**Branch Newsletter – March 2024**

Hello and thanks again for reading the new branch letter. If you have recently taken part in a UNISON training course, conference or have something else that you think other union members would be interested to hear about then please write to the branch at wahbunison@gmail.com and let us know about it.

Other ways of keeping up with branch news is our website [www.wahbunison.co.uk](http://www.wahbunison.co.uk) or find us on Facebook [Wiltshire and Avon Health Unison](https://www.facebook.com/people/Wiltshire-and-Avon-Health-Unison/100057500227605/)

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Branch Communications officer

**2024 Branch Annual General Meeting Report**

Here is a report from our Vice Chair on recently concluded AGM(s) which took place over several days and locations. Many thanks to all members who participated.

Wiltshire & Avon Health Branch (WAHB) covers a large geographical area and three major employers (AWP, GWH, Wiltshire Health & Care) as well as numerous smaller employers. Therefore, it was decided to hold an aggregated Annual General Meeting again this year. Members meetings were therefore held in Swindon, Bristol and Warminster together with an online lunchtime meeting (an evening online meeting was abandoned!) with the same agenda at each. Any votes taken at the meeting were amalgamated, to produce a cumulative total, and sufficient members attended this year’s AGM to ensure the AGM was quorate.

Following the disappointing NHS pay campaign, it was noted that last year’s AGM resolved to seek funding from Unison to employ an organiser for the Branch, in order to help recruit activists, build campaigns and ensure membership records were accurate, so that any future ballots for industrial action would not be invalidated by low turnout (as happened in 2022/23). Jayne Jackson, the Regional Organiser for WAHB, was able to highlight that this bid has been successful, and therefore the branch will now be seeking to recruit an organiser as planned.

Officer reports highlighted that our branch continues to try to recruit members and activists, so that the branch can effectively support members & negotiate with the relevant NHS and healthcare employers, and emphasised on the campaigning role of our branch and the wider union. Activists from Wiltshire Health & Care gave a briefing on the industrial action that our members have been engaged in to try to secure the ‘Covid payment’ that NHS staff got last year but which, so far, has been denied to our members in Wiltshire. Becky Brookman, who is one of the Unison National Executive Committee lay members for the South West region, explained that this dispute is one of a number that Unison are currently supporting. She highlighted that the NEC had increased the strike pay as Unison members are engaging in campaigning against cuts, the effects of outsourcing of jobs and about poverty pay.

Given the Sunak government is desperately trying to use racism and scapegoating to remain in power, the branch voted unanimously to re-affiliate to Stand Up To Racism, and support the valuable work this campaign does: our NHS was built by black and white workers together. A branch delegation subsequently took the union banner to the TUC backed March Against Racism in London on March 16th. [Note: See item below for picture]

The branch also voted unanimously to agree that an honoraria payment would be given to the Branch Chair, Branch Secretary & Treasurer as recognition for the work they have each done, often in their own time, supporting union branch members who work for smaller employers (and therefore where there is no collective agreement).

Nominations for branch officers & stewards that had been received (see below) were approved by the AGM- unlike politicians, we elect our representatives annually!

Richard Gurney

WAHB vice Chair

**2024-25 Union Branch Officer and Representatives List**

The following is the list of UNISON branch officers and representatives approved at the AGM. If you believe your name is missing or are interested in becoming a representative or taking up a vacant office role (listed below) this year please contact the branch.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Position** | **Name** | **Employer** | **Email** | **Phone** |
| Vice Chair | Richard | Gurney | AWP | r.gurney@nhs.net | 07867971354 |
| Branch Secretary | Andrew  | Cork | AWP | andrew.cork@nhs.net | 07766020498 |
| Branch Treasurer | Sally  | Jeffrey | AWP | sally.jeffrey1@nhs.net | 07917517717 |
| Welfare Officer | Andy | Cork | AWP | andrew.cork@nhs.net | 07766020498 |
| Communications Officer | Sebastian | Cooke | AWP | sebastian.cooke@nhs.net |   |
| International Officer | Dave | Weltman | AWP | dave.weltman@nhs.net | 07768235704 |
| Retired Members (Co-) Secretary | Janine | James | Retired | wahbunison@gmail.com |   |
| Retired Members (Co-) Secretary | Norma  | Thompson | Retired | wahbunison@gmail.com |   |

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| **Branch Workplace Representatives** |
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| **Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust** |
| **Name** | **Email** | **Phone** |
| Paul  | Campbell | paulcampbell1@nhs.net |   |
| Sebastian | Cooke | sebastian.cooke@nhs.net |   |
| Andrew | Cork | andrew.cork@nhs.net | 07766020498 |
| Richard | Gurney | r.gurney@nhs.net | 07867971354 |
| Phillipa | James | phillipa.james@nhs.net | 0117 3546000 |
| Sally | Jeffrey | sally.jeffrey1@nhs.net | 07917517717 |
| Dave | Weltman | dave.weltman@nhs.net | 07768235704 |
| Ramon | Wilson | rwilson20@nhs.net | 07738264459 |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust** |
| **Name** | **Email** | **Phone** |
| Tracy | Belcher | t.belcher23@outlok.com |   |
| Davey | Roger | rogeralexanderdavey62@gmail.com | 7793014955 |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Wiltshire Health & Social Care** |
| **Name** | **Email** | **Phone** |
| Helen  | Nash | helen.nash4@nhs.net |   |
| Thomas | Simblet | thomas.simblet@nhs.net |   |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Branch Health & Safety Representatives** |
| **Name** | **Email** | **Phone** |
| Andrew  | Cork | andrew.cork@nhs.net | 07766020498 |
| Philippa | James | phillipa.james@nhs.net | 0117 3546000 |
| Sally  | Jeffrey | sally.jeffrey1@nhs.net | 07917517717 |

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| **Branch Position - vacant posts** |
| Branch Labour Link Officer | LGBT+ |
| Workplace Contact | Health and Safety Officer |
| Life Long Learning Co-ordinator | Education Co-ordinator |
| Branch Chair | Equalities Officer |
| Assistant Secretary | Black Members Officer |
| Disabled Members Officer | Environmental Rep |
| Young Members Officer | Women’s Officer |
| Membership Officer |  |

**Wiltshire Health and Care Strike Victory Update!**

The workers at Wiltshire Health and Care repeated their industrial action in February with another strike day and have just received confirmation that they will be paid the non-consolidated section of the pay award. The Activist committee has released the following statement:

“Victory For NHS Workers

The government decision to fund the non-consolidated pay award for Wiltshire health care staff is a victory for all those in UNISON who took part in the two days of strike action.

We need to be clear that without this pressure the money would never have materialised. Therefore congratulations to everyone who took part in our campaign. It shows what Trade Unions can achieve when we take action.

The industrial action we took in December and February, not only succeeded in securing the pay award, but also gave a clear warning to management that health workers would now and in the future fight to defend their pay and conditions.

Although this campaign has ended, there are other issues such as securing band 3 banding for ward HCAs, and of course returning Wiltshire Health Care staff back to the NHS. On the back of this victory, and if we show the same determination and solidarity, we can achieve these goals.

Activist committee”

**New Office for Wiltshire and Avon Health Branch**

Our union offices have relocated. Our contact details are:

Wiltshire & Avon Health Branch UNISON

Unit 8

Flexspace

Hampton Park West

Melksham

Wiltshire

SN12 6LH 01

Online Enquiries : [Online enquiries | Get help | UNISON National](https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/online-enquiries)

Telephone: 01225 927961

Branch Email: wahbunison@gmail.com

**Please notify us of any employment or personal detail changes to ensure your membership is up to date.**

**Branch attends March Against Racism in London**

Members of our branch attended the March Against Racism rally in London on the 16th March and proudly marched with our banner.

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