

# REGIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM

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## WELCOME TO NORTH WEST WOMEN'S NEWSLETTER

Hi I'm Liz Cameron, one of the co Chairs of your Regional Women's Forum.

This newsletter is to be able to keep you up to date with what's been going on in your committee.

It's been a busy year for the committee with all the cuts which have also affected our committee as we have lost members to voluntary redundancy as well as early retirement.

We recognise that the comprehensive spending review has disproportionately disadvantaged women, the Fawcett society took out a judicial review regarding the equality impact assessment which was not performed on the CSR, however it was founded that although the case was valid it was now too late to effect any change in the decisions already made.

I know within the region local government branches there have been considerable efforts energised by the efforts of some of our strong women activists in the North West, Bolton, Stockport and in Merseyside who have managed to reverse cuts in some areas and provide real action in terms of cuts to Sure Start Centres and in the emergence of academies. We know that one voice can make a difference but together we are particularly strong.

We've had involvement in the nationwide demonstration on 26<sup>th</sup> March.

We've had attendance at the TUC women's conference at Harrogate (*separate report is available for that*).

We've attended Health Conference and Womens Conference.

We attended National Delegates Conference which was in our region in Manchester →→→→



→→ We are fortunate to have on our committee senior representatives of the welfare committee, one of whom is the president of our regional committee who made £900 in proceeds from the raffles they ran during the national conference.

Our President for this year is Eleanor Smith.

Enough about us - we want to hear about you, your stories, what's going on in your part of the region and any impact of the cuts on you..,

This edition features an article supplied by Sharza Dethick from Stockport, thanks to Sharza.

The purpose of a newsletter is to provide specialized information to a targeted audience. Newsletters can be a great way to communicate with family and friends on a regular basis.

You can tell stories about your life, your children's activities, your vacations or travel plans, new pets, or whatever you want to tell those closest to you! You can add pictures, too !



*Me on the March with one of newly appointed our Assistant General secretary- Roger Mc Kenzie in the background.*

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## JUNE SCOOPS WELFARE LOTTERY WIN

June Poole, the RWF Co Vice Chair and a keen advocate of UNISON's Welfare Lottery, scooped £500 in the August draw of the Welfare's Octopus Lottery. June has been in the Lottery since it started a couple of years ago and always believed that one day her number would come up.

If you would like to know how you too can join go to:-  
[www.unison.org.uk/octopus](http://www.unison.org.uk/octopus)



SHARZA STRIKES A LIGHT IN MARCH



Sharza the Match girl striker

The first big March I went on this year, was the Manchester March against the Cuts on 5<sup>th</sup> March, it was also International Women's Day so I had to leave it half way through, as I was booked to go to the Working Class Movement Library in Salford in the afternoon, to listen to Louise Raw talk about her book 'Striking a Light' which I found very inspiring.

It's about the Bryant and May Match Girls, who led the first ever successful strike in 1888, yes! It was women who did this and led the way for the rest. The Dockers came out a year later, they had tried striking before but without success. Unfortunately the men of the time hushed it up, as they didn't want it to be known that women could have the brains to do this on their own without help, and always attributed it to Annie Besant, Louise's book disputes this and says that the girls organised themselves without Annie's help.

As I say I found this so inspiring that I decided to go to London on the 26<sup>th</sup> March dressed as a Match Girl,).

Last Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> June, I joined the NUT, ATL, UCU and PCS' Pensions March in Manchester, starting at All Saints Park and finishing up at the Castlefield Arena to listen to the speeches, and yes UNISON got a mention, well a few actually, my group made up of various branches, (I was the only one from Stockport), were pointed out and officially thanked for coming, a letter of support from the UNISON NEC was read out and we were asked if next time we would ballot to come out at the same time. There was about 20 UNISON people turned up including myself, along with the FBU and CWU, and I am sure there was more unions represented. There was about 5000 people in total. Tonnes of press and TV cameras, so I am sure I will have been seen, and there was me hoping to go unnoticed.

WOMEN'S PENSION FORUM A SUCCESS

On Saturday, 16 July, the Region hosted a seminar for its women members. Presentations were made when presentation on current issues affecting working women

In attendance was Glyn Jenkins, UNISON's National Pensions Officer who gave a presentation on the public sector and state pension changes and how these will affect working women.

Also at the Seminar was Christine Durance, UNISON's Head of Policy Development, who, along with the Regional Equalities Officer, gave a presentation on women and the public sector cuts.



Quiz time. Conducted by Dion Baugh, Regional Equalities Officer

OTHER NEWS IN BRIEF.....

- Many of you will know that your other Co Chair, Sylvia Bray, has had to take a back seat in recent months because she has been caring for an elderly parent. We all know how much the state depends on women (and men) like Sylvia to be carers and this is likely to be increasing; just another impact of the cuts!
- Motions have now been submitted on behalf of National Black Members and Disabled members Conferences.
- Congratulations go to Eleanor Smith, who has been elected as the first black woman UNISON President.

