

Summer 2022

LABOUR LINK NEWSLETTER



It's been a busy few months in the East Midlands!

Labour had noticeable successes in May's local elections as the party held Lincoln council, and won seats in Derby to take the council into no overall control. UNISON's Martin Rawson won back Derwent ward too, well done Martin! Labour Link members from the East Midlands also campaigned in Wakefield recently to ensure UNISON's Simon Lightwood was elected as the new MP.

UNISON's national delegate conference took place in June and I was fortunate enough to attend the Labour Link fringe event where Angela Rayner spoke – and as you can see, we grabbed a photo with her too.

As I say, it's been quite a busy period! I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the bulletin and remember that you can reach me on robert.parkinson@leicester.gov.uk.

Robert Parkinson, Chair East Midlands Labour Link

PARLIAMENTARY SELECTIONS

The process to select Labour candidates to fight the next General Election is well underway!

UNISON East Midlands Labour Link would like to congratulate Michael Payne (pictured) on his selection win in Gedling. We were proud to support Michael's campaign and can't wait to see him on the green benches in the House of Commons.

Elsewhere, UNISON East Midlands Labour Link have chosen to support the following candidates:

Adam Wisdich - Derby North, Adam Thompson - Erewash, Jo White - Bassetlaw.

If you'd like to put yourself forward for selection as a prospective parliamentary candidate please contact Rachel Hodson (r.hodson@unison.co.uk) as soon as possible.



BARRY GARDINER MP

The Brent North MP is coming to the East Midlands.

Lincoln Constituency Labour Party are holding a fundraising event with a screening of a 30 minute documentary focusing on "Fire and Rehire" followed by a Q&A with Barry.

Despite many employers using Fire and Rehire and the atrocious behaviour of P&O Ferries sacking 800 of their staff on Zoom, this government continues to refuse to deal with insecurity in employment or to protect workers' rights.

The event is taking place on Thursday 28 July from 6pm at Lincoln Labour Club, Grafton House, LN1 1XJ.

You can get your tickets here: <https://billetto.co.uk/e/against-fire-and-rehire-with-barry-gardiner-mp-tickets-659555/select>



CARERS RIGHTS

Robert Martin is a UNISON Labour Link member and a carer to his disabled son.

The last Labour government set out to defend the rights of vulnerable people with the introduction of the Equalities Act (2010) and the 9 protected characteristics.

Since then, Tory governments have slashed funding for social care and the NHS leading to a crisis in family members having to provide increased amounts of care to loved ones. There are now 6.5 million carers in the UK providing on average 25 hours of care per week and they need the same rights as the people they care for.

I have faced the difficult conversation with my employer, the prison service, when my son's care needs became unbearable whilst holding a full-time job as a prison officer.

This is the point at which I found out that carer's rights are non-existent and began to campaign vigorously for carers rights in my CLP, local authority, UNISON my trade union and taking part in the Labour Party's Future Candidate's Programme.

Carers contribute £132 Billion in savings to social care and the NHS, and for this only receive £69.70 per week. This is plunging them into poverty and making them increasingly reliant on benefits within the workforce. This problem also disproportionately affects women, as 58% of carers are women.

Only a Labour government alongside trade unions can solve this problem, by increasing the rights of carers and helping them maintain their careers through reasonable adjustments (that were not set out in the Equalities Act).

Anti-union laws have also decreased the rights of workers and lead to the most vulnerable being left without adequate representation when it is needed most as I experienced.

I will shortly come back into the workforce as I have retrained as a Nurse, and I hope then to have a Labour government with strong Union laws that will allow me never to have to choose again between my career and my disabled child.

JANET MCKENNA EAST MIDLANDS REP LABOUR LINK

Hello, I'm Janet McKenna and I'm your regional delegate to the National Labour Link Committee.

We have recently held discussions for National Labour Link which activists in our region will find interesting.

We've discussed nominating UNISON representatives for various bodies and organisations including the Labour Party NEC Young Members' Rep – and to the National Policy Forum. I am very happy to say that **Jess McGuire** from our region was nominated as a UNISON delegate to the Young Labour National Committee.

UNISON Labour Link's national forum will be held in York in July. Angela Rayner has been invited as a speaker.

In anticipation of National Labour Link forum, we have agreed Labour Link's national annual report. Among the topics included in the report are the work of TULO (Labour Unions) – including the consensus from all unions on the New Deal for Working People (NDWP) and voter registration. The report will also cover areas such as encouraging retired members to stay involved in Labour Link.

National Labour Link has donated £5000 to MotherRed, which is a time limited project to provide grants to mums eligible to stand as Labour MPs, to cover the costs of their childcare whilst they seek selection.

The hope is that UNISON women will feel encouraged to apply for support.

