Daphne Barbieri ,Film Maker showing films about present day Russia: Iain Flett on the Tay Ferries: and Pamela Munro on Guide Dogs for the Blind. A retired member sits on the Branch Executive Committee. The Branch also helps us to send delegates to both the Scottish and UK Unison Retired Members Conferences.

On a sad note we lost one of our, and Dundee City Unison's, long serving and stalwart members in 2017. Regrettably our much admired, loved, and respected comrade Dan McRae passed away. He will be greatly missed.

We hope that any Unison member nearing retirement will consider joining us. It's only £15 for life membership and this entitles you to continued access to the Unison Plus benefits you currently enjoy and the national Unison newsletter. In addition, the local section gives you a chance to meet like minded people for a chat and cup of tea as well as access to the activities and benefits outlined above.

If you are retiring, membership application forms are available from the Branch Office or stewards. Dundee City Retired Members Section hopes to welcome you to one of our future meetings.

***Ron Kerr
Dundee City Unison
Retired Members Section***