

A huge thank you to all those who attended this year's AGM, you will be receiving your £10 Amazon voucher imminently



This year's AGM was attended by over **70 members** over the 2 sessions held on the day.



This year's AGM was attended by over **70 members** over the 2 sessions held on the day.



Nominees elected to branch officer positions and other representative roles:

Chair – **Adelle Flynn**

Secretary – **Nevil Fanibanda**

Treasurer – **Jay Patel**

Disabled Members Officer – **Mickey Kauldhar & Sham Laher**

Equalities Officer – **Shameera Issak & Dharmendra Kara**

Communications Officer – **Imran Ravat**

Membership & Recruitment Officer – **Kam Sandhu**

LGBT+ Officer – **Kel Newbold**

Health & Safety Officer – **Hasmukh Mistry**

Retired Members Officer – **John Merrell**

Workplace reps:

Devan Anand – **07557 038 426**

Nevil Fanibanda – **07785 625 431**

Adelle Flynn – **07557 038 433**

Harjeet Kainth – **07551 625 121**

Hasmukh Mistry – **07557 038 421**

Jay Patel – **07464 677 865**

Kam Sandhu – **07407 712 828**

Unison Learning reps:

Zarina Yakub Patel

Dalya Rabati

(Both newly elected, contact details to be provided in a later edition)

Health & Safety reps:

Kerry Haldane – 07557 038 431

Hasmuck Mistry – 07557 038 421

Branch officer vacancies available:

International officer

Welfare officer

Women's officer

Young members officer

If you are interested in becoming a branch officer, please contact the branch secretary by email:

Nevil.Fanibanda@britisgas.co.uk

Water, Environment, Transport & Energy Equalities Seminar 2024

This year's seminar will take place over 5-7 July in Sheffield

This seminar runs each year and is open to UNISON members in branches across the Energy and WET Service Groups. The event looks to engage members across a series of workshops, panel sessions, practical discussions, group exercises, and presentations from UNISON reps and officers, in a range of areas equalities areas that seek to showcase and advise on how equality work is an essential part of UNISON's bargaining, negotiating and campaigning work, and how this can be taken forward in branches and workplaces. It is also a great opportunity for members and activists to network with others from across branches and the Service Groups, to share experiences and expertise in these areas.

This month's Branch Executive Committee elected 3 branch officers to attend and agreed two opportunities for members to attend. **Those interested should contact Nevil Fanibanda by email no later than mid-day 6th May.**

<https://www.unison.org.uk/events/wet-energy-equalities-seminar-2024/>

John Merrell (Retired Members' Officer) says:

“Unfortunately, our retired members received a partial notification of this year's AGM. I wish to offer on behalf of the Branch Executive Committee a sincere apology and confirm our absolute commitment to ensuring it does not happen again.

It may be appropriate at this time for retired members with internet availability to consider providing the branch with their email address. If you wish to do so, please submit to: **John.merrell@live.co.uk**

There receipt would enable us to facilitate the submission of branch communications in a timely manner to retired and working members.”

Black Members Conference – Jan 2024 report (by Devan Anand)

- Lots of interesting topics brought forward, about the importance of recruiting the next generation of people to become reps (under the age of 30).
- The world has changed so much and some young speakers spoke about the issues they faced in the workplace, including racism through social platforms like Instagram and TikTok etc.
- Only 1% of people report racism, as they are scared of the repercussion in the workplace. Movement brought forward for people, so they can report any issues on racism discreetly and posters given, with a push on a speak up line (I collected some the posters etc for us to use in our office).
- Discrimination against women of BAME being paid less than their white colleagues in the workplace after having children. Motion
- The incorrect use of the sickness policy in the workplace against disabled members.
- Distinction between mental health and mental illness – we all have mental health but not mental illness.
- BAME pay gap – so many horrific racist stories in the workplace.
- Micro aggressions – mispronunciation of names – assumptions of cultural foods and areas, also the assumption of criminal history.

Additional to the topics covered above, the other interesting topic of the conference was the discussion/debate about the way Palestinians are being treated. These conversations became very heated at times, even pausing the conference in moments, as it brought up in so many raw emotions, and was therefore banned from further discussion, although the topic was still touched on by many people. Each time, more people stood up and brought the conversation back to the topic of Palestine, two individuals waved huge Palestine flags, with people shouting from the river to the sea.

Another fantastic turn out and conference at Brighton for Black Members 2024.

Women's Conference – January 2024 report (by Shameera Issak)

I recently had the privilege of attending the National Women's Conference, an event that brought together women from various backgrounds and perspectives to discuss important issues and advocate for positive change. The atmosphere was charged with enthusiasm, and the passion exhibited by the attendees for their beliefs and causes was truly inspiring.

The conference covered a wide range of topics through 49 motions, each representing a distinct concern or proposal. The diversity of issues discussed highlighted the complexity of women's experiences and the need for comprehensive solutions. I talked to many women who cared deeply about their causes. It was inspiring to see their dedication to making positive changes for women.

The conference had an interesting way of deciding which ideas to move forward with. Even though there were 49 ideas, only two would be picked, and it all depended on what everyone voted for. The specific ideas selected were not revealed at that moment since the results were not announced due to the votes not being counted right away.

In addition to my attendance at the National Women's Conference, I had the opportunity to participate in the Energy and WET work meeting, where we all met to discuss pertinent issues within the industry. After talking and discussing a bit, we all agreed on bringing three important things to the big national meeting in June, called the AGM. The topics we decided on are making workplaces more open to different ways of thinking (neurodiversity), finding a good balance between work and personal life, and having the right to take a break from work after regular hours. We still need to figure out the third thing we want to focus on, but that will come later.

It was enlightening to discover that Unison provides complimentary financial advice to its members. A representative from Payplan, a debt advisory service, shared insights into their services, highlighting their support for individuals affected by domestic abuse.

Both meetings were eye-opening. The Women's Conference showed me the diverse challenges women face, while the work meeting highlighted concerns about how we work and the need for positive changes.