



Celebrate the Bus!

28th-30th March 2019

Midlands TUC Pensioners' 'bus tour' last April - all the way from cider at Hereford to the seaside at Skegness - was a winner at Midlands TUC's awards night on November 30th.

Next step in our campaign to keep the bus pass and demand decent bus services is a weekend of action, 28th-30th March 2019. Midlands TUC Pensioners' Network and biggest bus union, Unite the Union, want groups to plan their own activities in their own localities. All it needs is three or four of you with a couple of hours to spare.

We will supply postcards for you to ask members of the public to sign. Return them to us and we'll sort them and send them to appropriate MPs.

We will provide you with a Giant Bus Pass to use as a selfie frame so you can take photos of your campaigning and share them on social media.

To get involved, contact Michelle Kesterton at Midlands TUC: ring 0121-262 6383

Annual West Midlands Retired Members'

SEMINAR

Great Wyrley Community Centre,
Landywood Lane, Great Wyrley, WS6 6JX
200 yards from Landywood station
Wednesday 3rd April 10.45-3.30

UNISON and the Labour Party

What's in it for us and how do we get involved?

Katrina Gilman,

UNISON West Mercia Police Branch & Labour Candidate, Telford

Planning an Affordable Funeral

Wendy Bond,

UNISON West Midlands Regional Welfare Committee

Scams—Beware and be aware!

Sue Wood,

UNISON West Midlands Retired Members' Committee

and Black Country Entertainment

Refreshments and registration from 10.15.

Cold Buffet Lunch

All members welcome. Each member may bring one non-member companion. Book via your branch by Friday 15th March. Your branch will pay members' travel expenses.

Tell us about access and dietary needs.

We will meet them if we can and we will tell you if we can't.

Info: Call Irene Phillips 0121-685 3186 or email i.phillips@unison.co.uk



You may become a retired member of UNISON if you are retired and, on the day you retired, you were a UNISON member and had been so continuously for the two preceding years. Becoming a retired member couldn't be easier. Call free on 0800 171 2193

Correction

January's newsletter said that a couple only gets Pension Credit if BOTH partners are over State Pension Age. This was INCORRECT.

As things stand NOW, only one of you need be over SPA. The younger partner's age doesn't matter. But things will soon change.

See article below.



66 thousand people have signed AgeUK's petition to save the over-75s' free TV licence. Pictured above are retired members of City of Wolverhampton UNISON branch lobbying their MPs on the issue. Sign at <https://campaigns.ageuk.org.uk>

Stop the Toyboy Tax!

On 14th January, the government announced that, from 15th May 2019, a couple will no longer be eligible for Pension Credit or for pension-age Housing Benefit if one partner is over state pension age and the other is under state pension age. They must apply for Universal Credit instead.

Couples will be hit hard. The standard minimum guarantee for a couple on Pension Credit is £248.80 a week (£1078.13 a month). For a couple over 25, the standard rate of Universal Credit is £498.89 a month.

This only applies to new claims. Couples who, on 15th May, already get Pension Credit or pension-age Housing Benefit won't be affected till their circumstances change.

At the moment, you can still claim Pension Credit as a "mixed age" couple. If you are thinking of claiming, you would be wise not to delay.

Put another way, if you are single, you are on Pension Credit and you're looking for love this Valentine's Day, look for another pensioner. A toyboy might cost you a fortune!

UNISON West Midlands Regional Retired Members' Committee is made up of two representatives of the retired members of each branch and of each Regional Self-Organised Group.

Meetings in 2019 will be at Regional Centre on Wednesdays 27th February, 5th June, 31st July and 6th November at 1.30pm.

To get in touch: email: i.phillips@unison.co.uk telephone 0121 685 3150 or fax 0121 685 4400
UNISON Regional Centre, 24 Livery Street,
Birmingham B3 2PA.

This newsletter is circulated by email to retired members of UNISON West Midlands. To subscribe or unsubscribe, contact Irene Phillips above.

Chairperson: Judith Longbottom

Deputy Chairperson: Sue Wood

Secretary: Bob Deacon

For your diary

Wednesday 27th February 1.30-3.30pm

UNISON West Midlands Retired Members' Committee Regional Centre. Annual Meeting with elections. All branch and Self-Organised Group reps should attend.

By 1st Feb, 19 branches and 2 SOGs had elected 32 reps—15 women and 17 men. Has your branch or group elected reps? It isn't too late to do so.

Tuesday 5th March 6.00-8.00pm

UNISON West Midlands Black* Members Group. Regional Centre
All Black members welcome including retired Black members.

*In UNISON, 'Black' is used to indicate people with a shared history. Black with a capital 'B' is used in its broad political and inclusive sense to describe people in Britain that have suffered colonialism and enslavement in the past and continue to experience racism and diminished opportunities in today's society.