

UNISON NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE 2012

CONFERENCE GUIDE

**THE BRIGHTON CENTRE,
BRIGHTON**

16-18 FEBRUARY 2012



the public services union

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1. CONFERENCE TIMETABLE

NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE 2012

TIMETABLE

Women's Conference 2012 - Timetable

Thursday 16 th February		
Time	event	room
1.15pm – 1.45pm	lbt caucus meeting	meeting room 6
1.50pm – 2.20pm	young members' meeting	meeting room 8
2.25pm – 2.40pm	delegates briefing	auditorium 1
2.40pm – 3.50pm	first conference session	auditorium 1
4pm – 5.30pm	<u>seminars</u> welfare end violence against women political out reach international women's progression organising for women pensions	syndicate 1 syndicate 2 syndicate 3 syndicate 4 meeting room 6 meeting room 8 auditorium
5.40pm – 6.10pm	<u>regional delegate meeting</u> eastern east midlands greater london north west scotland south east cymru/wales	meeting room 6 syndicate 4 syndicate 1 auditorium 1 syndicate 2 syndicate 3 meeting room 8
6.10pm – 6.40pm	northern northern ireland south west west midlands yorkshire & humberside	syndicate 1 meeting room 6 syndicate 2 meeting room 6 syndicate 3

Friday 17th February		
time	Event	room
9.30am – 11.10	second conference session	auditorium 1
11.15 – 12 Noon	<u>service group meetings</u> local government health education & children's services police and justice community business and environment	auditorium 1 syndicate 1 syndicate 2 syndicate 3 syndicate 4 meeting room 6
12.10 – 12.40pm	<u>caucus meeting</u> disabled members	meeting room 6
12.45 – 1.30pm	labour link meeting	syndicate 1
12.45 – 1.30pm	<u>fringe meetings</u> tbc	
1.35pm – 2.05pm	<u>caucus meeting</u> black members	meeting room 8
2.15pm – 4.45pm	third conference session	auditorium 1
4.45pm – 5pm	NDC hustings	auditorium 1
5.15pm – 6pm	<u>fringe meetings</u> tbc	
Saturday 18th February		
time	event	room
9.30am – 1pm	fourth conference session	auditorium 1

2. CONFERENCE BUSINESS

NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE POLICY ON MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

The National Women's Committee's policy on motions is printed at the end of each motion. Policy on amendments will be reported at Conference.

Support	In favour.
Support as amended	NWC submitting amendment
Support with qualifications	In favour of main points but with some reservations.
Remit	Refer to NWC for further consideration.
Seek withdrawal	Ask branch to remove from agenda, usually in favour of another position, otherwise oppose.
Oppose	Against.
No position	Leave to Conference.
Defer	Awaiting more information prior to taking a position.

1. DECENT PENSIONS MATTER TO YOUNG WOMEN

This Conference is appalled by the attacks on our pension schemes and that women - young women in particular - will be disproportionately disadvantaged.

This Conference is alarmed that low-take up, or withdrawal from the schemes, by members will be damaging to the schemes and may in the long-term make them unviable.

This Conference believes that women have a key role in defending our pensions, including explaining to others the importance of:

- 1) Joining and staying in occupational pensions schemes to ensure that members have some small measure of dignity and independence in retirement;
- 2) The part decent pensions play in reducing the call on state benefits, welfare and health services;
- 3) The investments made by pension schemes to support industry and create jobs.

This Conference calls on the National Women's Committee to do its utmost to:

- a) Ensure these messages are communicated to all women members
- b) Work with regional women's groups to ensure this issue remains a priority in women's self-organisation, and is promoted in the union's other structures;
- c) Examine ways of campaigning to move beyond pensions to make the case for improving the value of belonging to a pension scheme.

National Young Members' Forum

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

1.01

Add to point 3) "with good terms and conditions which at least meet the minimum wage"

Yorkshire and Humberside Region

2. ENOUGH IS ENOUGH - THE BATTLE FOR DECENT PENSIONS FOR WOMEN

Conference notes with concern that the proposed changes to public sector pension schemes and the state retirement age are disproportionately impacting on the lives of women.

Women are already statistically more likely to have lower pensions, primarily due to time taken out of the workplace and part-time working to meet caring responsibilities, and low pay affecting both their lifetime earnings and their pension in retirement.

Disabled and Black women statistically have lower lifetime earnings, and are therefore even more vulnerable to pensioner poverty. LGBT women have fought long and hard for

equality in public sector pensions including pensions for surviving same sex partners and pensions equality for trans workers, and now face seeing those pensions eroded.

In the current economic climate low paid women in the public sector have also seen their household income reduced and may now see a stark choice between paying pension contributions or meeting household bills and childcare costs.

Many women are already suffering the consequences of being unable to pay into an occupational pension scheme - two thirds of the UK pensioners now living in poverty are women - but research shows that as many as half of all women are still not able to make adequate pension provision for their future.

Meanwhile the accelerated state pension age raise for women has dashed the expectations of working women who will now be forced to work longer. This raises serious questions about the ability of workers in some professions to be able to do their jobs safely and effectively; the lack of opportunities which will be available for younger workers; and the levels of stress and ill health among an ageing workforce.

Conference applauds the public sector pensions campaign led by UNISON, and calls upon the national women's committee to :

- 1) liaise with the NEC and service groups to ensure that these concerns are taken on board in UNISON's pensions campaigning and negotiating agenda;
- 2) liaise with the NEC to ensure that clear advice is available to members on the benefits of remaining within their occupational pension scheme and the implications of leaving;
- 3) encourage women members to become actively involved in pensions campaigning, and as pension trustees and champions.
- 4) work with regional women's committees to promote the "get campaigning" materials which provide resources and training to assist women in lobbying and campaigning in defense of pensions and other UNISON campaigns.

National Women's Committee

3. WOMEN AND WORK

The budget cuts being imposed on the public sector is having a huge impact on women, two thirds of the public sector workforce is made up of women, who carry out a variety of roles. In some regions almost fifty per cent of the female population is employed in this sector.

Those traditional job roles filled by women such as administration is seeing a nineteen per cent increase in redundancies if compared to figures for 2010. This figure added to the rising numbers of posts not being filled due to employers closing workplaces, deleting posts and generally not recruiting is having a further impact on women's lives.

In August 2011 the number of unemployed women rose by fifteen thousand six hundred. Changes to the welfare state are also contributing to the amount of women trying to access employment. We have lone parents being moved off income support onto Jobseekers Allowance when their child reaches the age of seven years. This benefit has seen claims reach a fifteen year high. It is clear that the budget cuts within the public sector will see this

figure continue to rise. Cuts to tax credits and the gap between pay and living costs is also adding to the burden that women face.

The government's view on the effect of these cuts on women is worrying, the Equalities Minister Lynne Featherstone when asked about her views on the effect on women that public sector cuts would have, is quoted as saying "you can't make an omelette without cracking eggs".

This shows a total lack of understanding of the role that women play in society and the contribution they make.

Therefore, conference asks the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Work with regions to establish the extent of redundancies within both the public sector and the voluntary sectors that are affecting our women members.
- 2) Raise the issue with both Labour Link and the GPF.
- 3) Use the Million Voices Campaign to raise awareness at national and local levels the impact of the cuts on women and how the loss of posts traditionally held by women are impacting on services.

West Midlands Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT AS AMENDED

3.01

Delete action point 1 and substitute :

"Urge regional women's groups to continue to gather information on the impact of the cuts and the extent of redundancies within the public and voluntary sector which particularly impact on women members, as part of the UNISON campaign to defend public services"

National Women's Committee

3.02

Third paragraph, after 'credits' insert

"removal of enhancements/allowances from low paid women workers"

In point 1, after 'redundancies' insert

"and the reduction in pay"

Birmingham

4. FOOD BANKS VS BANKERS' BONUSES

Conference notes with dismay the resurgence of food banks across the UK.

In September 2011 it was announced that jobcentres in England and Wales will refer people whose benefits have been delayed, or have been refused crisis loans, to charity-run food banks that will give them a food parcel containing basics such as tinned soup, baked beans, meat, fish and pasta.

The food banks will be run by the Trussell Trust, a charity that anticipates running around 130 centres and feeding between 90-100,00 people in the next year, and which predicts that this may rise to up to half a million people by 2015.

Cuts in public services are already having a disproportionate impact on women, as the services they rely on and the services they provide are being targeted for cuts. Women escaping domestic violence may see no alternative other than to seek help from the food banks as benefits are delayed and crisis loans refused.

UNISON members, particularly low paid women members and lone parents (90% of whom are women), may be forced to seek help in this way, as rising food and energy prices, wage freezes and redundancy impact on their ability to support themselves and their families.

Whilst working people, and those made unemployed suffer, bankers bonuses continue to rise. In July 2011 it was reported that payments hit fourteen billion pounds despite the coalition's pledge to block "unacceptable bonuses". Conference agrees that this is yet more evidence of the government's callous disregard for the most vulnerable in society.

Conference therefore calls upon the national women's committee to :

- 1) Encourage branch and regional women's groups to liaise with local community organisations and public sector alliances to support those most in need, and to campaign jointly to raise public awareness of the impact that this government's policies are having on the most vulnerable in our society, particularly highlighting the return to food banks and soup kitchens;
- 2) Work with UNISON Welfare "There for You" to ensure that members are aware of the assistance available to members in crisis

National Women's Committee

4.01

In action point 2 after "there for you" insert

"and via Branch Welfare Officers"

at end of action point 2 insert

full stop

East Midlands Region

5. DEFENDING LGBT WOMEN'S PUBLIC SERVICES AND JOBS

Conference deplores the Tory-led government's brutal and unnecessary cuts on public services, many of which have had a particular impact on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) women.

These ideologically driven cuts to public sector funding have seen targeted services such as those delivered by domestic abuse workers, HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) prevention workers, LGBT youth workers, LGBT, women's and equalities officers lost. Mainstream council services which LGBT women rely on, like social care and libraries, have been severely affected. Council and National Health Service (NHS) contributions to voluntary sector organisations have been reduced, with LGBT community organisations delivering vital services among the first to feel the threat of closure.

The Tories' promise to protect the NHS has turned out to be hollow. LGBT women are already experiencing the detrimental impact of cuts to the NHS. NHS trusts across the country have started tighter rationing of NHS funding for a range of treatments such as In Vitro Fertilisation. Many are taking steps to scale back and reduce access to whole swathes of vital healthcare including HIV services, safer sex services, gender reassignment surgery, mental health and addiction services.

Cuts to police and justice services will hamper their ability to deal with hate crime and domestic abuse. The wholesale attempt to privatise education through free schools and academies and through developing a market in higher education will make it more likely that homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in education will go unchallenged.

Conference also notes that our pensions are under fire and our terms and conditions such as pay, allowances and sick leave are being chipped away. Conference believes that the attack on pensions and terms and conditions is a first step towards selling off public services and ensuring even greater profits for private sector providers.

Conference further notes that unemployment amongst women has increased massively and is at its highest level in twenty-three years. Public sector cuts have played a huge part in job losses, as women make up two thirds of these workers. The threat of losing their job can deter LGBT women from raising complaints about harassment and bullying in the workplace.

Conference acknowledges the lack of awareness of the impact this concerted assault on public services is having on LGBT women.

Conference recognises to save jobs and public services, including those targeted at LGBT women, we need to continually focus on building the strength of public opinion behind us. We must push home the core UNISON messages that these cuts are unnecessary and we are not all in this together.

Conference calls on the National Women's Committee to urge regional women's groups to:

- 1) Use the Million Voices campaign materials to educate the public about the value of public services including specific services targeted at women and LGBT women;
- 2) Record the impact of government cuts in their local areas for use in campaigning;

- 3) Seek ways to work more closely with other regional self organised groups including regional LGBT groups, other unions and trade union networks, local voluntary and community sector organisations and anti-cuts groups, where appropriate.

Conference further calls the National Women's Committee to:

- a) Develop a comprehensive, proactive communications strategy, including targeted campaign materials, publicising the impact of the attack on public services on women, with specific reference to LGBT women;
- b) Work with appropriate national community and voluntary organisations fighting the cuts;
- c) Work with appropriate structures in UNISON to highlight cuts to LGBT women's services and campaign for properly funded LGBT women's services.

*National Lesbian, Gay,
Bisexual and Transgender Committee*

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

6. THRICE CUTS

This Conference is all too aware of the disproportionate impact on women that the Coalition Government's distorted priorities and divisive agenda of cuts are having. This time last year conference members heard about the likely impact on women of the cuts - predictions and estimates all backed up by the research undertaken for example by, the Institute of Fiscal Studies, the TUC, the Commons Library Gender Audit of the 2010 Spring Budget, the Fawcett Society and more. The Fawcett Society called it 'triple jeopardy' to highlight a threefold attack on women via job cuts in the public sector, a reduction in the core public services that women rely on for themselves and those they care for and slashed benefits - all of which threatens a huge step back in women's equality.

In the period from April 2010 to October 2011 the richest one per cent in the UK saw their incomes rise by eighteen per cent, the buzzword in the City last year according to city journalists was 'BAB - Bonuses are Back' with bankers bonuses for 2011 totalling fourteen billion pounds (two billion pounds more than in 2008). By contrast, in the same period women were hit by a freeze on child benefit; health in pregnancy grant abolished; Sure Start Maternity Grant only to be paid for the first child; child tax credit changes cutting the incomes of many families; cuts to women's advice centres and refuges; the rise in childcare costs and State Pension reforms that saw thousands of women lose thousands of pounds in lost state pension, in spite of the government's six month concession for women who would have been the hardest hit.

In addition, public service workers, the majority of whom are women, have come in for some of the government's fiercest attacks - enduring another year of pay freezes, pay cuts, redundancies and being asked to pay more, work longer for a poorer pension. Sadly, the predictions made in 2010 are now reality for hundreds of thousands of women. According to Aviva, between October 2010 and October 2011, thirty two thousand women were forced to leave their jobs due to the rise in childcare costs (Aviva Family Finances Report, October

2011). When it comes to the cuts, 'women and children first' takes on a whole new meaning.

There is an alternative, and it doesn't include attacking women's state pension, closing Sure Start Centres, shutting libraries, closing women's refuges, abolishing school breakfast clubs. Conference recognises UNISON's hard work campaigning for an alternative. An alternative that includes for example, a small tax of 0.05 per cent well known as the 'Tobin Tax' or 'financial transactions tax' - a small tax that could yield billions for the UK economy every year.

Women's rights have not been easily won. Most, if not all have been as a consequence of years of struggle. Over the last hundred or so years, women have won the right to vote and have won the right to equal pay. However, this Tory led government are a sharp reminder that women's equality can all too quickly be eroded and conference believes that as well as continuing the great work that UNISON already has been doing to raise awareness on all of these issues, that is is time to raise the level of campaigning once again.

UNISON have proudly played a prominent role in winning many rights for women over the years and Conference believes that we must step up our campaigning if we are to make any inroads in preventing the damage that the coalition government are intent of levelling on women.

Therefore we call upon the National Women's Committee to work with the NEC, Service Groups, National Self Organised Groups to:

- 1) Plan a campaign and strategy aimed at branches and women members, that will raise awareness at a local level, along similar lines to the recent Fawcett Society 'Don't turn back time' campaign.
- 2) Produce a leaflet and poster with the campaign message for all branches and women members.
- 3) Encourage branches to raise awareness of these issues during women's history month.

South East Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

7. WOMEN AT RISK - THE DANGER OF CUTS TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN SERVICES

Conference notes with concern that research published by the False Economy campaign in August 2011 showed that numerous support services for women were having their funding cut or withdrawn, according to data gathered from 265 Local Authorities in England. Services in other parts of the UK are similarly under threat.

Research has demonstrated that there is a clear link between economic tension and domestic violence, which may potentially lead to family breakdown and an increase in the

number of lone parent families who may need greater state support. This makes no economic sense.

Conference believes that violence against women services are essential for women to access safety, justice and to rebuild their lives. It is of great concern that authorities are increasingly adopting a "one size fits all" approach, denying the need for specialist services for LGBT women and Black women. Specialist Black women's organisations and refuges, in particular, are feeling the impact of increased referrals for support for women with no recourse to public funds.

Under international human rights obligations, including recommendations under CEDAW and the European Convention on Human Rights (Articles 2,3,8), States have a responsibility to act with due diligence, that is with due care and effort, to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of all women within their jurisdiction. Conference believes that these cuts, and changes to the legal aid criteria, mean that the government is failing to fulfill those obligations.

Conference therefore calls on the national women's committee to continue to work with the End Violence Against Women Coalition to challenge the government to meet its obligations under the Convention and to press the government for :

- 1) ringfenced funding for specialist services as part of local violence against women strategies;
- 2) a national oversight mechanism to ensure that quality services are delivered consistently across the UK;
- 3) specialist commissioners who have expertise in the field of ending violence against women.

National Women's Committee

8. CUTS TO SERVICES AND THE EFFECT ON WOMEN IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

Conference is well aware of the cuts to services all over the UK and those particularly affecting women. Conference however recognises that cuts to services will affect those in rural communities even more acutely. It is acknowledged that services relied upon by those in urban areas, are even more valuable to those living in the country areas.

We have seen unprecedented cuts to our services to include transport, benefits, social services, support networks and of course the voluntary sector. These are felt all too much by those living in urban areas, but for those in rural areas, it is a lifeline for women that is severed for them.

Conference is aware that once these services are cut, they are seldom replaced, or a more expensive and less reliable service is put into its place. The government is stripping women in rural communities of their independence and their option to participate fully. They will have to travel further and wider to access the services that once were easily available to them.

Conference believes that women in rural communities are facing disproportionate higher cuts to services and suffer as the requirement for these are more wide ranging, and cost more money to support and to run.

Conference asks the National Women's Committee to lobby Government ministers about the effect of cuts in rural areas, taking into special account how this specifically affects the health and well being of women and their families.

Cymru/Wales Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

**SUPPORTAS
AMENDED**

8.01

In final paragraph, insert after "National Women's Committee" :

“, working with regional women's committees and networks, including urging individual members to....”

National Women's Committee

9. WOMEN AND THE CUTS - TRANSPORT

Women's Conference confirms UNISON's backing of Campaign for Better Transport's campaign 'Save our Buses'.

An increasing number of local authorities have looked to save money by reducing the number of socially necessary and school bus services they support because of cuts to government funding.

Once again, as statistics show that women use buses far more than men, these draconian funding cuts are having a greater effect on women including:

- 1) Women who catch the bus for work
- 2) Women who take their children to school on the bus
- 3) Young women in education
- 4) Women in rural areas
- 5) Older women who can no longer drive (women statistically out live men)
- 6) Women with caring responsibilities taking family members for medical appointments
- 7) Women who rely on the bus for social interaction
- 8) Women having benefits cut for turning down jobs because no transport is available

Clearly this government is not willing to accept the social and economic detriment, nor the climatic impact these cuts will have.

We have also seen affects on jobs for our members working in bus companies and transport departments in local authorities.

Conference asks the National Women's Committee to liaise with and support the Water, Environment & Transport Service Group Executive, as well as regional women's committees in their efforts to lobby politicians and the government in campaigning to protect bus services and members jobs.

West Midlands Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

10. WOMEN AND THE CUTS - LEGAL AID

Conference notes that women rely disproportionately on state funded legal advice services for civil law cases (sixty two per cent of applications being made by women, especially in areas like education and law).

Legal aid will be cut for welfare benefits, education and medical negligence advice and severely reduced for debt, unemployment, family law, housing and immigration advice.

There will also be changes to eligibility criteria, access to Legal aid and payments to legal advisors, leading to a significant impact on advice services leading to effects such as the following:

- 1) Violations to the right to a fair trial where there is no legal advice in particularly complex cases
- 2) Removal of advice on complex welfare benefits issues, housing and immigration issues
- 3) Restrictions on local availability of services
- 4) Women in abusive relationships will be particularly vulnerable to removal of Legal aid

Conference calls on the National Women's Committee to liaise with the NEC, Labour Link and use all other avenues applicable, such as the Million Voices campaign to raise awareness of these issues and to lobby the government to reverse these cuts.

West Midlands Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

11. RESPONDING TO THE TORY LEAD GOVERNMENT'S ATTACK ON WOMEN AND OUR ROLE IN SOCIETY

Conference knows the history of the struggle that women have fought for the right to equality for all aspects of our lives. From the days of the Suffragettes and the Women's Social and Political Union women have fought for rights to education, equal pay, decent childcare, maternity and parental leave, health care, equal rights for part-time workers, and decent pensions for our old age.

We are proud that UNISON alone of all the trade unions has proportionality and fair representation enshrined in our rule book. Those of us who are members of the Labour Party have fought for equal access for women into political life through supporting women only shortlists, and ensuring that the Labour party created the Minister for Women as part of the Cabinet Office to scrutinise legislation for gender equality. The Public Sector Equality Duties and associated Equality Impact Assessments helped to deliver equality in the public sector for service users and providers including staff.

These achievements have been bought by so many women both famous and unrecognised, and in some cases at considerable personal cost, to place us where we are today. We are the descendents of those women and the baton has been passed to us to continue the struggle, and struggle it will be.

Our current Tory lead Coalition Government with the Liberal Democrats, is seeing the position of women in society facing an unparalleled attack. From day one the Coalition Government has targeted women. From the emergency budget which had a significant disproportionate impact on women than men, attacks on the benefit system, increase to VAT, threats to Sure Start, tax credits, and the threat to universal benefits, all predominantly affecting women. In addition, their attack on the public sector workforce will see the majority of those at risk of losing their jobs being women. For those women left, their terms and conditions, including redundancy, are under threat. Vital public services that women rely on are being decimated or prepared for wholesale privatisation. Openly we are seeing Ministers of the Government saying that if women chose to have children the responsibility should be theirs and not a burden on their employer. The so called Pension Reforms of this Government and seeing women paying more and being made to work longer for less benefits. Putting huge pressure on millions of women. The right wing media are buying into these policies and demonising public sector workers, the majority of whom are women, and lauding the tactic of setting women against women in new think tanks aimed at vilifying the role of feminism in improving the lives of women at home and abroad. We have already seen Topshop introducing Topman T-shirts promoting domestic abuse which they have had to withdraw due to the complaints they generated.

These attacks are and will prevent women fulfilling their potential within society, whether that is in their communities or within their employment opportunities, and undermining the gains that women have made especially in balancing employment and their caring responsibility. For women and our women members we are going to be faced with the struggle not just to improve, but to fight to maintain the protection that we currently enjoy. The Tory ideology clearly has not changed and that is that women should be denied the opportunity to work outside the home.

Already in the North East we are seeing women's unemployment reaching the highest level in 23 years, and with the highest unemployment rate in the country. Take on top of this the decimation to the Connexions Service and the huge hike in university tuition fees, and the abolition of Education Maintenance Grants, meaning the future for young women in the UK is bleak.

UNISON in the Northern Region has been campaigning with our other public sector trade unions against Government policy through the Public Services Alliance, and it has been UNISON women at the forefront of the local PSAs. It is imperative that UNISON continues

to encourage our women members to come into positions of leadership within the Union. In the Northern Region, we are working through our Regional Education Committee to develop leadership courses for women. Women should be central in making the decisions that affect women whether that is in UNISON or Government or as local politicians.

The Northern Region Women's Network has been campaigning for many years to encourage women to become involved in public life, whether that is working with our Regional Labour Link or encouraging them to take up public duties such as becoming school governors or local councillors, all of which develops women and reflects our role in society. One of our previous motions led to the UNISON "I don't do politics" campaign.

It is imperative that UNISON women are at the forefront of the defence and promotion of women's rights.

This Conference instructs the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Campaign with the relevant parts of UNISON's structures to highlight the disproportional impact of Government policies for our women members;
- 2) Work with our representatives on the TUC Women's Group to work with the other trade unions to campaign against the attacks being made by the Government and right wing think tanks that challenge the position of women in today's society and seek to undermine the rights that women presently enjoy;
- 3) Fight to protect the employment rights of women members; and
- 4) Encourage UNISON regions to promote leadership courses for women members along with buddying and mentoring courses.

Northern Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

12. THE DEVALUING AND EXCLUSION OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY

Privatisation and cuts to care providers and the Public Sector are driving down women's wages and resulting in increased job losses in these areas.

Women are known to be the predominant users of public services and are therefore more disadvantaged by this.

The loss of wages and reduction in wages impacts greater on single income households and lone parents.

The whole of the above results in women and their roles in society being devalued and their ability to be active in society reduced. This in turn impacts on the woman and her family's self esteem and health.

Conference calls upon the National women's Committee to:

- 1) Work with all appropriate bodies such as the Fawcett Society to challenge cuts and changes that impact on women's jobs to continue to publicise and monitor the impact the cuts have to low paid women workers and provide publicity materials.
- 2) Work with UNISON Welfare to ensure women receive advice and provide financial support if required and work with UNISON Education to promote and encourage women to access further training and education in order to increase their self worth and value.

Yorkshire and Humberside Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

13. THE DEVALUING AND EXCLUSION OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY

Conference notes that the coalition government's measures to reduce the deficit are steadily undermining the hard-won gains of women in the workplace and in society:

- 1) At least 65% of public sector workers are women - cuts in public sector jobs, wages and services will therefore impact on women more than men;
- 2) Women's unemployment is now at its highest level in 20 years, and continues to grow;
- 3) Services used primarily by women, including those providing specialist support to Black, disabled and LGBT women, have become increasingly under attack during this government's term of office, with grants being cut or withdrawn from women's community and voluntary organisations;
- 4) Low income mothers, particularly lone parents, who have returned to the workforce are finding it impossible to balance childcare costs with paid work, whilst services they rely on, including Sure Start centres, are being cut;
- 5) Women continue to be unfairly selected for redundancy when pregnant, whilst levels of maternity/paternity pay remain too low for many women and their partners to take advantage of the statutory leave for new parents;
- 6) Disabled women tend to be concentrated in relatively low-skill, low waged jobs which are particularly vulnerable to the cuts;
- 7) Attacks on public sector pensions and changes to the state pension are attacks on women's pensions;
- 8) Women, particularly Black women, are still under-represented in political life, on decision making bodies and at board levels in private companies across the UK, including those which provide public services.

Conference further notes that a leaked document from 10 Downing Street makes it clear that the government is worried that their claims to be "women and family friendly" have backfired, and that they intend to launch a "charm offensive" on women voters.

The document, which was widely reported in the press in September 2011, says that "We are clear that there are a range of policies we have pursued as a government which are seen as having hit women, or their interests, disproportionately." The document mentions public sector pay and pensions as an example, "particularly as contrasted with - mostly male - bankers, in the popular narrative".

Conference therefore calls upon the national women's committee to :

- a) Work with the NEC to ensure that UNISON's women members are aware of the disproportionate impact of the cuts on all women, and the additional impact on LGBT, Black and disabled women;
- b) Work with regional women's committees and UNISON Learning and Organising Services to ensure that women members have the necessary resources to campaign in their local community on these issues, including lobbying skills, use of local media and social networking;
- c) Work with Labour Link and partner organisations to ensure that the reality of the impact of the coalition government's policies are understood and that their family friendly claims are repudiated;
- d) Continue to work with UNISON Welfare ("There for You") to ensure that women members are aware of the advice and assistance available to them.

National Women's Committee

14. FUTURE LEGISLATIVE CHANGES AFFECTING WOMEN

Each year European and UK parliament bring legislative changes forward for consultation and debate.

Many of these consultations and legislative changes are not well publicised and it is often by default that women become aware of these forthcoming changes.

This conference believes that the more information about proposed legislative changes that can be given to our women members, the more we can influence consultation exercises, the more we can influence policy changes and any implementation within our workplaces.

Each year the National Women's Committee produces a comprehensive report on its activities; progress made on campaigns and initiatives. Yet this report could also highlight to our women members' forthcoming changes - looking ahead to future years.

Conference believes that this additional chapter would be a valuable addition to the annual report, giving an enduring use to the annual report and may enable women in their branches to plan ahead, anticipate local campaign issues and predict impending challenges.

Conference instructs the National Women's Committee in future annual reports to include a chapter that lays out forthcoming legislative changes that have an impact on women's lives and work.

Eastern Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

**SUPPORTAS
AMENDED**

14.01

Add at end of final paragraph " and to endeavour to advise regional women's committees and networks of any further consultations which arise following the production of the annual report".

National Women's Committee

15. VARIABLE AND ZERO HOUR CONTRACTS AND THE THREAT TO WOMEN MEMBERS EMPLOYMENT

Conference will be aware that for some time we have been seeing in the public sector the increase in zero hours or permanent variable hours contracts, the majority of those being placed on such contracts are women. Sunderland Local Authority, in the Northern Region has been using variable contracts as a means of avoiding compulsory redundancies. There has been a recent Employment Tribunal decision in the Newcastle Employment Tribunal which has serious implications for women members. The case involved Ms Paireen Hasib, a teaching assistant, who had been working on average 27.5 hours per week for the council during term time since October 2006, when on seeking to return to work from maternity leave, she was told that there was no work for her to return to. Ms Hasib took her case to Employment Tribunal after she had been given no work for six months, claiming unfair dismissal. The case was heard in August where the Employment Tribunal accepted the employer's argument that there was no work available and not that there was no job, and therefore the Tribunal decided it had no jurisdiction to hear the case as there was no dismissal. Sunderland Council has almost one thousand staff on variable contracts, the majority of whom are part time low paid women.

Local Authorities are not the only ones using zero hours or variable hours contracts. These contracts are increasingly being introduced in other services for example Police and Universities. At Newcastle University, 'Casual' worker contracts are now being brought in to replace any full time ancillary staff positions that are vacated; effectively undermining the terms and conditions of employment of this already much maligned group of workers, predominantly female cleaning staff. But it's not just lower grades that are suffering recently a woman who is employed as a Grade D Research interviewer has been told that she and nineteen other Research Interviewers are to have their contracts changed to 'variable hours', effectively making these women 'redundant by stealth'.

Women members who are reliant on paid employment are being faced with difficult decisions. Do they continue with no guarantee of paid employment but not being made redundant or being eligible to claim unemployment benefits, or voluntarily leaving their employment and have to wait to be eligible to claim state benefits and possibly claim constructive dismissal.

Public sector employers are arguing that in the current climate of cuts, employees are opting for these contracts in preference to being made redundancies.

The reality of these contracts are that women members:

- 1) Have no guarantee of earned income
- 2) Increase the difficulties of arranging dependant care due to uncertainty
- 3) The impact on families is not only financial
- 4) Increase the pressure on women including mental stress
- 5) Increase in travel costs if they have no designated work location
- 6) Impacts on training opportunities for women staff
- 7) Linked to the erosion of terms and conditions of employment for women members
- 8) Impacts on equality at work
- 9) Impact on social care both for service providers and service users
- 10) Detrimental impact to work life balance
- 11) Potential to increase bullying and victimisation at work by withholding hours

This National Women's Conference calls on the National Women's Committee to:

- a) Raise awareness of the implication for our women members of zero hour or variable hour contracts
- b) Work with the appropriate structures of UNISON to highlight and negotiate where appropriate retainer pay and/or access to state benefits
- c) To work with the UNISON delegates to the TUC for protection for women workers placed in this position
- d) Raise through Labour Link to campaign on this issue

Newcastle University

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

COMPOSITE A - [Motion 16 – A Woman's Right to Choose – without prejudice and Motion 17 – A Woman's Right to Choose]

A WOMAN'S RIGHT TO CHOOSE

Conference believes that a woman's right to choose with regards to abortion is fundamental to her political, social and economic equality. Control over whether, when and how many

children to have is crucial to control over every other aspect of a woman's life. An overwhelming three quarters of people in Britain support a woman's right to make her own abortion decision.

Conference notes the attacks on UNISON's pro choice policy and support of Abortion Rights UK by a Conservative MP, Nadine Dorries, a former nurse. It would have seen non statutory organisations such as Marie Stopes and the British Pregnancy Advisory Service unable to provide impartial advice and counselling to women considering abortion but leaving the door open to allow anti abortion faith groups to step in and provide the service. Conference welcomes that this attempt to strip abortion providers of their role in counselling women was heavily defeated in the House of Commons and the amendment was defeated by a majority of three hundred and sixty eight votes to one hundred and eighteen with three out of four MPs voting being male. Meaning women relying on men making decisions on highly sensitive women's issues.

Conference further notes that MPs will get another chance to vote on this issue following a government review on abortion counselling services

Conference also welcomes the emergency motion agreed at TUC Conference in September, "Pre abortion Counselling" which highlighted the attacks on women.

Conference notes with concern the beginning of religious groups picketing outside of UK abortion clinics.

Conference notes with concern that the 1967 Act has never been extended to Northern Ireland. Women in Northern Ireland don't have access to abortion services unless in exceptional circumstances. Many northern Irish women face travel to the UK to access abortion services at their own cost. Fees, accommodation, and travel expenses make the cost prohibitive for others.

Conference believes in a woman's right to request an abortion and that in the UK we fail women as they still require two doctors signatures and must demonstrate that continuing a pregnancy would have a detrimental effect on her mental or physical well being or that of her existing children, than having a termination.

Conference further believes that woman's right to request an abortion should be underpinned with balanced professional support from regulated organisations. Women must have access to unbiased, unprejudiced, clinically sound and researched information regarding all pregnancy choices including abortion.

Conference therefore instructs National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Work within the relevant structures of UNISON to affirm that abortion is a trade union issue and distribute relevant literature highlighting this.
- 2) Work with Labour link and lobby MPs to ensure women's voices are heard during the review period and subsequent vote.

- 3) Continue to work with and support affiliated and sympathetic organisations such as Abortion Rights UK and The Fawcett Society in highlighting these attacks on women's rights and defending a women's right to choose
- 4) Continue to circulate The Abortion Rights Newsletter to all Branch Women's Officers.
- 5) Work with the TUC women's group to ensure a co-ordinated approach in challenging and lobbying against any detrimental changes to abortion counselling.
- 6) Call for the extension of the 1967 Act to Northern Ireland
- 7) Work with regional women's networks to provide leadership and political training for women to encourage more women to get involved in politics and their trade union; ensuring women's issues are debated predominantly by women.

Newcastle Hospitals UNISON Branch
Eastern Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

TO BE ADVISED

18. BULLYING IN THE WORKPLACE

The public sector cuts have had an unprecedented impact on women, with increasing numbers accepting redundancy and voluntary early severance.

Those women who are left in the workplace are experiencing an increase in stress as work pressures mount and bullying, in its various manifestations increases.

This is also affecting vulnerable clients, as our professional members raise concerns about unsafe working practices, due to the cuts.

This Conference calls upon the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Ensure that women specific training courses and resources are provided to help women recognise the signs of bullying and to be aware of the actions to take.
- 2) Recommend that every branch has a dedicated steward or branch officer responsible for supporting women to address the problem.

South West Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

***SUPPORT AS
AMENDED***

18.01

Add new point 2 to read "Encourage branches to work with employers to adhere to bullying and harassment workplace policies" and renumber point 2 to point 3

Yorkshire and Humberside Region

18.02

Before “ensure” in action point (1), insert “Work with LAOS and/or regional women's and equalities officers to”

National Women's Committee

19. WOMEN AS CARERS

For many years women have been the main carers within the home for their children, disabled and elderly parents. Women have fought for the right to be recognised and to be treated as equal to men.

Many workplaces now have policies in place to enable employees to take time off work to care for their sick children. Unfortunately, these policies do not reflect the fact that, as a society, we are all living longer and in many families it usually falls on the women to care for disabled and elderly dependents. Many dependents need to attend regular hospital appointments, sometimes over a number of months and even years.

It would appear that some employees women in particular are having difficulties in obtaining time off work to care for their elderly dependents, especially from line managers, this may be due to the fact that as predominantly the main carer they may have already accessed their carers leave and be up to the maximum of their annual leave entitlement.

This Committee recognises that our women members need support from their employers to take time from their employment to care for their dependents. This will be a positive action helping the already overburdened social services sector.

Whilst in the role of carer, it is additionally realised that within the ideological cuts put forward from this coalition Government cut backs have been made in the field of public sector social care, with private, often less regulated companies, providing care to our elders of extremely poor standards where they are left unattended in soiled sheets overnight and facing a prolonged wait for poorly paid and over committed carers to arrive.

On some occasions these carers are unqualified and are allocated the minimum of time to perform their tasks. They have been known to take personal calls whilst dealing with a service user, have been unfocussed and inattentive to service users at times in desperate need.

We are concerned for the many safeguarding and health issues which may arise if situations such as these are allowed to go unregulated and unchecked.

In the first instance of carer's leave for women, Conference calls on the National Women's Committee work to:

- 1) Provide guidelines to branches and activists on how to work alongside managers to engage in supportive discussions to facilitate time off (leave, flexible working or a personal arrangement) for members so affected.
- 2) In respect of the impact of the cuts on women in the caring professions and the effects on our cared for, the National Women's Committee liaise with our relevant organisations who set national standards for the work of the caring professions and

National Inspection Agencies in obtaining information to bring enhanced awareness of the real situations and safeguarding issues which may arise if these situations remain unchecked.

- 3) The National Women's Committee, become involved with campaigning initiatives that will support women in the role of carer.

North West Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

20. FLEXIBLE WORKING OPTION FOR ALL

Conference notes that despite numerous attempts to ensure that employers have a consistent approach to dealing with flexible working requests, there are still widespread differences. As those most likely to be in caring roles are women, this disadvantages women far more than men.

Particularly in these challenging times of financial constraints on employers, it is likely that they will become less willing to agree flexible working requests, and it is imperative we move to ensure consistency and fairness.

Conference therefore calls on the National Women's Committee to work with the NEC and service groups to:

- 1) Carry out a survey amongst branches to identify the quality of data collected by employers with regards flexible working requests
- 2) To identify how this data is used to inform decisions on flexible working requests
- 3) To identify areas of good practice and develop guidance to advise how this can be consistently applied

South West Yorkshire Partnership Health

National Women's Committee Policy:

***SUPPORT AS
AMENDED***

20.01

Delete all after "fairness" and substitute:

"Conference therefore calls on the national women's committee to carry out an on-line survey through regional women's networks and the women's pages of the website, and use the information gathered to work with service groups and regional women's committees to:

- 1) Identify areas of good practice and develop guidance to advise on how this can be consistently applied;

- 2) Encourage branches to use the guidance to support members wishing to exercise their right to request

National Women's Committee

21. EQUALITY MONITORING

Conference on 2 September 2011 Eric Pickles, the Secretary for Communities and Local Government new guidance called 'A fair deal for the community and voluntary sector'. The guidance states councils should not carry out equality questionnaires and use the money saved to fund the community and voluntary sector. They claim that the questions asked about gender, disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation duplicate information collected in the Census. Pickles himself said "Local residents shouldn't be asked to reveal detailed personal information just because they've enquired about getting their bins emptied or how to join their local library. Clamping down on such town hall activity will save taxpayers' money and protect the privacy of residents of all backgrounds".

Although councils have a statutory duty to collect information on how their policies affect protected groups Pickles says equality questionnaires are not necessary. This clearly comes from a man who has never suffered from prejudice or discrimination.

Gender discrimination most commonly affects women. This can be because of negative attitudes, stereotypes or because some policies and practices disadvantage women, for example, we are more likely to have caring responsibilities. Sixty five per cent of public sector workers are women but we are still under represented at the highest levels with the vast majority working in low paid or part time jobs. Women are less likely to feel safe when they are out, particularly at night. There is evidence to show that women are less likely to access welfare benefits, are more likely to be living in poverty and have less access to sport and leisure facilities.

Councils point out that equality monitoring forms are voluntary and are used to make sure they are properly serving all parts of the population. It is important to know whether service users reflect the make up of the population so that services can be targeted effectively. Equality monitoring helps councils make effective use of very limited resources. It is based on the basic principles of knowing your staff and your customers.

Conference notes that many organisations have already failed to take on the full value of monitoring. Monitoring in isolation keeps the emphasis on under represented groups rather than institutions as a source for change. Sometimes the sole purpose of monitoring is a way of 'record keeping' rather than collecting evidence to implement positive action.

As the Tory led Coalition continues to cut regulation and Eric Pickles encourages councils to stop equality monitoring in employment and service provision we need to make sure employers and service providers are aware of the benefits of carrying out equality monitoring. This conference calls on National Women's Committee to work with the NEC to:

- 1) Campaign for equality monitoring to be continued in employment and service provision.

- 2) Produce guidance for branches and regions on promoting the benefits of equality monitoring; and
- 3) Lobby government and councils to maintain equality monitoring.

Newcastle City

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

22. A SIMPLE BLOOD TEST THAT COULD SAVE LIVES

Last year's conference motion on Ovarian Cancer would have been a wake up call to women members unaware of the necessity of early detection of ovarian cancer for there to be any reasonable chance of effective treatment.

To be told one has cancer is terrifying enough, but for those whose cancers have no immediate symptoms - often called the silent killers - ovarian cancer, prostate cancer, kidney cancer the long term prognosis is often not good as by the time symptoms manifest themselves the only possible treatment is invasive and not very successful. In addition all too often early symptoms are not acted upon by the sufferer and/or detected or misdiagnosed as something far less sinister.

Figures published in The Lancet show that about eighty two per cent of British women with breast cancer survive to at least five years after diagnosis. For ovarian cancer the figure is just thirty six per cent. The key reason for the difference is late diagnosis. An early diagnosis could double the survival rate. Ovarian Cancer Action estimates that the UK has the worst survival rate in the developed world and is taking steps to improve survival through funding research and raising awareness.

One of the methods for detection is a Twenty pound (approx) blood test that can highlight possibility of "cancer makers" the proteins and antibodies already at work in fighting the disease deep within the body. Although some in the medical profession question the reliability of the blood test, it has been effective for many women in early detection of ovarian cancer and more importantly is relatively cheap and non invasive. However, many GPs do not offer the blood test and too many women are unaware that it even exists as a procedure to detect the possibility of ovarian cancer.

Conference asks the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Continue to support the work of Ovarian Cancer charities/research organisations.
- 2) Raise awareness amongst UNISON women members of the relatively simple tests available that could aid early detection.

South East Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

23. LIGHTS OUT

In London 1684-1694 there was an important innovation. This was in the form of public street lighting and was part of a movement across Europe. It was an important innovation

because it enabled business, leisure time and daily life to go beyond the confines of daylight hours which was previously bound by a curfew. Having street lighting meant that study could be expanded into the evening, businesses benefited as opening hours could be later, jobs were formed and people felt safer. There were also more arenas for leisure activities as well as more convenient for daily life. Another hidden benefit was that people saw the city in a different yet beautiful way and meant that this space was accessible to the general public not just in daylight hours.

Since that time street lighting has been a significant confidence boost to women who walk or travel out in the evening and night. Perceptions of safety and security are improved where women can see about them, enabling them to identify danger areas and hazards.

Conference is disturbed to know that many local authorities have decided or are considering cutting street lighting in order to cut energy bills and costs. So far:

Essex 91,000 lights off
Suffolk 40,000 lights off
Norfolk 27,000 lights off from midnight to 5.30am
North Yorkshire 30,000 lights off at midnight
Somerset switching off lights in 14 villages between midnight and 5.30am
Nottinghamshire all lights to be dimmed or switched off
West Sussex In towns, most lights dimmed after midnight, most rural lights switched off after midnight
Dorset thousands of lights to be switched off

Cutting street lighting has a significant impact on women's perceptions of safety; darkness limits women's willingness to venture outside of the home, limiting women's life style and choices.

In particular, those with sight problems like night blindness or retinitis pigmentosa will have additional problems, which may leave them isolated and unable to be outside of their homes after dark.

Those women who may be particularly vulnerable to assaults and hate crimes on the streets may well feel that in reality they are subject to a darkness curfew.

In addition, mothers will have increased anxiety over their loved ones being out socialising, walking or travelling home in complete darkness, vulnerable to accident or assault, without lights to guide them home to safety.

One of the benefits of CCTV has been an increase in perceptions of safety for women walking on the streets at night. Reduced or eliminated lighting will dramatically reduce the effectiveness of CCTV.

In decision making local authorities are obliged to consider equalities issues in their deliberations; to make real considerations of the impact of their decisions and whether reducing or eliminating street lighting will adversely impact on women. Equality Impact Assessments have to be real and substantial pieces of work, requiring consultation and meaningful dialogue with stakeholders. Yet where EIA's have been undertaken on turning off street lights they have concluded no adverse gender impact.

Women at a local level need to be armed with the tools to challenge the cuts in both services and funding on Gender Equality grounds. This includes making sure that public authorities abide by their legal requirements to equality impact assess the effects of their cuts.

Conference is concerned that turning the lights off is a backward step and that this cost cutting strategy further isolates women and limits their lifestyle and choices.

Conference instructs the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Actively promote the need for branches to challenge local authorities proposals to cut or reduce street lighting
- 2) To work with other interested groups to research or collate information on the impact of these street lighting decisions on women
- 3) To report back to women's conference in 2013

Eastern Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

24. CORRECTIVE RAPE

Conference agrees that violence against women is a crime. All women, regardless of their race or sexual orientation, have the right to live without fear and to be free from prejudice, discrimination and violence.

Conference is therefore appalled that in countries across the world, "corrective" rape takes place, where women are raped as a way of punishing and "curing" them of their sexual orientation.

Much of the media focus has been on South Africa, where there are an estimated 500,000 rapes, hundreds of murders and countless beatings carried out every year. It is estimated that almost half of all South African women will be raped during their lifetime, and for every 25 men brought to trial for rape in South Africa, 24 walk free.

The wave of hate crimes against black lesbians is part of this epidemic of violence against women. Women who choose not to identify as heterosexual are being victimised for daring to step outside the boundaries of what their families, communities and wider society prescribe for them. However, conference further notes that this practice is not limited to South Africa.

Conference therefore calls upon the national women's committee to work with the UNISON LGBT committee, End Violence Against Women Coalition and other appropriate organisations to:

- 1) Raise awareness of this issue;

- 2) Lobby the UK government to ensure that their strategy on ending violence against women includes measures to address "corrective" rape at an international level;
- 3) Work with UNISON's international committee to ensure that violence against women in all its manifestations is raised in the international arena and recognised as a human rights violation;
- 4) Liaise with our sister unions in South Africa to support them in action to challenge the cultural system which allows violence against women and "corrective" rape to take place unpunished.

National Women's Committee

24.01

At the end of paragraph 2 after "sexual orientation" insert "or perceived sexual orientation".

In paragraph 4 after "identify as heterosexual" insert "or perceived as being lesbian, bisexual or transgender".

West Midlands Region

25. TIME FOR A CHANGE

Conference acknowledges that UNISON publishes some valuable information and guidance material for branches, activists and members on a regular basis and on varying workplace issues and/or recruitment based materials.

Yet conference believes that there is not enough UNISON material tailored specifically for women and that the design and format of existing publications for women sometimes appear outdated, often too typical of all UNISON literature and not necessarily reflecting the diversity of all our women members. UNISON encompasses women members from different ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds, women who define as lesbian, bisexual or trans, disabled and young women. Each will be attracted to the services and information of UNISON for different reasons and by a variety of advertising methods. Therefore, literature pertaining to women should take into account that one size does not fit all.

In the South East, some women members have reported that much information targeted at women members can often go unnoticed by branches and women members, it would be beneficial to create an easily recognised 'themed' look or 'logo' such as the LGBT 'OUT in UNISON' logo or the Young Members logo which is now so readily recognised by branches and activists. Conference notes that the 'Women in UNISON' logo sometimes used by more randomly and not necessarily 'as a rule' on all materials that are aimed at women, for example UNISON's 'Health & Safety' for Women' guide book.

As a consequence, much of the information especially with regards to recruitment, training opportunities, forums and conference could go unnoticed by branches and women members. This might be reflected in some of the persisting difficulties of increasing the participation of women in union activities especially at a local level.

Considering women make up sixty five per cent of the public service workforce - much higher in some sections such as NHS (seventy seven per cent) and Local Government (seventy five per cent), Schools (eighty two per cent) - and that women make up seventy

five per cent of UNISON membership, conference believes that more investment could be made to improve the design and content of UNISON literature and materials for women members, women activists and most importantly for potential women members. Taking into account facts such as, the size and gender make up of the Public Service workforce, there are potentially hundreds of thousands of women workers to recruit. Maintaining our current strength and building our union for the future will rely, not solely but nonetheless predominantly on ensuring that UNISON is the union that women public service workers want to join.

Conference therefore instructs the National Women's Committee to work with women members of the NEC, National Service Groups, National Self Organised Groups to:

- 1) Create a new and modern 'branded' logo for women in UNISON, to be used on all materials aimed at our women members and potential women members.
- 2) Produce a 'women's recruitment pack' to be disseminated to regions and branches for use at all recruitment events.
- 3) Update and modernise existing leaflets, guides, factsheets, booklets aimed specifically at women, to adopt the new women in UNISON look.

South East Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

26. LABOUR LINK AND SUPPORT FOR WOMEN

Conference is aware that there are one million women members in UNISON. Through Labour link UNISON is affiliated to the Labour Party. Many of our women members are also members of our Labour Link.

Labour Link rightly promotes itself as being transparent and encourages women to become involved. In recent years in the Northern Region we have been developing closer links with our Regional Labour Link Group and the Women's Network with mutual benefits for both. We are delighted that women from the Network have been selected to run and been elected as new Labour councillors across the Region.

The Labour Party is in the process of Refounding Labour and it is vitally important that the Labour Party hears what women have to say about their future and the future of their children, whether they are Labour Party members or not. After all, it is women electorates that hold the balance of power in elections in the UK, whether that is local or national.

The Labour Link rules currently allow for seats from the National Black, Disabled and LGBT Committees and they have representation on the Labour Link Forum.

We are facing an unprecedented attack on women led by the Tory Party and the Coalition Government. It is vitally important that the concerns of women and especially UNISON women are fed into the Labour Link through formalising the link between the National Women's Committee and the National Labour Link Committee.

This National Women's Conference instructs the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Enter into dialogue with the National Labour Link to consider creating a seat for the National Women's Committee on the National Labour Link Committee and Forum.

Northern Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

27. MARY SEACOLE - ICON FOR UNISON WOMEN

Mary Seacole was born Mary Jane Grant in 1805 to a free black Jamaican woman. Her mother ran a boarding house for British soldiers and sailors in the capital city, Kingston. Her mother was known as a "doctress" and passed on much of her knowledge of healing, using the arts of Creole medicine.

In 1836 Mary married Edwin Horatio Hamilton Seacole, godson of Lord Nelson. After only eight short years of marriage, Edwin died. On reaching the age of fifty, Mary was concerned about the welfare of soldiers she had known in Kingston, who were serving in the Crimean War. Mary travelled to recruitment offices in London, at her own expense, in an attempt to support the nursing efforts of Florence Nightingale who was at that time in Turkey. Mary was rejected by at least four of those offices due to racial discrimination.

Rather than return home full of bitterness about her rejection and treatment, Mary then made her own way to Turkey. There, she set up the British hotel, again at her own cost. She provided food and care for the soldiers who she referred to as "my sons". The hospitals set up by the British under Florence Nightingale were three days sail away from the Crimea Battlefields. In comparison, Mary worked continually under the heat and danger of battle; she often went onto the actual battlefields and her courage and nursing skills were reported in the Times newspaper and Punch magazine. As a result the British as well knew her, as a Black Florence Nightingale.

When the Crimean War ended abruptly, it left Mary bankrupt. Her supporters in Britain, from all backgrounds ranging from ordinary soldiers to the Prince of Wales rallied to her aid with fundraising events in her honour.

After the war, Mary was awarded several medals for her bravery. She died at the age of seventy six and is buried in St Mary's Catholic Cemetery, Kensal Green in London. But unlike Florence Nightingale, this amazing woman still does not have a permanent memorial to her bravery and perseverance in the face of discouragement and discrimination. Mary Seacole has been voted the greatest Black Briton and was awarded a personal pension from Queen Victoria.

Mary Seacole is an icon for UNISON women. She was a woman who did not give up in the face of discrimination or hardship. Her story needs to be kept alive to inspire future generations of UNISON women.

There is an enormous gender imbalance in the public statues erected to merit the achievements in society. Within the borough boundaries of Westminster there are one hundred and twenty four named public statues; of these on fourteen are women and four of those are Queen Victoria and another the late Queen Mother. There are two for Florence

Nightingale and the only Black persons statue is that of Nelson Mandela. This needs to be addressed and the funds needed are achievable if it is publicised and acted upon.

Conference commends the championship of this issue carried out by UNISON and the National Nursing Committee whose sterling efforts to raise and keep this issue on the agenda have contributed to already raising one hundred thousand pounds towards a permanent Statue to be erected in the grounds of St Thomas's hospital in London and the Friends of Mary Seacole and the Jamaican High Commissioner, who do so much to keep Mary Seacole's memory in the public eye.

Conference calls on the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Work with Learning and Organising Services (LAOS), Regional Women's Committees, Black women Member's Committee and the Mary Seacole Memorial Statue Appeal to jointly produce and distribute literature and posters highlighting the achievements of Mary Seacole and the Memorial Campaign. This should also include information on web addresses.
- 2) Use Mary Seacole and other inspirational women to encourage a new generation of women who face adversity and/or discrimination as positive role models and publicise their achievements bi monthly in Focus magazine as a regular editorial.
- 3) Encourage networking via all regional Equality Officers a plan to highlight this campaign to all Self Organised Groups (SOGs) and Branches especially during Black History Month in October each year.
- 4) Report back to 2013 National Women's Committee with the availability of the campaign materials and invite a guest speaker from the Mary Seacole Memorial Statue Appeal to address Conference.

East Midlands Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

28. WOMEN FRIENDLY WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Every year at National Women's Conference we come together to debate motions, to listen and learn from each other, develop and set UNISON policy and direction.

We debate motions on all sorts of issues that affect the lives and work of women. In recent years for example delegates have debated motions about domestic abuse, about rape and other forms of sexual violence, motions about sexual harassment, prostitution, Female Genital Mutilation and so-called honour crimes. Many of these motions cover issues that are intensely personal to some delegates, issues that touch on events from their own lives and experiences and that continue to have an impact on them to this day.

And yet despite this, despite the personal nature of so many of our motions, women regularly feel moved to get up at National Women's Conference to tell their own stories of survival, bravely and movingly bearing witness to the atrocities that have been perpetrated against them.

Delegates to National Women's Conference have felt able to speak out about these things so openly because they have thought this conference to be a safe space. They thought that they would get no heckling, no-one doubting the truth of their words, no insults or comments about who they are or how they look.

Conference is concerned to know that despite our working together guidelines being firmly explained by previous chairs of conference, last year there were problems with inappropriate; hurtful and discriminatory comments made at this very conference.

Women are a diverse group; it is this very diversity that makes us so very powerful and dynamic. In this conference there are women; black women; disabled women; lesbian women; bi-sexual women; trans women; low paid women; full time working women and part time working women. We come from different service groups and; different professions and workgroups. We are not a one size fits all group. But we are all women; all UNISON women and every UNISON woman deserves respect for being the woman that she is. Respect that means she is not insulted or harassed. Respect that she is here, an activist in UNISON, participating in setting women's policy and direction.

Conference affirms its commitment to a safe and empowering conference for all its women. Conference acknowledges that this can only be achieved with the co-operation of all its delegates and visitors.

Conference therefore instructs the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Work with the Regional Women's Committees and other self organised committees to raise awareness of the need for a supportive; respectful and empowering conference environment
- 2) Carry out a review of the Working Together Guidelines for National Women's Conference to ensure the guidelines meet the needs of the conference.
- 3) Report back to National Women's Conference 2013

Eastern Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

29. BUILDING INTERNATIONAL LINKS - CHILDBIRTH - WHAT IS A WOMEN'S LIFE WORTH?

In Britain we are worried about the attacks on the NHS and the effect on the ratio of midwives to expectant mothers. This results in the worry of whether the experience will be more painful than is necessary and whether there will be any side effects on the baby.

In Africa women are worried that when they go into hospital to have their baby whether they will survive the experience.

UN millennium targets, which should be delivered by 2015, has at number five - improving maternity health. This target is currently showing the least improvement even though it would also deliver improvements to targets one to four and six.

For approximately the price of a postage stamp literally hundreds of thousands of women a year could be saved.

Conference calls on the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Work with and build links between all appropriate bodies and agencies such as Life for African Mothers.
- 2) Encourage Regions and Branches to donate baby bundles and/or money to Life for African Mothers.
- 3) Encourage UNISON Representatives to visit Africa with Life for African Mothers (£1,500 per person approximately).
- 4) Encourage women who work in health and social care to visit Africa as part of their personal and professional development with one of the agencies.
- 5) Start a campaign to move maternity facilities at home and abroad up the political agenda.

Yorkshire and Humberside Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

**SUPPORT AS
AMENDED**

29.01

Delete action point 3 and renumber subsequent points.

National Women's Committee

30. UK SLAVERY AND TRAFFICKING

As the economic vice bites deeper and the whole world struggles to maintain status quo on everything from stability in the stock markets to coping with the effect of massive unemployment, there will always be a type of entrepreneur to exploit natural resources and turn a profit.

These people pride themselves in supplying a rare commodity, sometimes smuggling it across borders and the boundaries of accepted behaviour. Of course they also need a buyer for these precious jewels. The eventual owners will not care if the transportation method was conventional as long as they can enjoy its rare gifts.

But these jewels are not dazzling fossilised mineral deposits to adorn a pretty neck but living, breathing young girls and sometimes boys; to fuel the insidious sexual slavery market under the guise of domestic employ.

Many are transported by gang masters as undocumented migrants believing they are coming to the UK to work as house staff or provide childcare for rich families and gain an education to help them support their families back home and better their lives. For those who have passports and a right to come to the UK, the journey maybe more comfortable, but on arrival at the dock or airport their passport will be confiscated. From there on, their

future is sealed. Many will be split from and denied all contact with their friends and families and the desocialising will begin in earnest. They may be brainwashed into thinking the UK is a dangerous place and it is unsafe for them to go outside at all; or worse drugged, beaten, tortured and gang raped into submission. They are then sold again and again to different areas and brothels to provide a constant fresh new supply to feed an every hungry devouring monster.

In the UK this year the 2012 Olympics will provide rich picking grounds for the gang masters; it is quite likely the girls are already being selected in their own countries prior to being trafficked here.

It is sickening to note there are now ten times more slaves in the world than at the end of the transatlantic slave trade.

The gang masters licensing agency is only licensed to operate in Fisheries, Forestry or Agriculture and there are no constraints on Construction, hotels or domestic labour markets which makes it almost impossible to legislate or keep track of where these victims end up.

At Heathrow Airport in one month early in 2011 unaccompanied children arriving as young as ten were taken into Local Authority care yet four months later were found working as child prostitutes in Italy where they had been trafficked again, after being tracked down by their gang masters and spirited away.

Conference calls upon the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Work with Labour Link on campaigning to UK Government to highlight the plight of these individuals.
- 2) Use the expertise within the sister organisations, the International Committee and the Regional Women's Committee and Equality Officers to encourage branches to discuss and feedback in the spirit of information exchange and education.
- 3) Report back to National Women's Conference in 2013 with progress made.

East Midlands Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

31. CUBA AS A ROLE MODEL FOR WOMEN IN PUBLIC ROLES

Today only twenty two per cent of MPs in the House of Commons and twenty per cent of members of the House of Lords are women. Compare this with Cuba where women hold thirty five per cent of parliamentary seats in the Cuban National Assembly. Therefore Cuba ranks sixth out of one hundred and sixty two countries, regarding female participation in political life. In contrast the public sector cuts in this country are having a disproportionate affect on women and the government's reform agenda will lead to an even bigger divide in society creating a negative impact on women in public roles.

The Cuban Constitution guarantees women economic, political, social, cultural and family rights and opportunities equal to those of men. Article 32 of the Cuban Constitution, states that women and men enjoy the same economic, political, cultural, social and family rights.

This conference therefore calls upon the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Work with Labour Link to encourage more women to become Councillors and MPs.
- 2) Work with the TUC and sister unions in promoting and encouraging women to become engaged in politics.
- 3) Encourage regions to promote courses that empower women to become activists.

South West Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

32. MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4

In the year 2000, at the Millennium Summit, one hundred and eighty nine members' of states of the United Nations declared that they would spare no effort to achieve a set of eight goals aimed at raising the level of development, health and prosperity of the globe by the end of the year of 2015.

In 2009 this conference heard of the work that still needed to be done on Goals 4 and 5. Goal 4 aims to reduce child mortality. Steady progress has been made with the mortality rate for children under five declining globally by a third. All regions except sub Saharan Africa, southern Asia and Oceania have seen reductions of at least fifty per cent. In 1990 the death rate among the under fives stood at an astonishing twelve point four million annually, this declined to eight point one million in 2009. The success of this Goal has led to twelve thousand fewer children dying each day. But children from the poorest households are still two to three times more likely to die before the age of five than children from the richest households.

Conference, between 2000 and 2008 child death rates due to measles has plummeted due to improved immunisation coverage and the opportunity for a second dose. This led to a seventy eight per cent drop in measles deaths worldwide. But shortfalls in funding for measles control activities means that a number of priority countries are facing depleting resources for routine immunisations and immunisation campaigns. as a result, outbreaks of the disease are on the rise. Adequate funding and strong political commitment and high quality implementation are needed o ensure that the reduction in child mortality rates continues to fall.

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals Report 2011 states that a mother's education is a power determinant of child survival. In all developing regions, children with mothers with some education are less at risk of dying. A child's chances of survival increase even further if the mother has secondary or higher education. Empowering women, removing financial and social barriers to welfare, encouraging more innovations to make critical services more available to the poor and increasing the accountability of health systems at the local level are all examples of policy interventions that could improve equity, with benefits for child survival.

Conference, every minute fifteen children will die due to a preventable disease. With this in mind, Conference calls on the National Women's Committee to continue to:

- 1) Work with Labour Link to lobby the Government to ensure that the Millennium Development Goals are kept on track.
- 2) Work with Regional Women's Committees and UNISON's International Committee to raise awareness of the importance of the Development goals and in particular Goal 4.
- 3) To prepare a report to National Women's Conference 2013 to show the work that has been done.

East Midlands Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

33. INTERNATIONAL LINKS

This Conference is proud of the reputation that UNISON has on International work.

In the Greater London Region, the Regional Women's Committee (RWC) has been developing links with the Nicaraguan Communal Movement (NCM), through the Nicaraguan Solidarity Campaign, and in 2010 co sponsored the development of a social project for the improvement in living conditions for members of the NCM in dwellings in dispersed locations in twelve communities of the municipality.

This year we are proposing to help with the construction of much needed latrines in the same communities. Latrines are surely one of the most basic requirements for the eradication of disease and for healthy living conditions, and we are glad to be able to help these women in the daily struggle to improve their lives.

During the year we have exchanged photos and information about each other and about events that the women have supported eg a day of action and awareness on the prevention of AIDS/HIV.

The Greater London RWC will be continuing to develop links and to seek to further support and share information with the La Concha co operative.

Conference notes the benefits of establishing such links and therefore instructs the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Encourage all regional women's committee to become involved in international work and to forge links with women's groups overseas.
- 2) Remind women members of the re establishment of UNISON's Trade Union International Development Fund which provides funding for international initiatives between UNISON and sister unions in other countries, and to encourage them to apply for such funding.
- 3) Continue to encourage UNISON women members to become involved by becoming Branch International Officers.

- 4) Continue to work towards establishing an ongoing global women's trade union network, as agreed at National Women's Conference 2010.

Greater London Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

34. ACKNOWLEDGING AND SUPPORTING WOMEN ACTIVISTS IN THE ARAB SPRING

It is a sad truth that opportunities for capitalising on the success of union activity within the recent Arab uprisings have mostly been missed by the mainstream press. Some of you may have read, in tiny snippets, or in specialist media that unions have been a powerful element in generating the Arab Spring. In some countries the organised demands for constitutional change have actually been led by union activists.

However, the mainstream press have committed very little airtime or space to investigating the true extent of trade union influence on the Arab Spring, and even less on the outcomes caused by women trade union activists.

This means that unions are not getting the credit they are due for this historic movement; a movement that is popular with the British public and has been described at a recent party conference as "undoubtedly having the potential to bring about the greatest single advance in human freedom since the end of the Cold War".

Unions may not be getting the credit they deserve, but for some of the women activists the situation is far worse. Many have been, and are still being, raped, beaten and detained in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Bahrain, Yemen and Syria. Despite assurances from the King of Bahrain in June that military trials of pro reform protesters would be transferred to civilian courts, both the vice president of the Bahrain Teachers Union (Jalila al-Salman) and the head of the Bahrain Nursing Society (Roula al-saffar) are awaiting a military trial. Both women report having been tortured and have been on hunger strike while in detention.

Middle Eastern women's activism in their unions is not new. As Maya Jribi, a successful activist in Egypt put "The women's role has been huge, not just in the revolution, but for years before it, from supporting strikes to staging sit-ins".

But the women are now afraid that their efforts risk going unrewarded, and that men who were keen to have them on the streets crying "Freedom" may not be so happy to have them in positions of power. One concern on the secular left is that the return of Islamist parties could reverse gains made on women's rights. An Egyptian protester told Catherine Ashton, (EU foreign policy) during a recent visit to Tahrir Square: "The men were keen for me to be here when we were demanding that Mubarak should go. But now he has gone, they want me to go home".

In view of the impending season of action, and the prevalence of damaging media reports, we ask the National Women's Committee to highlight maximum exposure of the positive aspects of union action in the success of the Arab Spring, and in particular women's union action, where appropriate.

We further instruct the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Liaise with UNISON's National International Committee to promote awareness of women specific atrocities in countries that fall within the international work programme, and to further encourage UNISON's Regional International Committees to include a gender element to their work programmes.
- 2) Make every effort to work with the International Committee, in solidarity with other trade unions, to campaign against military trials for women trade unionists in Bahrain and other Middle East countries.

Women may have contributed significantly to the Arab Spring, but it remains to be seen if the Arab Spring will contribute to empowering of Arab women workers and union activists. Let's at least make sure that our union is at the forefront of supporting that contribution.

Devon County

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

35. WOMEN IN LIBYA

With the dramatic end of the Gaddafi regime, Libya has the chance for a different future, one that contains real freedoms and liberty for all its citizens and potentially many changes for the lives of Libyan women.

Women have been significant in the struggle for a new and free Libya; taking to the streets in February protesting; smuggling arms beneath their clothing, founding a number of civil society groups, tweeting updates, blogging on progress, feeding and nursing the injured, mourning the dead. Libyan women may not have been visible on the streets with guns, but they have played an equally important role, displaying courage and strength that has been invaluable to the success of the people's revolution. Women have taken a central role alongside men.

And yet despite these contributions the National Transitional Council has very few women amongst its number.

At the present time, there are many issues for women in Libya; they live in a society that is emerging from years of dictatorship and control.

What is to become of women's role in this new era for Libya? Without women's involvement in the key decision making forums fundamental change and true equality for women in Libya is unlikely to become a reality

This conference applauds the courageous efforts of women in Libya in bringing about political change and recognises that women's involvement is essential to peace building in a new and democratic Libya.

This conference supports the efforts of women in Libya to gain political representation and influence in the new structures. Conference recognises that dictatorship and tradition have held back women's progress in Libya for over 42 years.

This conference asks the National Women's Committee to:

- 1) Establish links with Libyan women public sector workers ; and
- 2) invite a Libyan woman public sector worker to address a future women's conference.

Eastern Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS

36. STANDING ORDERS 2.2

Delete 2.2 No delegate shall serve on standing orders committee for more than three consecutive years.

Replace with:

2.2 No delegate shall serve on standing orders committee for more than four consecutive years.

East Midlands Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

SUPPORT

37. STANDING ORDERS 3

Insert new 3.3:

Each motion shall consist of no more than three hundred words, and each amendment shall consist of no more than fifty words.

Renumber accordingly.

Scotland Region

National Women's Committee Policy:

OPPOSE

3. GUIDE TO CONFERENCE PROCEDURES

1. **Purpose of Conference**

A major function of the Conference is to formulate policy proposals for women's organisation, the National Women's Committee and future conferences. It is also a mechanism for exchanging information and knowledge and encouraging women to participate in the union.

2. **Conduct of Conference**

The Conference will proceed in accordance with the Standing Orders, and the information contained in this guide.

Delegates are asked to note, in particular, the guidelines on conduct. This is a contract that everyone attending the conference must adhere to.

3. **Role of the Standing Orders Committee**

The composition of the Standing Orders Committee (SOC) ensures that it is a completely impartial body, responsible only to Conference. The Committee is responsible for the preparation of the final agenda for Conference, determining the order of business, considering whether emergency motions should be put to Conference, and generally ensuring that Standing Orders are adhered to.

The Standing Orders Committee meets throughout Conference and is available to meet with delegates. This is where you should go if you want to raise an issue concerning the business of Conference. The Standing Orders Committee will be based in **Meeting Room 3, 2nd Floor, Brighton Centre,**

The Standing Orders Steward will be the first point of contact and may arrange an appointment for you at a later time if there are other delegates waiting, or if it's more convenient for you.

Please do not hesitate to approach the Standing Orders Committee if you require advice or assistance.

4. **Role of Chair of Standing Orders Committee**

The Chairperson chairs meetings of the Standing Orders Committee, ensuring clear decisions are reached, and that a fair hearing is given to all branches and delegates coming before the Committee.

The Chairperson delivers regular reports from the Standing Orders Committee to Conference. These reports include items such as the proposed order of business, withdrawals and emergency motions.

5. Role of Secretary to Standing Orders Committee

The Secretary ensures that all relevant information is brought before the Standing Orders Committee, advises the Committee on constitutional matters and provides support and advice to the Chairperson.

6. The Business of Conference

At the start of Conference, the Standing Orders Committee report will be put to Conference and voted on. That will agree the timetable and order of business for Conference.

7. How Debates are Conducted

At the start of each debate, the Conference Chair will explain how the debate is to be conducted. Usually, a single motion, and any amendment(s), is(are) debated. At other times, a group of motions/composites on the same subject may be taken together.

Any items not reached in a Conference session are moved to the next day. However, subject to the decision of the Conference Chair, a debate that has started must be completed before the close of the session.

If you want to speak, REMEMBER:

If you are moving a motion or speaking in the debate, please come to the front of the hall in good time so that you are ready. A row of seats is kept free for this purpose, part of which is for those wishing to speak 'for' the motion, and part for those speaking 'against' it. A seat is also reserved for the delegate with the right of reply.

Motions

Before a motion can be debated and voted on by conference delegates, it must be moved by a delegate who has been elected to represent the constituent body that submitted the motion. In the absence of such a delegate, another delegate may move the motion if prior notification has been given to the Standing Orders Committee.

The mover of a motion may speak for up to FIVE minutes. Subsequent speakers to a debate may speak for up to THREE minutes.

Amendments

If there is an amendment to a motion, it is taken after the main motion has been moved. The amendment is then debated and voted on. No further amendments can be moved until a decision is taken on the amendment being debated. When an amendment to a motion is carried, the motion, as amended, becomes the substantive motion, to which a further amendment may be moved.

Group Debates/Sequential Voting

Where, in the view of the Standing Orders Committee, separate debates on specified motions and/or amendments dealing with the same subject would lead to undue repetition in the debates, a grouped debate and/or sequential voting may be adopted by Conference.

The following procedure will be followed:

- the Conference Chair will advise Conference of the procedure and order of debate. Advice will be given on the effects of certain proposals on others;
- all motions and amendments will be moved;
- the general debate shall take place;
- the movers will take their right of reply in the order in which the motions were moved;
- the Conference Chair shall again state the order of voting and advise Conference which, if any, motions or amendments will fall if others are carried;
- voting will take place on motions, preceded by relevant amendments, in the order in which they were moved;
- a debate being conducted under this procedure may not be adjourned until all the motions and amendments have been moved.

Right of Reply

The right of reply lies with the mover of the original motion in all debates. The mover may use the right of reply at any time, at her discretion.

There is no specific provision for a seconder.

8. Speaking in Debate

When you speak, remember to give your name and branch, say which motion you are speaking about, and whether you are moving, supporting or opposing it.

Keep an eye on the green light. When it goes off and a yellow light comes on, you have one minute left. When the red light comes on, you **MUST STOP**.

9. **Raising a Point of Order**

A delegate may at any stage in the Conference raise a point of order if she considers that the business is not being conducted in accordance with the union's rules or Conference Standing Orders, or wishes to move a procedural motion.

There is a seat at the front of the rostrum reserved for points of order, and a special microphone. If you wish to raise a point of order, you should make your way to the point of order seat, make yourself known to the member of staff at the rostrum control, and identify the point of order.

The Chair will call you to speak.

Some points of order may be new to delegates. A delegate may move, at any time, that:

- the question be now put (Conference should vote on the motion);
- Conference proceed to the next business; (without Conference taking a vote on the motion);
- the debate be adjourned.

Each of these motions will be put to the vote without discussion and no amendment is allowed. However, in the case of the motion that the question be now put, the Chair may advise Conference not to accept the motion if she feels that the matter has not been sufficiently discussed. If the motion is carried, it will take effect only after an existing right of reply has been exercised.

No one who has already spoken in a debate may move either next business or adjournment of the debate.

A delegate may also move at any time that Conference move into private session. In this case, the Chair may, at her discretion, permit discussion and amendments.

10. **Reference Back**

There is no provision in the Standing Orders for reference back. However, for the purpose of the Annual Report, delegates may move reference back of a paragraph of the report with which they do not agree. If accepted by Conference, the effect of moving reference back in this case is to not accept the particular paragraph of the Annual Report.

11. **Remit**

The National Women's Committee announces its policy on motions in advance. Remit means that the National Women's Committee is asking Conference not to vote on the motion, but to refer the issues raised in the motion to the National Women's Committee for further clarification, elaboration or investigation.

Where the National Women's Committee policy on a motion is remit, the following procedure will apply:

- If the branch accepts remittal, the proposal is put to Conference, for Conference to approve remittal;
- If Conference rejects remittal, the motion is then voted on, for and against, by Conference;
- If the branch does not accept remittal, Conference votes on the motion, for and against.

In all cases, Conference makes the final decision.

12. Withdrawing Motions/Amendments

Branches, Regional Women's Committees or the National Women's Committee wishing to withdraw a motion or amendment should notify the Standing Orders Committee. A withdrawal form is available from the Standing Orders Committee.

13. Emergency Motions

Emergency motions will only be considered by the Standing Orders Committee if they are signed on behalf of the submitting body and provide details of the meeting of women members at which the motion was adopted. The subject matter giving rise to the emergency must have occurred after the deadline for motions and amendments. The Standing Orders Committee will apply strict criteria to proposed emergency motions.

14. Voting Rights

Voting at Conference is by show of hands. Branch delegates have the right to vote.

Delegates representing the national self-organised committees, regional women's groups and the National Executive Council do not have the right to vote.

Voting rights in ballots for delegates to National Delegate Conference, and for motions to be submitted to that Conference, are as set out above.

15. Private Sessions

Although rare, there are occasions when Conference business has to exclude those who are not UNISON members.

The Chair of Conference will announce the private session and ask those individuals who are not permitted to remain in the hall to leave.

Admission to the floor of Conference will be authorised by the stewards only on the production of the relevant credential. Admission to the visitors' area will be confined

to those individuals who can prove they are current UNISON members by, for example, the production of a UNISON membership card, wage slip with UNISON subscription deductions or a letter of verification from their branch. This procedure is essential for your security and safety and your co-operation and assistance would be appreciated.

UNISON members are advised to ensure that they bring some form of proof of membership with them to the Conference.

4. STANDING ORDERS FOR NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

**STANDING ORDERS FOR NATIONAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE
2012**

(as amended at National Women's Conference 2010)

1. APPLICATION OF STANDING ORDERS

- 1.1 These Standing Orders shall apply to all meetings of the National Women's Conference.

2. STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

- 2.1 The members of the Standing Orders Committee shall hold office from the end of one National Women's Conference until the end of the next National Women's Conference.

- 2.2 No delegates shall serve on Standing Orders Committees for more than three consecutive years.

- 2.3 At its first meeting after it takes office, the Committee shall elect a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson from amongst its members.

- 2.4 The functions of the Committee shall, subject to these Standing Orders, be to:

2.4.1 Ensure that the Union's Rules and Standing Orders relating to the business of Conferences are observed, and notify the Chairperson of any violation that may be brought to the Committee's notice.

2.4.2 Draw up the preliminary agenda and final agenda of Conference business, and proposed hours of business.

2.4.3 Determine the order in which the business of Conference shall be conducted, subject to the approval of Conference.

2.4.4 Consider all motions and amendments submitted for consideration by Conference and, for the purpose of enabling Conference to transact its business effectively, the Committee shall:

2.4.4.1 decide whether such motions and amendments have been submitted in accordance with the UNISON Rule Book, and specifically principles outlined in Section D4, and in accordance with these standing orders;

- 2.4.4.2 group together motions and amendments relating to the same subject, decide the order in which they should be considered and whether they should be debated and voted on separately or debated together and voted on sequentially;
 - 2.4.4.3 make such minor wording changes of a technical nature as the Committee may consider necessary and which will render competent motions and/or amendments submitted with minor errors and/or omissions;
 - 2.4.4.4 prepare and revise, in consultation with the movers of motions and amendments, composite motions in terms which in the opinion of the Committee best express the subject of such motions and amendments;
 - 2.4.4.5 refer to another representative body within the Union a motion or amendment which in the opinion of the Committee should properly be considered there. The mover shall be informed of the reason for so doing.
 - 2.4.4.6 have power to do all such things as may be necessary to give effect to these Standing Orders.
 - 2.4.4.7 The Standing Orders Committee will, from time to time, issue guidelines in order to assist with the smooth running of Conference and submission of motions and amendments. Such guidelines shall be consistent with these Standing Orders and amendments will be ratified by the Standing Orders Committee at their final meeting at conference, prior to issue with the papers for conference in the following year.
 - 2.4.4.8 Any guidance issued by SOC will be reviewed by SOC following each National Women's Conference to ensure the guidance continues to be fit for purpose.
- 2.5 Any decisions of the Committee which are to be reported to Conference shall be announced by the Chairperson of the Committee and shall be subject to ratification by Conference.

3. MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS - PRE-CONFERENCE PROCEDURE

- 3.1. The National Women's Committee shall have the right to submit to the National Women's Conference reports, statements, motions, amendments to motions and amendments to Standing Orders.
- 3.2 Each branch and regional women's group, other national self-organised groups and the National Young Members' Forum may submit motions, amendments to motions and amendments to Standing Orders.
- 3.3 Motions and amendments shall be sent to the Executive Office in order that the Standing Orders Committee may consider them for inclusion in the preliminary agenda. Such motions or amendments shall be in writing and signed by the appropriate persons from the body on whose behalf it is submitted.
- 3.4 The date and time by which motions and amendments to be considered for the Conference shall be received by the Executive Office shall be as stated in the timetable laid out in Rule D.1.9 of UNISON rules.
- 3.5.1 A motion or amendment should normally be moved by a delegate of the branch, region or other approved body proposing that motion or amendment.
- 3.5.2 In the absence of a delegate of the branch, the motion or amendment may be moved by the Regional Delegate from the region to which that branch belongs, only where prior notification has been given to the Standing Orders Committee, but may not be moved formally from the Chair.
- 3.5.3 In the event of SO 3.5.2 being applied, the Presiding Conference Chair shall advise Conference of the Procedure.
- 3.5.4 If there is no other delegate to move the motion or amendment, then the motion or amendment falls.

4. CONDUCT OF CONFERENCES

- 4.1 The National Women's Conference shall meet in public session, except that by direction of the National Women's Committee or by resolution of the Conference, the whole or any part of a conference may be held in private. In addition to the elected delegates the only persons permitted to attend a private session of a Conference shall be:

4.1.1 such members of staff as have been authorized by the General Secretary to attend Conference

4.1.2 such other persons as the Chairperson may determine.

5. RIGHT TO SPEAK

5.1 Apart from the elected delegates and those nominated persons who have the right to speak at the National Women's Conference, no other person shall speak except by permission of the Standing Orders Committee, or by the resolution of Conference.

5.2 Paid officers may only speak at Conference to give reports, answer questions and provide information. Paid officers may not speak in debate on motions and amendments.

6. PROCEDURES AND POINTS OF ORDER

6.1 Any questions of procedure or order raised during a Conference shall be decided by the Chairperson whose ruling shall be final and binding.

7. POWERS OF CONFERENCE CHAIRPERSONS

7.1 Upon the Chairperson rising during a Conference session, any person then addressing Conference shall resume her seat and no other person shall rise to speak until the Chairperson authorises proceedings to continue.

7.2 The Chairperson may call attention to any remarks or language running counter to the rules of UNISON, or any breach of order on the part of a member, and may direct such a member to discontinue her speech.

7.3 The Chairperson shall have power to call any person to order who is causing a disturbance in any session of Conference and if that person refuses to obey the Chairperson, she shall be named by the Chairperson, shall forthwith leave the Conference Hall, and shall take no further part in the proceedings of that Conference.

8. VOTING

8.1 The method of voting shall be by a show of hands of those people present who are delegates to conference with the exception of delegates representing the national self organised committees, the young members' forum, regional women's groups, the National Executive Council and the standing orders committee, who do not have the

right to vote. The presiding conference chair shall declare the result or shall call for a count.

8.2 A count may also be called if, after a presiding conference chair's declaration of a result, at least 10% of the members present immediately indicate that they want a count.

8.3 When a count has been called:

8.3.1 No other conference business may proceed until the count has been completed.

8.3.2 The presiding Conference Chair shall immediately instruct the tellers to close the doors. Any person may leave the conference during the time that the doors are closed. Members of the Standing Orders Committee and UNISON staff may enter the conference, should they deem their business to be such that it cannot wait until the count is completed, whilst the doors are closed.

8.3.3 The presiding Conference Chair shall instruct the tellers to do a count of those in favour, those against, and those not voting, and shall declare the result. Once the result has been declared the presiding Conference Chair shall instruct the tellers to re-open the doors.

9. TELLERS

9.1 Conference shall appoint delegates to act as tellers for the duration of the Conference. Tellers shall not be members of the National Women's Committee or the Standing Orders Committee.

10. WITHDRAWALS OF MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

10.1 A mover of a motion or amendment who wishes to withdraw their motion or amendment shall inform the Standing Orders Committee. The Standing Orders Committee shall report this request to Conference. Conference shall decide whether or not the motion or amendment may be withdrawn.

10.2 If a motion is withdrawn with the consent of Conference and there is an amendment to that motion, which appeared in the preliminary agenda, then that amendment shall fall.

11. MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS NOT ON THE AGENDA (EMERGENCY MOTIONS)

- 11.1 A motion or amendment which is not shown on the final agenda may not be considered by Conference without the prior approval of the Standing Orders Committee and the consent of Conference, which shall be governed by the following rules:
- 11.1.1 Such motion or amendment shall be in writing, signed by the appropriate persons from the body on whose behalf it is submitted and shall be sent to the Standing Orders Committee at least five working days before the commencement of Conference, except if it relates to events which take place thereafter. It will state at which meeting it was debated and adopted.
 - 11.1.2 If the Standing Orders Committee gives its approval to the motion or amendment being considered, copies of the motion or amendment shall be made available for delegates at least one hour before Conference is asked to decide whether to consent to the matter being considered.
 - 11.1.3 An emergency motion will not be given priority over other motions and amendments on the agenda except where the Standing Orders Committee and/or Conference decide that the purpose of the motion in question would be frustrated if it were not dealt with at an earlier session of the Conference.

12. PROCEDURAL MOTIONS

Subject to SOs 12.9 and 16.2.6 the following procedural motions may be moved at any time without notice on the agenda:

- 12.1 That the question be now put, provided that:
 - 12.1.1 The Chairperson may advise Conference not to accept this motion if in her opinion the matter has not been sufficiently discussed.
 - 12.1.2 If the motion is carried, it shall take effect at once subject only to any right of reply under these Standing Orders.
- 12.2 That precedence be given to any particular business set forth on the agenda subject to the provisions of Standing Order 11.
- 12.3 That the Conference proceed to the next business.
- 12.4 That the debate be adjourned.

- 12.5 That the speaker no longer be heard.
- 12.6 That the Conference (or any part thereof) be held in private session provided that:
- 12.7 A motion under SO 12.1, 12.2 and 12.3 shall be immediately put to the vote without discussion and no amendment shall be allowed.
- 12.8 The Chairperson may at her discretion permit a motion under Rule 12.5 to be discussed and amendments moved.
- 12.9 No motion under SO 12.1, 12.2 or 12.3 shall be moved by a person who has spoken on the motion or amendment in question.
- 12.10 That leave be given to amend a motion or an amendment with the prior approval of the Standing Orders Committee.
- 12.11 A delegate who moves a procedural motion under SO12.1 shall not speak on any motion or amendment debated as a result of that procedural motion.

13. AMENDMENTS TO A MOTION

- 13.1 When an amendment to a motion is moved, no further amendment may be moved until the first one is disposed of, subject to S.O.16
- 13.2 When an amendment is defeated, a further amendment may be moved to the original motion.
- 13.3 When an amendment to a motion is carried, the motion, as so amended, shall become the substantive motion, to which a further amendment may be moved. The right of reply belongs to the mover of the original motion regardless of amendments carried.
- 13.4 The mover of a motion may accept an amendment or amendments to their motion, but each amendment must be moved separately and voted upon.

14. LIMIT OF SPEECHES

- 14.1 The mover of a motion or an amendment shall speak for no more than five minutes, and each subsequent speaker shall speak for no more than three minutes.
- 14.2 No person shall speak more than once on a question, except that the mover of the original motion may exercise a right of reply for not more than three minutes, introducing no new material.

14.3 These time limits may be amended where prior approval has been sought from the Standing Orders Committee.

14.4 The Chair shall, at their discretion, extend a particular speaker's time limit if their access requirements have an impact on speaking time.

15. POINTS OF ORDER

15.1 A delegate may, at any stage in a Conference, raise a point of order if she considers that the business is not being conducted in accordance with the Union's Rules and Standing Orders.

15.2 Such a point of order must be raised as soon as the alleged breach occurs or at the earliest practicable moment thereafter.

15.3 The Point of Order shall not be debated or amended, and the Chairperson shall make an immediate ruling under S.O.6.1.

16. GROUPED DEBATES AND SEQUENTIAL VOTING

16.1 Where, in the view of the Standing Orders Committee, separate debates on specified motions and/or amendments dealing with the same subject matter would lead to undue repetition in the debates, a grouped debate and/or sequential voting may be adopted by Conference. This is subject to agreement of the parties that submitted the motions.

16.2 The following procedure will be followed:

16.2.1 The Chairperson will advise Conference of the order of business and of the sequence in which motions and amendments will be moved and voted on following a general debate, and of the effect of certain proposals on others.

16.2.2 All motions and amendments included in the debate shall be moved.

16.2.3 The general debate shall take place.

16.2.4 The Chairperson shall again state the order of voting and shall advise Conference which, if any, motions or amendments will fall if others are carried.

16.2.5 Voting will take place on motions, preceded by relevant amendments, in the order in which they were moved.

16.2.6 A debate being conducted under this procedure may not be adjourned until after all the motions and amendments have been moved.

17. REPORTS BY NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

17.1 After the opening of Conference the National Women's Committee shall present its report for the past year.

17.2 If the National Women's Committee presents a report to Conference which contains proposals or recommendations requiring approval and adoption by Conference, the Committee shall submit it under a motion seeking such approval and adoption.

17.3 The Committee report shall be circulated prior to Conference.

18. REFERENCE OF OUTSTANDING ITEMS TO THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

18.1 If at the end of the National Women's Conference, the business of the Conference has not been concluded, all motions and amendments then outstanding shall stand referred to the National Women's Committee, which shall in due course report to members its decision on these matters and in any event, report back will be made within the next annual report to conference.

19. SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS

19.1 Any one or more of these Standing Orders may be suspended by a resolution of Conference in relation to a specific item of business properly before that Conference and to the proceedings thereon at that Conference, provided that at least two-thirds of the delegates present and voting shall vote for the resolution.

5. WORKING TOGETHER AT CONFERENCE – GUIDELINES

UNISON is committed to the fullest possible participation of all its members in the activities of the union. We want to ensure that no woman is put off from participation because of the actions, attitudes or language of other members.

In particular, black and disabled women and lesbians have the right not to be made to feel angry or distressed as a result of delegates' behaviour during this Conference.

It is therefore particularly important that during this Conference, we are all aware of our own attitudes and actions, as they affect others, and that we are willing to constructively challenge each other and are, ourselves, open to challenge.

The following guidelines have been drawn up to help all delegates to meet UNISON's commitments to the full participation of all its members in a practical and constructive way. Underlying these guidelines is a commitment to the principle that all delegates have an equal right to benefit from this Conference, to contribute to debate and discussion, and to enjoy the Conference.

We expect that all delegates to Conference will accept these principles and will assist in putting them into practice.

Working together

This Conference has been organised in order to bring together women from throughout UNISON. Between us, we have a wealth of experience and ideas. It is important that everyone feels equal and able to make a contribution if they wish, so please:

- listen to others and avoid being dismissive of their contribution;
- wait until a speaker has finished and do not interrupt their train of thought;
- aim to have reasoned discussion, not argument;
- try to make criticism constructive so that it helps others to develop confidence, skills and knowledge;
- make your own contribution as clear and concise as possible and do not dominate the discussion;
- ensure that everyone who wishes to speak is given the encouragement and opportunity to do so;
- ensure that you are respectful of disabled women's access needs.

Language

UNISON aims to be inclusive of all its members, enabling them to participate in all our activities. This brings with it a responsibility for all of us to make sure that we do not use language which others might find offensive. This means thinking about, for example, how you talk about individuals or groups. It means avoiding making statements, comments, or jokes that are based on your own or others' prejudice about individuals or groups of people.

Jargon

Jargon is a barrier to good communication. The more we become involved in trade union work, the more likely we are to use jargon. Take care to explain any jargon or initials you use which other members may not be familiar with, so that everyone understands what you are talking about.

Harassment

There must be no sexual, racist or anti-lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender harassment of any kind: sexual harassment – any unwanted or unwelcome sexual comments, looks, actions, suggestions or physical contact that is found to be objectionable and results in an unpleasant or intimidating environment being created; racial harassment – any unwanted and unwelcome terms, comments, actions or behaviour relating to a person's race, ethnic origin or colour which members of a racial, cultural or religious group find offensive and results in an unpleasant or intimidating environment being created;

Smoking

All formal sessions of the Conference are non-smoking. Other people's smoke is not only unpleasant and potentially harmful but can cause acute physical discomfort.

Socialising

The time during Conference that we spend informally socialising is extremely important. We hope that everyone finds this time valuable and enjoyable. This means, on the one hand, ensuring that everyone feels free to join in if they want and, on the other, not putting pressure on individuals to fall in with a group if they don't want.

For various reasons, some women may decide not to consume alcohol, so please do not put pressure on others to drink. Also we would ask that everyone respects each others differing needs for sleep. If you choose to stay up late, please try not to disturb those who have chosen to go to bed early.

Remember that if everyone is going to feel comfortable during social occasions, then the above guidelines and UNISON policies, particularly regarding harassment, must be adhered to throughout the whole Conference.

We would also like to remind delegates that both the conference venue and hotel staff are aware that we represent women in UNISON, and any adverse behaviour may reflect not only on the individual involved, but on women and UNISON generally. This applies as much to informal/social gatherings as to formal/conference sessions.

Flash photography

Flash photography is not permitted.

Men

Although the Conference is women delegates only, there will be men present throughout the Conference as:

- personal facilitators for disabled members;
- UNISON staff;

- hotel/conference staff;
- technical staff.

Delegates must appreciate that female staff cannot be insisted on where it would impinge on an employee's contractual right, or a disabled delegate's right to choose her own facilitator.

Delegates are asked to afford due courtesy and respect to the men present.

We sincerely hope that all delegates will understand the principles on which these guidelines are based, and will adhere to them, so that we can all feel relaxed and secure, can gain as much as possible from the whole Conference experience and, above all, enjoy ourselves.

If anyone has any queries, or requires further information about these guidelines, please ask a member of the National Women's Committee.

6. JARGON SHEET

QUICK GUIDE TO UNISON JARGON	
Self-Organisation	Groups facing discrimination meeting and organising to determine their collective agenda and feeding it into the union's structure.
SOGs	The four self-organised groups: defined by UNISON national rules as women members, black members, disabled members and LGBT members
NLGBT	National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Committee
NDMC	National Disabled Members' Committee
NBMC	National Black Members' Committee
NWC	National Women's Committee
Self-Definition	Right of people to define themselves, for example LGBT or a disabled person.
Proportionality	The representation of women and men in fair proportion to the relevant number of female and male members – UNISON has a rulebook commitment to proportionality.
Fair Representation	The broad balance of representation of members taking into account the balance between part-time and full-time workers, manual and non-manual workers, different occupations, skills, qualifications, responsibilities, race, sexuality and disability – UNISON has a rulebook commitment to fair representation.
National Delegate Conference	Supreme decision making body of UNISON – annual conference of branch delegates, at which the self-organised groups have representation.
NEC	National Executive Council - elected body of lay members.
Lay Structure	A decision making body of UNISON members that does not include employees of the union.
Service Groups	Employer-based structures in the union. UNISON organises members in the following services - Energy, Healthcare, Higher Education, Local Government, Police Staff, Transport and Water and Environment. Each service group has autonomy to decide the group's general policy and negotiate on behalf of their members. Each service group has an annual conference of delegates which sets the group's agenda for the following year.
Sector	A sub-group of a service group for example the Voluntary Sector of the Local Government or Health Service Group or the Nursing Sector of the Health Service Group.
APF/Labour Link	Affiliated Political Fund: Fund from contributions from opted-in members used to support the Labour Party via the UNISON-Labour Link.
GPF	General Political Fund: Fund from contributions from opted-in members used for non party political campaigning.

CONFERENCE ORGANISATION	
Standing Orders Committee	Elected body of women members which oversees the smooth running of Conference business and ensures that the Standing Orders are observed.
Standing Orders	The rules governing the conduct of business - agreed by Conference as a whole.
Plenary	All delegates meeting together.
Motion	A formal proposal to be debated and voted upon.
Amendment	A proposed change to a motion that deletes from or adds to it.
Grouped Debate.	Two or more motions on the same topic, plus their amendments, debated together, but voted on separately, to allow all the positions in a discussion to be presented.
Substantive	Motion as amended.
Composite	Two or more motions or amendments on the same topic combined to make one composite motion.
Competent	To be competent a motion or amendment must comply with Standing Orders and the guidance issued by the Standing Orders Committee, be appropriate and make sense, such as not demanding something which is already UNISON policy or instructing a body outside UNISON.

7. HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

7 HEALTH AND SAFETY INFORMATION

7.1 UNISON Conferences Health and Safety Policy Statement

UNISON has in place a Health and Safety policy document (copy available in the Conference Office) which applies to all the activities that it undertakes including the organisation and administration of all its conferences.

This means that UNISON is committed to its responsibility to provide delegates, sharers, visitors, and staff to conferences with a healthy and safe environment. UNISON will comply with all health and safety statutory requirements and codes of practice as a minimum standard.

UNISON will (so far as is reasonably practicable) pay particular attention to:

- the provision and maintenance of plant and systems of work that are safe and healthy;
- arrangements for ensuring safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transport of articles and substances;
- the provision of such information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure the health and safety at work of staff and others attending conference;
- the provision of a safe means of access to and egress from conference; and
- the maintenance of a conference working environment that is safe, without risks to health and provides adequate facilities and arrangements for welfare at work.

To fulfil its commitment UNISON works closely with representatives of its staff, venue management, contractors and all service providers to produce agreed policies and procedures on health and safety issues and to monitor their application.

In the event of any Health and Safety issues and problems arising they should be directed immediately to a member of staff who will liaise with the Conference Office.

7.2 Evacuation Procedures

A pre-recorded message will be played before the start of Conference each session.

If you have any queries, please contact the Conference Enquiry Desk.

8. ACCESS DETAILS

8.1 Flash Photography

The National Disabled Members' Committee has indicated an access issue with flash photography. It can cause visual impairment and disorientation and interferes with signed communications.

Therefore the National Executive Council has decided that there will be no flash photography at National Delegate Conference.

This will also apply to National Women's Conference, at all times during the Conference, and in the Conference environs, at social events and in shared events.

8.2 Mobile Phones

The sound from mobile phones can interfere with access equipment, therefore please either turn your mobile phone off, or switch it to silent mode, while in the Conference Hall.

ACCESSIBILITY SUMMARY

Accessibility Summary of the Brighton Centre, King's Road, Brighton BN1 2GR

Parking

The Brighton Centre is well served by 3 multi storey NCP car parks.

Russell Road car park is sited in the same block as the Brighton Centre and the pedestrian access from the car park is located at the corner of Russell Road and Cannon Place.

Car parks Churchill 1 and Churchill 2 are located to the North side of Russell Road. Pedestrian access via lifts is located within the Churchill shopping centre.

For any delegates using wheelchairs and wishing to park close to the Brighton Centre, the NCP Russell Road car park would be the most convenient. The Russell Road car park has 16 dedicated disabled parking bays sited close to the car park passenger lifts and 2 are located on each floor.

Main Entrance to the Brighton Centre

The Brighton Centre comprises of 2 buildings which are interconnected; the Brighton Centre and The Syndicate Wing. The main entrance to the Brighton Centre is located on Kings Road and the main entrance to The Syndicate Wing is located on Russell Road. Access between each building is also available internally.

Exterior Access

For delegates arriving by wheelchair, there is a dedicated wheelchair access door on the West side of the new frontage, this has push button facility. This allows access to a small foyer area servicing the Brighton Centre Box Office and also FEED café. There is then another push button activated door alongside the three revolving doors which facilitates access to The Brighton Centre main foyer.

For delegates arriving on foot, there is a large revolving door to the new frontage of the venue facilitating access to a small foyer servicing The Brighton Centre Box Office and FEED café, there are then three revolving doors allowing access to The Brighton Centre main foyer. There is also access from FEED café into the Main Foyer which is also fully accessible compliant

Please note that the 3 sets of double doors located to the East section of the King's Road elevation are Fire Doors only and do not provide access into the building.

Main Entrance to the adjacent Syndicate Wing

Exterior Access

The main entrance to the Syndicate Wing is located on Russell Road and is accessed via 3 double door sets which are of manual operation. There is no designated powered

accessible entrance door, however a steward should always be available to offer assistance if required.

Internal Access into the Syndicate Wing

The Syndicate Wing can also be accessed from the inside of the Brighton Centre.

For delegates travelling by wheelchair, please travel to the rear of the Brighton Centre at Ground Floor level. There are 3 lifts located at the rear of the building. Take the lift furthest on the right as you face the lifts. Travel one level up to the Mezzanine Level. When you exit the lift you will see a series of Fire Exit doors located in front of you. Turn right and travel to the far end of the Fire Exit doors. Behind the Fire Exit door at the far end of the run, within the lobby, is a semi automatic powered door which is operated by a metal push plate. Push the plate and the door will open to provide access through to The Syndicate Wing, via a ramp sited within a loading bay. This will lead either to a lift or through to Syndicate Room 2 on the Ground Floor.

If you require assistance at any stage, please ask a steward.

For delegates able to use stairs, please use the internal stepped access located at the rear of the Brighton Centre. This will take you straight through into The Syndicate Wing.

Main Foyer

The Main Foyer area within the Brighton Centre is large and generally easy to access. 2 Enquiry Desks will be provided at which portable induction loops are located.

Communal Areas: Brighton Centre

All rooms where meetings are held incorporate perimeter induction loop systems.

Ground Floor

The Ground Floor Box Office is located at the front of the building (Kings Road side). It has a low level counter section located at the far end and has a portable hearing induction loop installed.

The Ground Floor Information & Gifts counter is located to the front of the building on the East side. It incorporates a low level counter section and a portable induction loop.

Between the ground and the first floor the staircase is made up of 3 steps to a 1500mm deep landing, then 16 steps to another landing then 12 steps up to the first floor. The treads measure 295mm approx. and the risers measure 150mm approx.. The unobstructed width of the stairs is approx. 1920mm wide.

There are no tonally contrasting nosings identifying the edge of each tread and riser.

Mezzanine Level

There is a V.I.P. / Security Counter located at the rear of the building (Russell Road side). This incorporates a low level counter section and a portable hearing induction loop. This can be accessed by the lifts at the rear of the building. Take the far left lift as you face them and travel up to the Mezzanine level. The lift exits within the V.I.P. / Security area.

First Floor

The First Floor incorporates Auditorium 1 and Auditorium 2. Both halls have a permanent induction loop installed.

There are designated wheelchair locations provided during both standing and seated concerts.

The First Floor also incorporates a 2Bar, East and West bars, each have a low level counter section.

The First Aid Room is situated to the rear of the West Bar.

Second Floor

This is a small floor area incorporating a Meeting Room 3, Office 4, Meeting Room 5 and Kitchen and is located to the rear of the building.

Third Floor

The Restaurant located at the front (Kings Road side) and has a low level counter section. This area is all at one level, is wheelchair accessible via lifts 1 and 2

At third floor level, within the auditorium area a dedicated platform area has been provided for any delegates using wheelchairs. This wheelchair platform is located in a prime area on the South balcony.

There is no direct access between the South side of the building and the North side of the building for any delegates.

2 public telephones are provided on a stair landing at the rear of the Brighton Centre. There are currently no telephones which are considered to be accessible.

On the Third Floor North side of the venue you will find Meeting Rooms 6, 8, 9 and 10 and Offices 7, 11, 12 and 13. These are all fully accessible for wheelchair users via the lifts to the North side of the venue and are also accessed via the North staircase which also takes you to Syndicates 3 and 4

Communal Areas: The Syndicate Wing

The Syndicate Wing has Syndicate Rooms 1 and 2 located on the Ground Floor and Syndicate Rooms 3 and 4 located on the First Floor. There is also an accessible bar area located on the Ground Floor.

Lifts: Brighton Centre

There are 2 passenger lifts located to the front (King's Road) side of the building and 3 passenger lifts located to the rear (Russell Road) side.

All lifts are considered to be adequately large enough to carry a large wheelchair and companion. All lifts have wheelchair accessible control buttons. The lift car measurements are approx. 1970mm x 1760mm. There is a clear width opening of 1100mm approx.

Lifts: The Syndicate Wing

The Syndicate Wing has one passenger lift which serves the Ground and First Floor. The lift is considered to be adequately large enough to carry a large wheelchair and companion. The lift car control buttons are located at 1200mm above the floor level and may not be easily accessible to some users.

Toilets: Brighton Centre

There are wheelchair accessible toilets located on the Ground, First and Third Floors.

The Ground Floor accessible toilets are located within the Male and Female toilets. The female accessible WC measures approx. 1950mm x 1740mm. The male accessible WC measures approx. 1800mm x 1700mm.

There are 2 Unisex accessible toilets located adjacent to the Male and Female toilets within the East and West Bar areas in the East and West Balcony. The unisex accessible WC at the West Balcony is sited adjacent to the general provision and the compartment measures 1740mm x 1570mm. The unisex accessible WC at the East Balcony is also sited adjacent to the general provision and the compartment measures approx. 1950mm x 1200mm.

There is one Unisex accessible toilet located near to the entrance of the Restaurant at Third Floor level on the East side.

There are general Male and Female toilets located on every floor.

Toilets: The Syndicate Wing

There is one Unisex accessible toilet located within the Foyer area on the Ground and First Floors and the compartment measures approx. 2020mm x 1730mm.

There are general Male and Female toilets located within the Foyer area on the Ground and First Floors.

Evacuation

The Brighton Centre and The Syndicate Wing are both well served by Fire Exit routes.

Evac chairs are located within Emergency Escape Stairs. Stewards are responsible for the safe evacuation of delegates from each floor level and will check all toilet facilities on evacuation.

Access and access officer

UNISON staff member Michelle Gregory is the conference access officer. Questions about access and facilitation should be addressed to her via the UNISON conference desk.

UNISON recognises the importance of, and accepts responsibility for, making conference as accessible as possible. All delegates have had the opportunity to register for provision of services needed to make the conference accessible to them.

Access in Brighton

On the Brighton and Hove council web site there is a link to the website of 'the federation of disabled people - centre for independent living'.

This organisation in Brighton has produced information on blue badge car parking, access on various city facilities listed in the A-Z link which may be useful for conference attendees:

The link to the web site is: <http://www.bhfederation.org.uk/accessible-city-guide.html>

The link to the web site A-Z page is: <http://www.bhfederation.org.uk/a-z-list-of-all-reviews.html>

9. MAP/TRAVEL INFO – THE BRIGHTON CENTRE, BRIGHTON

conference venue

Brighton Centre
King's Road
Brighton
East Sussex
BN1 2GR

Tel: 01273 292 643
Fax: 01273 779 980

Website: www.brightoncentre.co.uk/conference

how to get there



air

London Gatwick Airport is located approximately 28 miles (45 kilometers) from Brighton and can be reached in half an hour by either road or rail (a railway station is located inside the airport terminal).

London Heathrow Airport is 90 minutes drive from Brighton using the motorway, or just under two hours using underground train to London Victoria railway station, and then fast express train service to Brighton. Fast coach services also run from both airports to Brighton coach station; 5 minutes walk from the Brighton Centre.

rail

Brighton is connected to all areas of Britain via the Inter-City rail network, and is only 52 minutes direct from London Victoria. The Gatwick Express departs London Victoria to Gatwick every 15 minutes and the fastest connection onto Brighton takes just 28 minutes.

There are frequent rail services into Brighton and the railway station is centrally located; 10 minutes walk from the Brighton Centre.

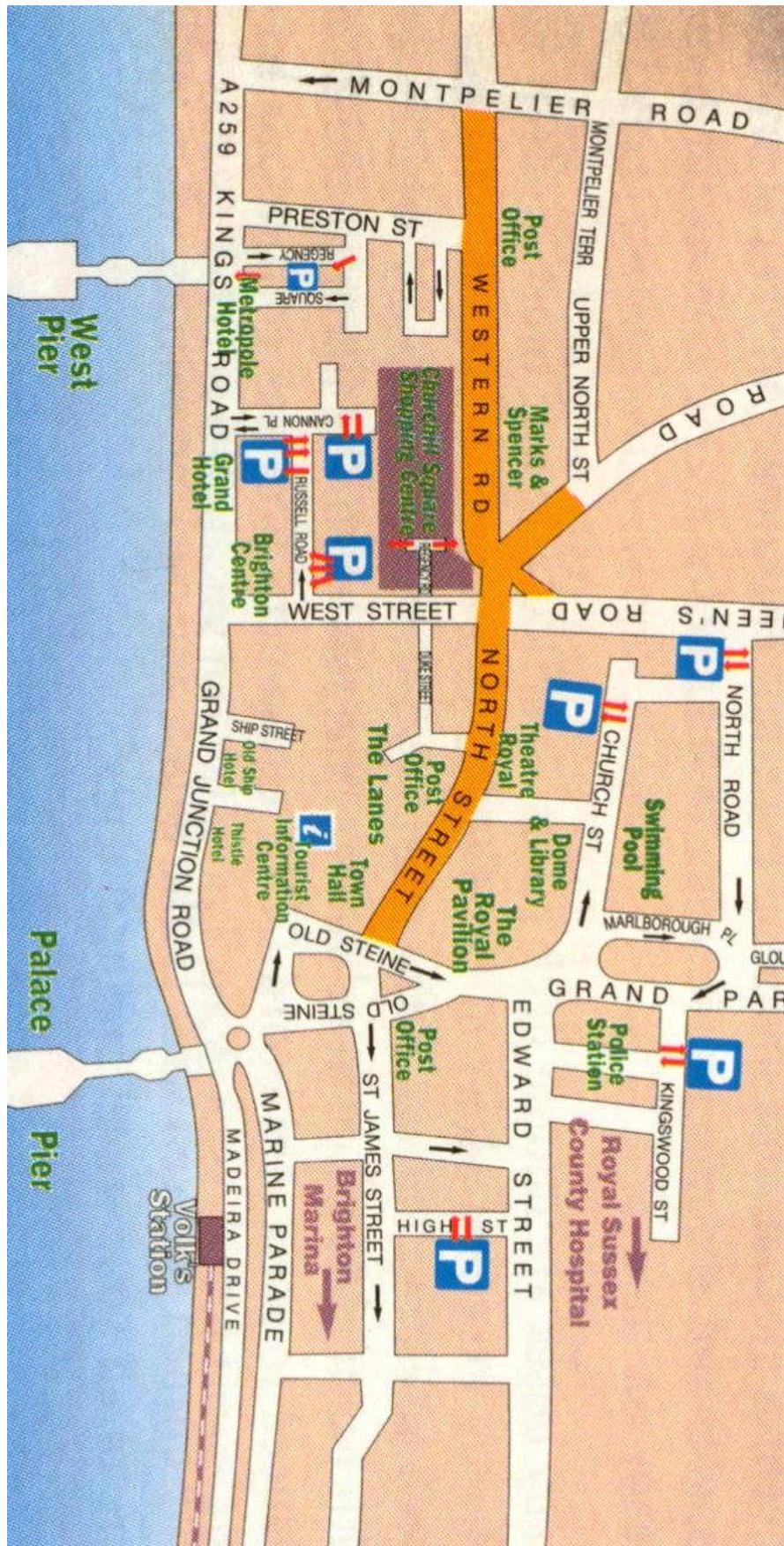
For details of train services please refer to: www.nationalrail.co.uk.

road

Major improvements to the M23/M25 link means that dual carriageways run continuously from the M25 London orbital motorway to within two miles of the heart of Brighton.

car parking

The Brighton Centre has three NCP car parks adjacent to the main building with over 7500 parking spaces.



conference information desk and exhibition

The conference desk and exhibition will be located on the ground floor in the foyer area.

conference hall

The main conference area is auditorium one on the first floor.

meeting rooms

There are a number of other meeting rooms in the Brighton Centre where meetings will take place

These include in the syndicate wing:

- syndicate 1
- syndicate 2
- syndicate 3
- syndicate 4

And on the third floor of the main building:-

- meeting room 6
- meeting room 8

standing orders committee

The standing orders committee is located on the second floor of the main building in meeting room 3.

creche

The crèche is situated on the first floor of the main building in auditorium 2. Remember this facility is only available for delegates and visitors who have reserved places for their children in advance.

catering

There are catering outlets located on the ground floor in the foyer and on the first floor in the east bar.

first aid

The first aid room is located in the east bar. If you require first aid assistance you can either attend the first aid room or it can be called to a location by a steward.

telephones

There are public telephones on the mezzanine level between the main building and the syndicate wing.

cash machine

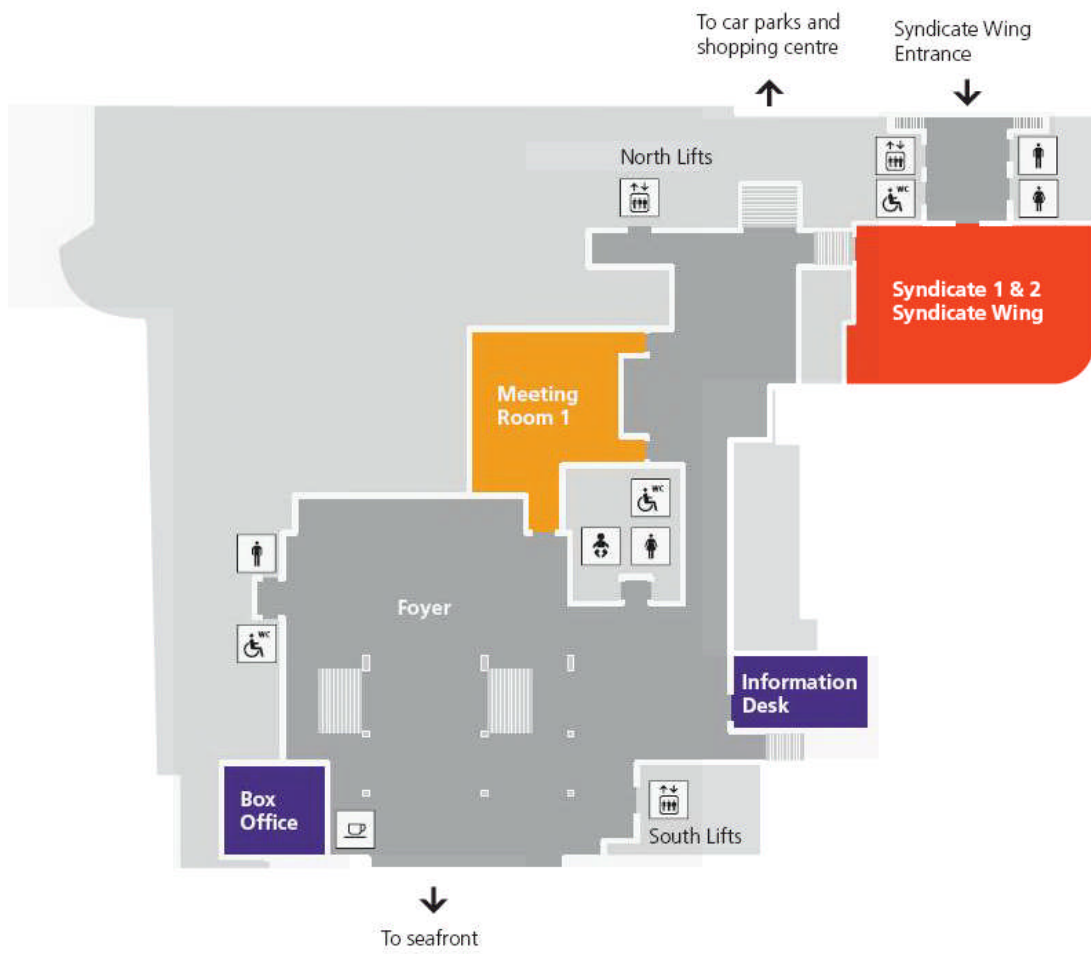
A cash machine is available at the Brighton Centre in the main foyer. All major banks are within five minutes walk from the centre.

wi-fi

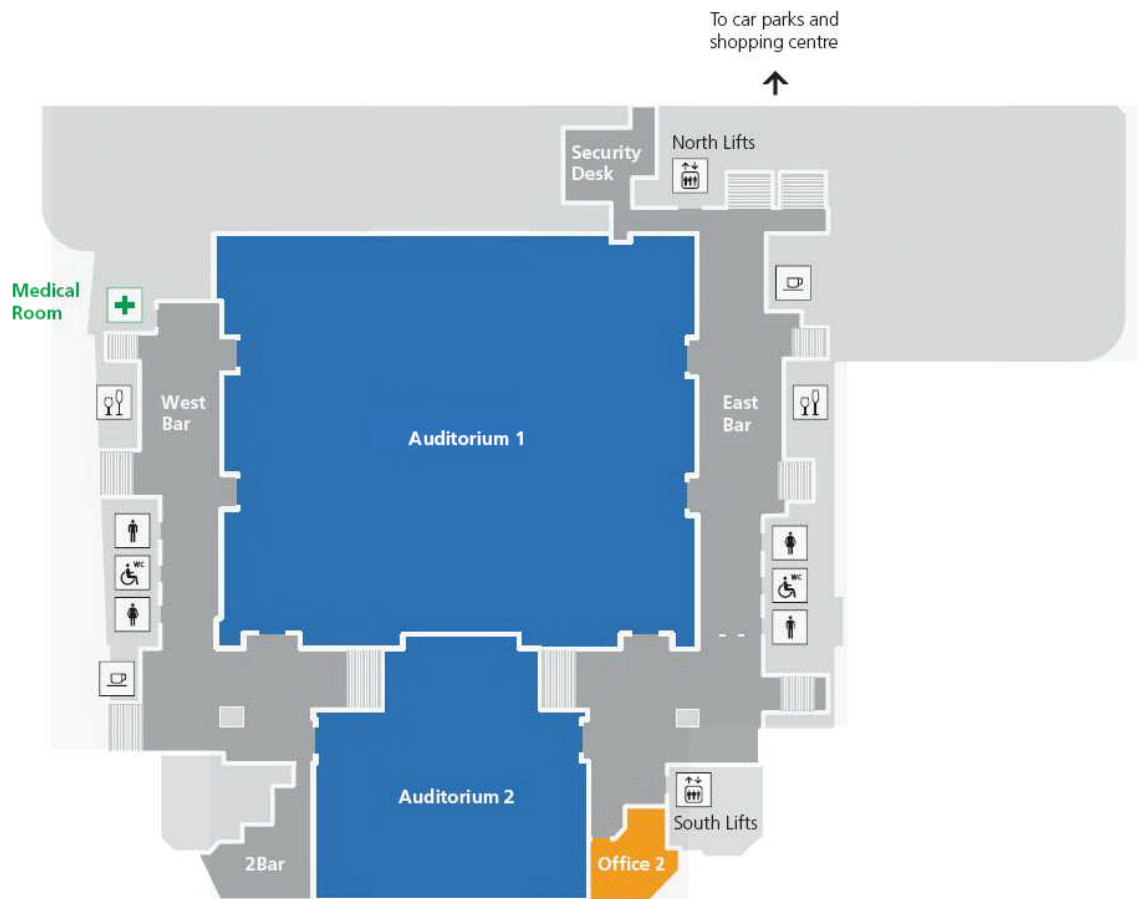
Free wi-fi is available – please ask at the conference desk for code and password.

photographs

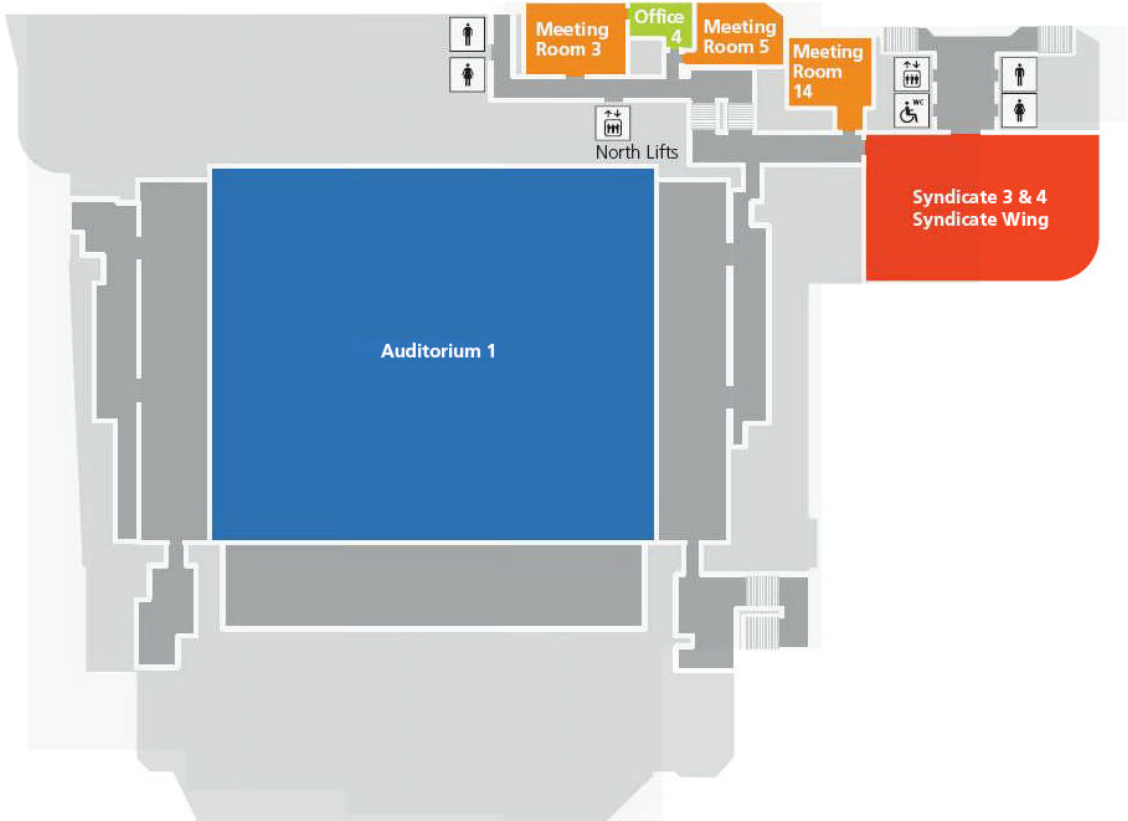
If you require a photograph for your credentials please contact the conference information desk.



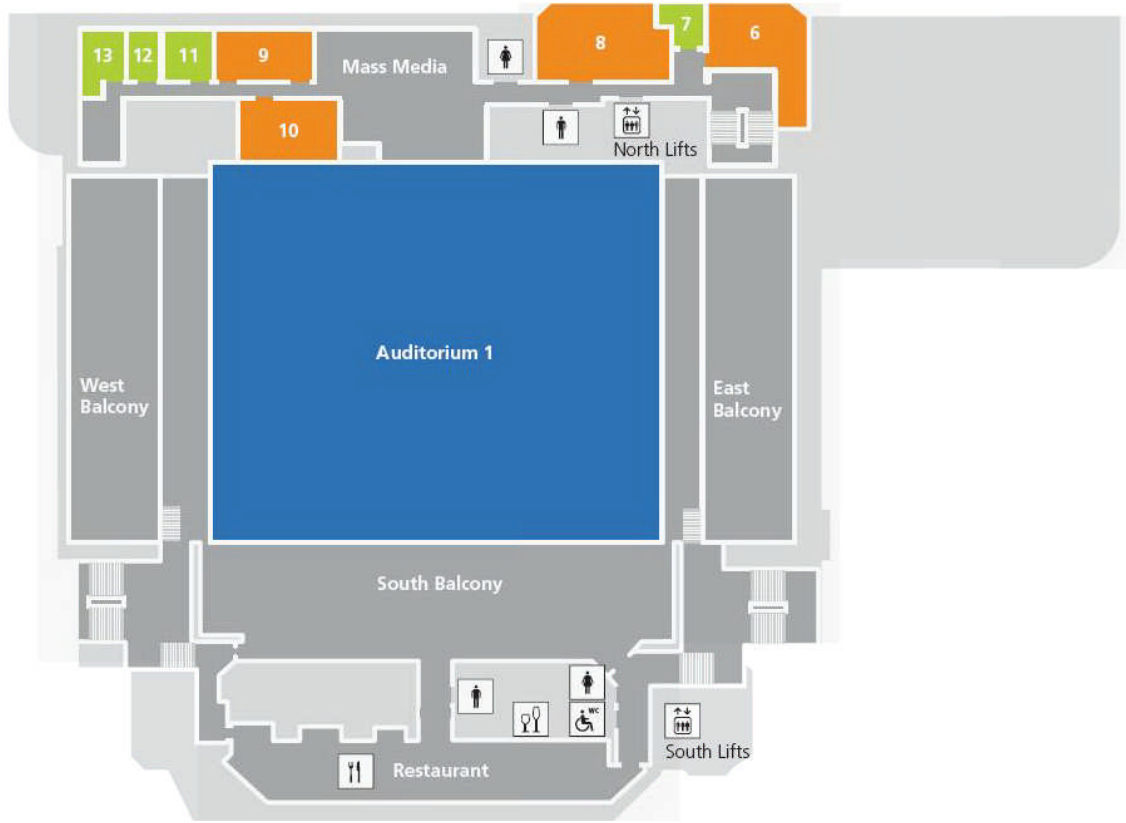
Ground floor



First floor



Second floor



Third floor