



UNISON LOTHIAN HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2024

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
FRIDAY 7TH FEBRUARY 2025
6 TO 7 PM**



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Friday 7th February 2025 – 6pm to 7pm
Danderhall Miners Club

AGENDA

- 1) Chairperson's welcome and opening remarks
- 2) Presentation of ERA accreditation certificates
- 3) Minutes of previous AGM
- 4) Matters arising
- 5) Financial report
- 6) Branch Secretary's report
- 7) Election of Branch Officers and Auditors
- 8) Ratification of Stewards
- 9) Ratification of delegates to the Scottish Council and the Scottish Health Committee
- 10) Ratification of delegates attending the National Health Care Conference and the National Delegates Conference
- 11) Motions
- 12) Any Other Competent Business
- 13) Presentations
- 14) We welcome our guest speaker
Niki Stewart winner of the Lynn Jackson Nurse of the Year award



We respectfully ask that all phones are switched off



Branch Chairperson

This is my first year as your Branch Chairperson and I have had big shoes to fill, so although the position has its challenges I consider it a privilege to hold this position. My role consists of presiding at our Branch and Executive meetings and of agreeing the agenda for these. I also advise the Branch Officers and the Branch Committee in respect of matters relating to the procedure and interpretation of the Branch rules. To this end I also work closely with our Branch Secretary providing leadership to the Branch.

This year the Branch has had major achievements with regard to the staff pay award with the associated RWW and the Band 5/6 elements from last year that have proved challenging but my thanks to the Stewards who have led on this work.

We also need to give credit to the various groups within the Branch that co-ordinate much of our work. Our Campaigns group do as the title suggests and it is to their credit that we have improved our support to members across many campaigns and events so thank you to you all.

Our Communication Team have had a significant impact on keeping our members up to date with information, advice and

events via the Web page and newsletter. On behalf of the Branch thank you to Robert and Stewart.

Our annual development days were held in October with some positive feedback. Our Action Plan for next year has been approved which will further enhance the Branch objectives and achievements. In that regard our SOG's are an integral part of that plan which supports our members across a wide range of groups. We are also continuing our training for Stewards through the ongoing HR updates and sessions at our Branch Committee meetings. I would like to thank Gordon McKay for his input as the feedback from the Stewards from his sessions has been excellent.

Our Leads Group continues which now includes the Deputy Leads from all sites. This allows for consensus and discussion around all of our areas which can only benefit the membership in terms of advice and representation

I have had recommendations from members thanking us for the support and representation that we provide so can I pass on my sincere thanks to all of our Stewards for the work that they do, sometimes in very difficult circumstances, as you are a credit to the Branch. Congratulations are due on the level of representation our members receive.

Finally, I would like to thank our Regional Officer, John Hackett, for his advice and support this last year and, leaving the best till last, to Tracy Anne Miller, our Branch Secretary, who has been instrumental to my development in the role, and I look forward to that continued collaboration in the coming year.

*Grace Forrest, Branch Chairperson,
Lothian Health Branch.*



Branch Secretary

It has been a busy year for Lothian Health Branch. Not content with supporting the move of 85% of band 2 CSW's to a band 3, we ensured that our members working on the Staff bank as CSW's were treated exactly the same as substantive post holders, a reference period being agreed and many went straight to the top of the band 3 - back-dated to October 2021. We then turned our attention to Phlebotomists and saw these Unison members also move from a band 2 to a band 3. We finished off the year by supporting our Unison members working as Radiography Department Assistants move to band 3 from band 2. Well deserved outcomes!

As part of the 23/24 pay deal, band 5 nurses have the right to request a review of their current duties to see if they are actually working at band 6 level. To ensure our members are given as much help and support as we are able, the Branch developed a Guidance Document for them to use when completing the questionnaire. We have shared the document with many other health branches across Scotland to ensure all Unison members benefit from the advice. It is now also available via Unison Scotland. We always try to assist our members in any way we can and will continue to do so.

The strength of a union can be measured by the number of members who choose to join. Unison Lothian Health Branch has recruited over 120 new members per month in 2024. Recruitment is always a top priority for the branch – the larger the membership, the louder the voice! Having teams of Stewards in every area in Lothian allows us to build strong relationships with our members. We have staffed offices and outlets in RIE, WGH, SJH, ELCH, MCH, REH, St Roque at AAH, Lauriston Buildings and Comley Bank. We also have a Mobile Advice Centre which covers our members working in the Private and Voluntary Sector. Unison is by far the biggest union in NHS Lothian with nearly half of NHS employees being members.

The Stewards in Lothian Health Branch continue to work hand in hand with our comrades in other unions, including the RMT, CWU, EIS, UNITE, ASLEF and the PCS, as well as our Unison colleagues in local government branches across not only Lothian, but the Scottish region. Stewards spend a half day each in the Craigmillar Hub working alongside fellow trade unionists to help and support people in this working-class community. The trade union movement started in communities like Craigmillar and we are proud to be a part of TUIC.

This year saw the return of a Labour government and they have repealed the anti-trade union legislation. Not only that, they have ended zero hour contracts and the time constraints on unfair dismissal claims. Let us hope they continue to look after the rights of the working classes. After all it was the same working classes who they have to thank for their very existence.

I would like to welcome every new Steward elected in 2024. Being a Shop Steward in Unison is a privilege. We have seen two retirals this year - Jean Nolan from the RIE Stewards Committee and Susan Sim from the Western. Both have made a huge

contribution to the branch over many years and will be sorely missed.

It has been nearly 6 years since I was elected to the role of Branch Secretary and it is the best job in the country. I have taken some time to reflect on the changes implemented since I took up the role of Branch Secretary and there have been a few. The first thing we did was to set up an Edinburgh Stewards Committee with dedicated reps available 5 days a week to support and represent members working in Edinburgh H&SC Partnership. We have introduced Officer roles for Campaigns, Environment and Well-being; the Branch Committee believes each of these roles are fundamental to our core business. We have also set up a Campaigns Committee and this Committee is responsible for organising our activities throughout the year, ranging from gala days to celebrating our workforce on dedicated “international” days. The Lead and Deputy Lead Committee that was set up in 2019 has evolved over the intervening years and is now the group responsible for driving forward the branch agenda. We run monthly education sessions at every Branch Committee, delivered by one of our senior Stewards, Gordon McKay. Grace Forrest, Branch Chairperson also regularly runs Policy training sessions for Stewards. All of these changes allows us as a branch to continue to deliver the very best service to our members.

The one thing that has never changed though is the dedication and commitment of every Steward and staff member involved in Unison Lothian Health Branch. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for your hard work on behalf of our members. A special thanks to Barbara and the Admin team, without whom my job would be impossible. Our Branch Treasurers work closely with me to ensure our income is spent where it can most benefit the membership - they have a big job and deserve an equally big thank you.

I also need to give special thanks to Grace Forrest who, as Branch Chairperson, never fails to support and counsel me. However, the largest thank you has to go to my long-suffering husband, Thomas Miller. He has supported me every step of the way - both through the good days and the bad.

Dolores Huerta, a trade union leader and civil rights campaigner in America in the 1960's sums up what being an activist means - “Every moment is an organising opportunity, every person is a potential activist, every minute a chance to change the world”

Tracy Anne Miller, Branch Secretary



Regional Organiser

It has been a privilege to serve a third year as your branch's Regional Organiser. Along with my colleague Nicola Morris, our role as regional members of staff is to support UNISON's local branches in their delivery of the union's national and local objectives. I am also responsible for supporting branch members to access the union's legal services.

Key pieces of work in the branch this year included supporting the delivery of the branch's action plan, in particular the focus

on equalities and your Self Organised Groups, training and development of Stewards and Branch Officers and supporting the improvement in member representation and case work.

The most welcomed part of my work is the time I have been able to spend with your branch Stewards and Officers. I am very grateful for the opportunity to work with such a dedicated, passionate and inspirational group of people.

Nationally, UNISON continues to be the leading voice for public services and the wonderful people like yourselves who deliver them. UNISON is adopting new ways of working to ensure your union remains in a strong position to campaign and speak up for our public services, members and the communities we serve.

“Organising to Win” is the programme being rolled across in branches across the UK. Your branch is leading this work and already testing new initiatives to increase membership and campaign in our community.

Finally, I would like to thank Tracy, Grace and all the Branch Officers and Stewards I have had the pleasure of working with this year. 2024 was a challenging year and 2025 looks to be no different. I am looking forward to working alongside you in our fight for equality, fair work and social justice in our communities.

John Hackett, Regional Organiser



Joint Treasurers

The Treasurers role is mainly coordinating and documenting all expenditure and income within the branch. This is stored electronically on the Olba accounting system and backed up with the paper forms and receipts. The Treasurers process and store records of all payments and income as per national union rule.

This year we welcomed Michael as the Assistant Branch Treasurer and Sharon as joint Treasurer. Cath Henderson decided to retire from the role of joint Treasurer after many years' service. We are hugely grateful for all of her hard work on behalf of the Branch and hope she is enjoying getting back to representing and recruiting in ELCH. We are growing as a team and continue to develop robust processes, Branch protocols and guidelines to ensure good financial governance.

The Branch Committee receives monthly reports on the previous month's finances. The Treasurers are supported by the Branch Core Executive. This Committee will discuss all financial matters and make recommendations to the Branch Committee regarding any expenditure.

The Treasurers also work closely with the Branch Officers, Lead Stewards and Stewards Committees. We provide support and guidance to the Self Organised Groups within the branch. We as Treasurers support Officers, Leads and Stewards with their Branch activities. We have been supporting a number of initiatives and celebrations in 2024. Some of the celebrations included are our International days, for example International AHP day. We have also supported and fund-raised for the NHS charities by participating in National Elf Service Day.

Many of the Branch projects require input and support from us as Treasurers and this year was no exception. It is our role to ensure that we are all working within the national union's financial rules. An example of the support and advice we give is working

with the Branch LGBT+ Self Organised Group to launch the 2024 Unison Year of the LGBT+ Worker. The Treasurers were able to guide and support the team to achieve a plan of activities to promote this campaign. The Branch Education Officer continues to be supported by the Treasurers. This ensures the process for stewards and members participating in educational activities was as seamless as possible.

The Branch Wellbeing Coaches ran many individual and group sessions for members and the Treasurers assisted in the organising and advising on how to finance these activities.

The Branch continued our sponsorship deal with Edinburgh City Pipes and Drums earlier in 2024 and we are currently in the 2nd year of a two year sponsorship of Caledonian Thebans RFC. Both proudly display the branch logo on their kit.

The Branch has always and continues to support many community groups who requested donations. This support includes TUIC (Trade Unions in Communities) which is activists from many different trade unions who provide advice and support in the heart of our local communities. We continue to donate to many other worthwhile groups and charities. The Treasurers will liaise with each group regarding their request and present it to the Branch Committee for discussion and approval.

The Treasurers would like to thank the Auditors Jackie Ritchie and Thomas Miller for their hard work - the skill sharing was greatly appreciated. We would also like to thank the Branch Executive and Branch Committee for their support over the last year.

*Michael Shaw Assistant Treasurer
Sharon Jamieson and Carolyn Casey Joint Treasurers*



Administration Team

Having almost 12,000 members and over 80 shop stewards, the Branch administration team are certainly kept busy! As first point of contact to our members, we strive to deal with telephone, email and face to face enquiries in a timely, efficient and sensitive way, providing initial advice and guidance.

George and I are based at the Branch Office at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital, Margaret is at St John's and Megan works from our Newhailes office making a team of four. Our mailbox is monitored everyday and between us we handle around 3,000 queries a year. Our aim is to put you in touch with your local Shop Steward in order to get advice and support to you as quickly as possible.

We also deal with any membership issues you may have; setting up and maintaining electronic membership records in strict accordance to GDPR regulations. We update your records if you move job or house, and help you to transfer into a different branch if you change employer. We can also offer advice on your subscription and what to do if you reduce or increase your hours or decide to retire and return to work.

This year we have helped several members' process legal claims and to date, members of our Branch have won cases for over

£35,000 this year. We can also advise you on how to use the free will scheme offered by Thompsons, as well as how to access initial free legal and financial advice. We can also help you contact our health and wellbeing team and put you in touch with our Branch officers and Self organised Groups.

As well as providing a range of administrative and organising support across the Branch, we liaise with other regional branches and national sites. We coordinate and organise meetings, preparing paperwork and ensuring communications are sent out to our stewards and members in a timely manner.

It's a busy working environment where two days are never the same. We have a great team who are hard working and committed to give support to all our members in this ever growing organisation.

Barbara Marshall, Office manager

You can contact us on

loth.unisonbranchoffice@nhs.scot

Branch office: 0131 537 6681

St Johns office: 01506 524 273

Newhailes office:

Private and Voluntary Sector

The Private and Voluntary (P&V) team has been actively involved in supporting the Trade Unions in Communities (TUIC) Hub this year. This collaboration has strengthened our community engagement and enabled us to support workers and community members more effectively.

P&V played a key role in organising and delivering the TUIC Family Fun Day, helping to bring together families and community members. The event was a great success, fostering connections and providing valuable resources to attendees while promoting awareness of trade union benefits and initiatives.

In 2024, P&V strengthened ties with colleagues from the City of Edinburgh Branch, working together on critical casework issues. This collaboration has been particularly impactful in handling complex health and social care issues, immigration and sponsorship cases, and the unique terms and conditions of “pop-up” companies in the sector.

Robert Pollock joined Debbie Westwood and Carolyn Casey as part of the P&V team this year.



Growing concerns around migrant workers in our sector continue to emerge. Recurring themes such as fair treatment, job security, and sponsorship challenges highlight the need for greater UNISON involvement. Our team is committed to advocating for fair employment practices for migrant workers and ensuring their rights are upheld. Representatives from P&V have taken part in the Migrant Workers Network launch event and are keen to see the initiative expanded to the Lothians. The P&V team supports the UK Government's decision to remove the two-year employment rule for new employees, set to take effect in 2026. This change is expected to benefit our members significantly, as frequent dismissal cases have often involved this restrictive rule. This policy shift will promote fairness in employment practices, aligning with our core values.

This year, P&V has focused on supporting members at risk of redundancy, prioritising redeployment and better financial

settlements. This effort has provided impacted members with essential financial stability and peace of mind during a challenging period.

As we look forward, the P&V team is committed to broadening our reach by establishing UNISON recognition agreements with more companies. This will strengthen union presence and create a more supportive work environment for employees across the sector. The P&V team plan to visit residential care homes in the coming year to raise the profile of the team with existing members and utilise those established relationships to increase membership within those sites. The Private and Voluntary team remains dedicated to advocacy, support, and collaboration. We will continue to work closely with our community partners to address emerging challenges and promote fair and equitable working conditions for all.

Debbie Westwood, Carolyn Casey and Robert Pollock



REAS

It has been a quick, busy year for the mob at the Royal Edinburgh... so-much-so it feels like it was only yesterday we delivered the last annual report.

2024 has brought the branch a number of complex cases, and the REAS Lead

Steward, also the Branch chairperson, Grace Forrest, has helped the Stewards navigate our way through these cases, with her unparalleled knowledge of policy and wisdom.

Grace continues to deliver monthly policy training sessions for all of the stewards in the Branch. She was also asked to provide this Policy training for REAS managers, which she happily did. Grace currently sits on the Reduced Working Week group, to negotiate and implement the thirty-minute reduction for staff as part of the 23/24 pay deal. Thank you, Grace.

Our newest steward, Gordon McGregor, has hit the ground running. He has joined the Job Evaluation panels and is fast becoming an expert in this process. Gordon is scheduled to become one of our Health and Safety representatives early next year on completion of his training. His experience as a Charge Nurse at the Royal Edinburgh has proven invaluable and he is already a highly valued member of the Unison team in REAS. Ian Kilgour, our Recruitment Officer, has been out on his weekly walks across the Royal Edinburgh, spreading the word about all the amazing things Unison does and bringing new members into the fold. He is the hirsute face of Unison at the Royal Ed. Thanks, Ian, your facial hair and hard work is appreciated.

Andy King is settling into his role as Deputy Lead for REAS. He's spent the year tending to his busy caseload and is an active member of the Branch Campaigns & Events Committee. Andy also intends to undergo training to become a fully accredited Health and Safety rep in 2025. His calm disposition, sense of humour, and knowledge of policy makes him an excellent colleague and representative.

The REH Unison Office is the main branch office and two of our Administration team are based there. Our incredibly busy admin team, Barbara and George,

have spent the year staffing our phones, directing enquiries... offering kind words to members... organising conferences... development days... keeping our stewards organised and up-to-date... and processing the incredible 1804 members we've had join our branch this year.

The REAS Unison team wish to thank all of our members for your hard work and dedication. The NHS has the best staff in the world.

Grace Forrest – Lead Steward

Andy King – Deputy Lead



Facilities

It has been a busy year again in the Facilities Directorate. We have good news for our members working in Hard FM. The Recruitment and Retention payment has been agreed and extended until March 2026. NHSL have made a commitment to find an alternative solution to the RRP by this date and Unison is fully involved in this.

New Job Descriptions have been developed and there are currently 5 submitted to Job Evaluation for matching. If these posts were up banded, as we fully believe they should be then this would eliminate the requirement for RRP for these staff. This is an issue that needs resolved urgently as there are around

20 vacancies in Hard FM. We were very successful in getting a back-dated payment for one of our members. A Tradesman in Hard FM was being paid WOC protection and when he raised the issue with Unison we took the case forward.

Our member received a five-figure payout. Unison has been at the forefront of supporting the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme and we were delighted when four new Modern Apprentices were recruited in May.

This scheme ensure a robust succession planning policy and “grow your own” has been very successful in other professions within the NHS. We all have a responsibility to support this fantastic initiative and we are hopeful the Scheme will be repeated in 2025. A special thank you to our Hard FM Head of Service Tommy Logan as he has championed the scheme from its outset.

The Reduced Working Week, which was agreed as part of the 2023/24 pay deal has been keeping everybody busy in NHSL. Facilities started looking at this in earnest around June 2024. Michael Shaw, Facilities Partnership Lead and myself were heavily involved in all of the discussions and negotiations and by the start of October an agreed method was put in place. We will continue to work with our members and management for the future reductions scheduled for 2025/2026.

Finally, can I thank my fellow Unison Stewards for all the support I have received over the year. A special thanks to Thomas Miller who always makes time to meet with me and guide me.

Robert Callander, Facilities Lead Steward



Midlothian H&SCP

As 2024 draws to a close I would like to use this report firstly as an opportunity to commend all our incredible NHS Lothian staff once again for the fantastic work that they do. Despite the cost-of-living rising year on year our staff continue to put in the extraordinary effort into keeping our communities safe and healthy. Our wonderful NHS has thrived for the last 76 years as a direct result of our staff's endless commitment and effort.

This year like all before it UNISON has campaigned tirelessly for better pay for our members. UNISON has rightly held the Scottish Government's feet to the fire and demanded fair pay for our members resulting in this year's pay award of 5.5%. Whilst pay negotiations are long and tiresome UNISON has not stood still during this time. We have successfully negotiated the band 5 to 6 reviews for our Registered Nurses and continue to work hard in supporting them through the process. Let's hope our Registered Nurses are as successful as Unison who supported our phlebotomy team here in Midlothian in moving from band 2 to band 3.

UNISON puts its member health and wellbeing at the forefront of our priorities, and this is no different here in Midlothian. We continue to support our members with the Soup Stop and events such as the Garden Fete. UNISON once again made Christmas that little bit more special for our patients in the RHCYP with Santa and

his helpers delivering presents and joy to children within. This was organised and delivered by three stewards and a UNISON member from our East and Midlothian team – Michael Shaw, Liam Kerr, Laura Campbell and me. The Unison Office, situated just behind the main reception in MCH is having a much-needed upgrade. Pop along for a cuppa and a chat – we would love to see you!

As lead steward for Midlothian i would like to commend all the stewards for their continued hard work and support across East and Midlothian. I would also like to say a special thank you to Thomas Miller as without his support and mentorship I would not be able to do the job I do.

Jordan Miller
UNISON lead Midlothian.



Corporate Services

This year has been a very quick and busy year with lots going on across our sites. Our services and members have faced significant challenges due to the financial pressures that the NHS is experiencing. We have supported our members in the Capital Planning Team who have gone through organisational change due to the Scottish Government withdrawing funding for any new projects. Several of our members have now gained new positions within the

organisation through this process. Health records at Canaan Lane are also going through organisational change which will see many of our administration staff being up banded as their changing role taking on additional tasks has been recognised. In September it was announced that the PAEP needed urgent repairs carried out and the building would need to be closed for six months. The PAEP has one of the busiest outpatient departments in Lothian. We were on site regularly over the very short period of time from the announcement to the closure date at the end of October to keep staff up to date and support them through this process to ensure the move to new premises was as smooth as possible that all staff did not face any changes to their conditions of employment.

The Corporate Team now has an office space one day a week in Lauriston and Comely Bank which allows us to be more visible and accessible to our members as they are able to drop in to talk through any work related issues with us. We continue to visit all our sites regularly to recruit new members and to develop positive relationships with our members. The team have visited our sites on the various international celebration days as we like to celebrate and acknowledge the work you do. This year has been the year of the LGBT



Band 5 job evaluation



LGBT Event

worker, and our LGBT officer Stewart Young has organised events at all our sites to celebrate equality and equal rights for all our LGBT members.

Angela Howard, one of our Stewards, has started doing a presentation at new staff induction sessions to talk about the benefits of being in a trade union and then the team visit Comely Bank the following day to meet up with new staff to encourage them to join Unison, the biggest and liveliest public service trade union.

In the summer we were busy keeping you up to date on this year's pay campaign and we organised and participated in a demonstration at St Andrews House during pay negotiations with the Health Secretary to put pressure on him to invest in you all and make a decent pay offer. Part of last years pay deal included the review of the band 5 nurses role. The online application process has started, and any band 5 nurse can apply to have their current role re-evaluated. Tracy Miller our Branch secretary has produced a guidance booklet to support members through the application process which we have distributed across out sites. The team have been supporting members with the application process.

We have had further changes in our team, Angela Howard joined us from the RIE and has supported us with developments in the Corporate team. She has sadly left to take up the lead role in the Edinburgh team and Mayra Nunez has now joined us and we look forward to working with her. Valerie continues as deputy lead in the team and



International Nurses Day

she continues to support our members through the Unison Well Being Service which promotes staff's wellbeing.

I would like to say a big thank you to all the Stewards in the Corporate team for their hard work and achievements over the year.

Fiona Stenhouse
Corporate Services Lead Steward



Western General

In taking the time to reflect over the last 12 months, it has been an extremely busy year here at the Western General Hospital. Navigating the current climate has not been without its challenges but it has been very rewarding providing representation and support to our valued members, as well as being actively involved in several ongoing issues. The membership plays a vital role in ensuring our voices are heard. Together we can have a direct impact and affect positive change within our working environment as a result. We will continue to take all opportunities to discuss the importance of being a member and the benefits it brings. Recruitment will remain a strong focus over the next year for “we are stronger together” and the louder the collective voice the better for us all.

We have welcomed a new Steward, Jacqueline Keddle who joined us in August and she has very quickly become part of the team on full-time facility time which also includes Neil Cook, Lynn Johnstone (also WGH Partnership Lead) and me. Jacqueline is learning fast and really starting to enjoy her new challenge.

We have again had a successful pay campaign this year and the majority of our members voted to accept the 5.5%. We have been out and about across all areas at the Western talking with our members and finding out what they really want and what they care about. We value your thoughts and opinions and are always here to listen.

Unison is member led so our focus is always on what our members want and what we can do to support them. As part of last year's pay deal it was agreed that Band 5 Registered nurses were all entitled to ask for a review of their pay band, hopefully resulting in them moving to a Band 6. Unison has more Band 5 nurse members than any other union in NHSL and we want to do everything we can to support them through this process. The Branch developed a Guidance Booklet to help them navigate the questions. This Booklet has been adopted by Unison Scotland and our members across the country are able to use it. We will continue to support any member of any pay band who has issues regarding their role and job descriptions.

The team would like to congratulate Carol Davis, Car Parking Supervisor who received the Tam Waterson award at the NHSL Celebrating Success Awards. Outstanding achievement!

It is inspiring to see the Stewards in the WGH Unison team without ring-fenced facility playing an active role and making use of our new office in the ADB. As Lead Steward, I want to continue to prioritise the One Team approach as this ensures our foundations are strong and our members

are represented to the best of our abilities. Every Steward and member is valued.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the stewards at the Western General Hospital for their hard work and continued support over the last year. Special thanks to Lynn Johnstone who has successfully led the team over the last few years. I am proud to be a part of such a strong focused and forward-thinking team of individuals who have supported each other throughout another extremely challenging period. Looking forward to our new challenges for this coming year.

Stewart Robertson
UNISON Lead Western General Hospital



DATCC

It has been a busy year for the Branch and there have been a few issues directly relating to our members in DATCC.

So firstly, some good news. The band 2 Radiography Department Assistants were successful in obtaining their band 3. Unison fought for and won this upband for all 13 of their members. As am sure you will be aware, the training for ODP's has now changed and it requires a University Degree.

This is worrying for us as a branch as could lead to shortages over the intervening 3 years. Unison is in discussion with Scottish Government on the issue and also demanding assurances that our current ODP cohort of staff will suffer no negative impact.

The band 5 to band 6 Review has now kicked off in earnest and special Job Evaluation panels have been set up. There have already been some posts been through the process. If you haven't submitted your review request, please start thinking about this. Unison Lothian Health Branch has produced a Guidance Booklet for Unison members to assist them in completing the form. Pop into your local Unison Office and grab yourself one.

The reduction in the working week negotiations continue, but be assured Unison is at the table, ensuring our members see the benefits of the reduction. We have ensured that the reduction can't be taken daily as this is to support the well-being of our members.

Over the past few months Unison has had pensions advice sessions running for individual members with our Financial Advisers, Quilter. Please make sure you book your session if you want any type of advice on this matter. Again, make contact with your local Unison Office.

With a membership of 12,000 in Lothian, Unison Lothian Health Branch is the biggest union and therefore has the most powerful voice at any negotiating table. If you aren't a member then please seriously consider joining. We are a campaigning union and proud of the fact we are member led.

Sharlene Philp
UNISON Lead Steward
DATCC



Little France Campus

It has been another challenging year for everyone working in NHS Lothian.

The Stewards on the Little France Campus have changed during 2024, so whilst we have said farewell to Jean Nolan, Barbara Milligan, Angela Howard and Debbie Westwood, we have welcomed Victoria Cosgrove into the position of Lead Steward (Denise Wilson is Deputy Lead), Lorraine Campbell and our newest member of the team, Alana Scott. Reg Lloyd continues in the role of Partnership Lead for the RIE and Leigh Brown for OAS.

We have also given the Unison Outlet a facelift with new flooring, walls painted and new signage and furniture and it is certainly a more welcoming space for members. Pop along and say hello.

As always, we have been kept very busy advising, supporting and representing our members. Unison has over 3000 members on the campus. Unison represented our phlebotomists and saw them move from a band 2 to a band 3. Unison also submitted a Job Evaluation review request for 13 Radiography Department Assistants and again they moved from a band 2 to a band 3. If you believe you are incorrectly banded please come and have a chat.

We are supporting band 5 nurses who wish to pursue a claim to be moved to a band 6. Unison Lothian Health Branch has produced a handy Guidance booklet to help members through the process.

We have booked multiple one to one sessions with Unison's financial advisers, Quilters. As a member you are entitled to this free of charge and is invaluable if looking for pensions advice. If you want to book a session, please come and see us in the Outlet.

Reg Lloyd, as well as being Partnership Lead at RIE, is also Unison's Health and Safety Officer. Reg successfully negotiated and in conjunction with management, secured weather protection shelters and body cameras for the Car Parking Assistants on the Little France Campus. This means our members have facilities to shelter from adverse weather and the body cameras will record verbal or possible physical abuse towards them in line with other sites. Unison takes the safety and well-being of our members very seriously.

We are continuing to support members with any issues they have regarding the Reduced Working Week and Protected Learning Time. As a group of Stewards, we regularly walk round wards and departments, hopefully recruiting new members, but also to listen to any concerns our current members have.

*Victoria Cosgrove
February 2025*



Edinburgh H&SCP

Welcome to our annual round-up for the Edinburgh area. Some you might be aware that our office has relocated again but we remain within the grounds of Astley Ainslie Hospital (AAH) and are now based in St Roque Building. Our door is always open and we looking forward to meeting you, so please pop in to our office at St. Roque for a chat or just to say hello. Our office is open daily Monday-Friday. Office Tel number: 0131 536 7890

There have also been several staff changes over the year. Angela Howard has moved from our UNISON Corporate Services Team and taken on the role of Lead Steward for the Edinburgh working alongside Jackie Ritchie, Deputy Lead. We have a number of workplace Stewards including Claire Holmes, Deborah Lettieri, Jo Fergus and Stephanie Labrecque.

UNISON firmly believes that NHS Staff are One Team and we continue to support the recognised International days of many of the NHS professions with walkarounds and stalls including International AHP Day below.

This year, we saw the transition of AAH from the Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership to the East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership. Our East Lothian Partnership Lead, Thomas Miller, actively attends all meetings with regards to the management of AAH.



UNISON's Angela Howard and Jackie Ritchie with Gerry McFeely, AHP, Lothian Work Support Services, AAH

With our campaign of increasing CSW Band 2 to Band 3 complete we are now actively supporting the Band 5 to Band 6 nursing review. UNISON has produced a supportive Guidance Booklet to assist our members with completing the review questionnaire. There are hard copies of this document available outside the Canteen area at AAH or alternatively you can pop into our office at St Roque for guidance and advice on completion. You can also access this electronically on unison-scotland.org/band-5-nurse-review.

We hope to catch up with you all in the year ahead whilst we are out visiting Edinburgh sites to provide you with news/campaign updates and to listen to your workplace concerns. We hope to recruit many new members and catch up with our long-standing members. To ensure we speak to all of our members we will continue to incorporate steward visits on night shifts and weekends, giving advice and support where needed.

We continue with our everyday work or supporting members through Investigatory meetings, disciplinaries, grievances and PAW's.

As always, we would like to say a big thank you to our wider UNISON family and especially to our Branch Secretary, Tracy Anne Miller for her continued help and support. Finally, we would like to acknowledge our thanks to you, the members. UNISON is member led and through meeting with and listening to our members we can support you to take issues forward both locally and nationally.

*Angela Howard, Lead Steward
Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership*



SJH and West Lothian H&SCP

This year's 5.5% pay increase was welcomed by the majority of our members as many are still struggling with the cost of living and energy increases. The option to receive the back dated element in instalments was hugely beneficial to our many members in receipt of in work benefits. Unison was the only union at the negotiating table who asked for this, so we are delighted the Scottish Government took our request seriously.

This has been another busy year for the team, in particular dealing with Organisational Change and all the uncertainty and anxiety this brings for staff. We worked hard to ensure positive outcomes for our members.

Gill and I have been involved in several issues that have arisen at HMP Addiewell. They have taken a lot of time to deal with but have resulted again in a positive conclusion.

The band 5/6 Review is keeping all of our Stewards busy, but the Guidance Document produced by our branch and being used by members across the country is helping immensely.

The temporary redeployment of staff from PAEP to SJH has been challenging for all the staff affected, including those redeployed from PAEP, Theatre staff and the staff at SJH. However, things have settled and seem to be going well.

The well-being service in West Lothian supported by Lisa Quarrel, our Well-Being Coach, is well used and appreciated by members and feedback is always positive. Lisa tells me there is now a waiting list. It shows how much stress and anxiety people are suffering from just now.

It was great to see our hard-working members in the laundry recognised by winning a Site "Team of the month award".

I would like to thank my team in SJH and West Lothian, Gemma Brennan, Gill Trotter, Janice Makinson and Margaret McFarland for their hard work and commitment to our members.

*Derek Thompson, Lead Steward
SJH & WLHSCP*



East Lothian H & SCP

Having been working in East Lothian for over 20 years, this has been the worst year to date.

2024 has seen the closure of the inpatient beds in Edington Hospital, and the closure of the Minor Injury Unit in Edington Hospital. This is not just a great loss to the people of North Berwick it was a sad day for East Lothian as the nearest minor injury unit is now on the Royal Infirmary Site at Little

France in Edinburgh. The building remains open for some community services. North Berwick is a holiday town and it was therefore a busy Minor Injury Unit staffed by some of the best trained nurses in Lothian. The Minor Injury Unit was open 24/7 and the staff had to deal with whatever came through the doors from cuts, head wounds to snake bites.

2024 also saw the closure of Belhaven Hospital after serving the people of Dunbar for the last 112 years. The 3 wards in Belhaven Hospital had just finished being refurbished and at a cost of over £1.2 million pounds. The residents in ward 1 only got back into their home for a couple of months before the closure. Some of the community hub staff got back to ward 2 for a short while before the closure, but the patients in ward 3 never got to return. After spending all that money on the refurbishment not a single patient ever spent a night in ward 3. This was home to these patients.

At the same time as the news regarding Edington and Belhaven broke, Ward 6 in East Lothian Community Hospital also got notice of closure. Ward 6 was an unfunded Covid ward. The Scottish Government pulled the funding for the ward, despite record numbers of patients recorded as “delayed discharge” in our acute hospitals and all acute beds full. Patients were and continue to be nursed in the corridors of our Emergency Departments and yet over 50 beds are closed in East Lothian?

With the hard work of the Unison Stewards in East Lothian most of the displaced staff from the closed wards have been offered alternative posts in East Lothian. Representing this many staff at one time was not easy for the team, but Cath Henderson, Sharon Jamieson and Liam Kerr all gave it 110%. These 3 reps worked extra hard to support all the staff, to date there are still a handful of staff not in permanent posts so they are doubled up throughout East Lothian Community Hospital.

The Unison Office in East Lothian Community Hospital has gone from strength to strength and is busy 5 days per week. The office is open from 8am until 4pm Monday to Friday and has proved a great drop in place for members and managers looking for advice, guidance and support. East Lothian was also very proud when our very own Niki Stewart won the Lynn Jackson Nurse of the year Award at the NHS Lothian Celebrating Success Awards. Not only is Niki a great nurse she is also a loyal and long-standing Unison member. Well done Niki.

Despite all the bad news this year in East Lothian our membership has continued to grow, and regardless of the hard hitting things that have happened this year, the Unison team still greet members with a smile and continue to give 110%.

As the Lead Steward for Unison in East Lothian I am so proud of the Stewards and I’m proud to be part of a great team.

The East Lothian Team

Jordan Miller, Michael Shaw, Liam Kerr, Cath Henderson, Sharon Jamison, Louise Allan, Angela Carroll, Robert Callander, Tina Makedenge, Wanda Fairgrieve and our new kid on the block this year Barbara Milligan I could not do my role without this team by my side.

*Thomas Miller, Unison Lead
East Lothian*



Communications Officer

Communication continues to be a cornerstone of Unison Lothian Health Branch's activities, underpinning our goals in member recruitment, engagement, learning, and campaign support. The Communications Team works closely with Branch Officers, Lead Stewards, and Stewards across departments, striving to keep all members informed and connected to the branch's ongoing work and initiatives. Over the past year, Communications Officers Stewart Young and Robert Pollock have shared this role.

We have managed the branch website, unisonlothianhealth.org, which has grown to be a hub for branch news, resources, and event updates, drawing 6,116 unique visitors this year alone. We have also taken charge of our social media pages, ensuring these platforms provide timely and engaging updates on our campaigns, events, and other vital information for our members. We have surpassed the objectives we set ourselves in 2024 and delivered a number of key achievements.

We developed and distributed two physical newsletters during the year and circulated additional digital updates, reaching members who prefer online engagement.

Social media is significant communication tool that our members actively engage with. We ensured there were regular local news stories on X and Facebook as well as covering events, union news, and campaign progress.

The team also had two articles published in Scotland in UNISON, spotlighting our branch's initiatives and achievements at a regional level, helping to elevate Lothian Health Branch's presence across Scotland.

Along with the Branch Secretary we developed and distributed a Guidance Booklet to assist our Band 5 Registered Nurse members requesting a review of their pay band. We hope the document will be a valuable resource in helping them secure a Band 6.

The new Branch website - unisonlothianhealth.org attracted over 6,000 visitors this year, indicating its growing role as an essential resource for members. We have worked closely with our SOGs and local Steward areas to promote and celebrate events such as the Year of LGBT+ Workers, Disability History Month, International Staff Days, and local Pride and gala events. The team created and distributed posters and digital content to raise awareness and encourage member participation.

Each year we produce the Branch Annual Report ahead of the AGM, providing members with a comprehensive update on the activities of Branch Officer, local Stewards Committees, staff, and campaigns across all areas.

Our goal this year has been not only to inform but to empower members, building on the momentum of campaigns and events through a coordinated approach that keeps communication channels open and accessible. The support provided to SOGs exemplifies this mission, allowing members from diverse backgrounds to

find representation and involvement within the branch. Looking ahead, the Communications Team aims to strengthen and expand our reach, focusing on the following priorities for 2025

We plan to establish a dedicated Instagram page, adding a new dimension to our social media presence. With input from stewards and members, this platform will allow us to reach a broader audience, particularly younger members, and showcase the activities, events, and successes of the branch in a highly visual, accessible format.

We plan to refresh the Unison Lothian Health Branch section of the Lothian Intranet page, improving accessibility and ensuring content is up-to-date and reflective of members' needs. By enhancing our intranet presence, we aim to provide a reliable source of information that members can access from within their work environment. We intend to explore options to update display screens in shared spaces as this will enable us to communicate timely news, campaign updates, and member resources in a visually engaging way. This initiative will allow members to stay informed, even if they do not regularly access our digital platforms.

The Communications Team is eager to meet the opportunities and challenges that 2025 will bring, further enhancing how we engage with and support our members. For continued updates on our activities, achievements, and future developments, members are encouraged to visit unisonlothianhealth.org, where they can find the latest news, resources, and information on upcoming branch events and initiatives.

With your ongoing support, we look forward to strengthening our communication efforts in 2025 and beyond, creating an inclusive and informed environment for all our members.

Robert Pollock and Stewart Young
Joint Comms Officers



Environmental Officer

In April, the Scottish Government scrapped its critical 2030 climate commitments. The Scottish Parliament could not have made a worse environmental decision. Delayed action and inaction sets a bad example and tips us into territory that is much more disruptive and expensive. Surely, the Scottish Government should already be delivering positive changes such as warm homes, decent public transport and green jobs. Ministers must take immediate action to mitigate the impacts of the climate challenge threatening the people of Scotland.

At the “Energy Campaigns Strategy Day” (9th Nov 24) with Action Network I heard that the Labour government has allotted £21.7 billion to the HyNet Project to prolong fossil-fuel industries. I have therefore joined the “HyNot” campaign.

In NHS Lothian, I continue to represent Unison in the Sustainability Development Management Group, where we seek to improve monitoring and consequently reduce the NHS Lothian’s climate impact by effective use of data. We call on NHS staff to be creative and effective in spotting and implementing improvements in their context. Unison’s has a toolkit that is designed to

help: <https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2024/09/Bargaining-on-green-issues-in-the-workplace-Sept-2024-1.pdf>. The NHS is the largest employer in the UK, hence once an innovation has proved practical and effective it can be replicated thousands of times. NHS Lothian was the first board in the UK to deliver an assessment of biodiversity, climate change and nature-based health benefits for all Hospital sites. We have rangers at the RIE, WGH and Astley Ainslie. I helped the ranger at RIE plant 4000 crocus bulbs. Staff are invited to join him every Wednesday.

NHS Lothian is developing a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) to improve species habitats and wildlife. It will protect existing trees and guide development. NHS Lothian, despite efforts to achieve reductions, has had an overall increase in green-house gas (GHG) emissions of 1.1% or 699 TC02 this year.

I enjoyed a three-week course organised by Unison; "Climate Crisis and Green Skills". This was the first Unison environmental course and meeting of our Green reps. It was great to make contacts within Unison. We have formed a group to facilitate developing ideas and learning.

I continue to be an active member of the ECC Edinburgh Climate Coalition group to liaise with the wider Edinburgh community on the specific climate issues affecting our city.

I recently attended: 'Big Oil in Court; Rosebank & the fight for the North Sea' at Edinburgh's Playfair Library. High-profile voices lent their support to the legal case against the controversial Rosebank oil field, which is currently being heard in the high court in Edinburgh. This field was approved by the previous government in 2023. Estimated extraction and use of fossil fuels from this site would emit more CO2 than the world's 28 lowest-income countries

combined do in a year. The new government recently conceded that its approval was unlawful and campaigners have met its owners – Equinor and Ithaca Energy – in court. The hearing commenced in Edinburgh on the 11/11/24. If campaign groups in which I participate are successful, the decision to re-approve Rosebank may end up back on the government's desk. The Stop Rosebank campaign exists to prove that the decision to approve Rosebank wasn't just a climate disaster or morally and economically wrong—it was unlawful. Please sign the campaign at <https://www.stopcambo.org.uk/>.

Recent extreme weather events, such as flooding in Valencia emphatically demonstrates the urgency and importance of addressing the climate crises in every way possible as quickly as possible. With global temperatures reaching 1.5C above pre-industrial average this year, delay or partial measures are not an option. Every country, including Scotland, every organisation, including the NHS and Unison, and every person must prioritise this and take action now.



Health and Safety Officer

The past year has been another challenging year for us all. We have been continuing to support and advise staff suffering stress and anxiety with personal and work-related issues. Workers have been dealing with Staff shortages and challenges delivering services to users of NHSL services.

Notable successes this year due to our interventions and recommendations have been considerable. In conjunction Facilities Management we ensured Car parking Assistants at the Little France Campus had weather protection shelters and body cameras to record verbal and possible physical abuse towards them in line with other sites. We advised and assisted NHSL management with team and individual Stress for Staff Risk Assessments, ensuring remote home workers were not overlooked. We assisted and supported staff who suffered workplace injuries. We supported members suffering Long Covid and Menopausal symptoms, ensuring management gave provision of the appropriate leave and support when staff were suffering some of the effects of the conditions. We recommended and signposted members to services that can help to support staff struggling with life issues. We ensured all NHSL H&S Committees are jointly Chaired by Staff Side H&S Reps. We worked with OHSS/ management to ensure improved recommended PPE for staff. We have advised and led the many short life working groups including revision of lone working devices.

More recently we have been making recommendations for safety measures to the Employer whilst the current financial situation and Departmental/Service budgets are very stretched. We continue to Assist members back to work post Pandemic. Members who were working from home during this time have required adjustments to the workplace environment e.g., DSE workstation requirements. Many meetings now take place over MS Team's. We are ensuring breaks and gaps between meetings are built in to prevent a working day staring at a PC screen. An ongoing and key issue is safe staffing levels. We ensure these remain a focus during recruitment and retention challenges in the NHS. We will continue to ensure that workplace Risk Assessments are robust and all our members health, safety

and wellbeing factors are considered. As the Branch Health and Safety Officer I continue to regularly engage with the Health and Safety Executive. The Regulator will consult me as the Branch H&S Officer on all reported incidents in NHSL and in line with the Health and Safety at Work Act and will always seek a staff side perspective. We often engage with Scottish Fire and Rescue, Police Scotland, and Environmental Agencies. We have close professional working relationships with Community Police and Fire and Rescue Officers with any topic that have safety implications for staff and Patients alike. We also have strong links with the National Hazards Campaign which fight for workers safety.

Health and Safety information and advice is available to members from Unison at all of our Unison Offices and Outlets across NHSL. One of the Stewards will put you in touch with either myself or one of our workplace H&S Reps, who are all trained and accredited. Unison Lothian Health Branch will continue to keep a watchful eye and talk to our members as your health and safety at work is essential to us.

Reg Lloyd
Health and Safety Officer



Recruitment Officer

Firstly, I will introduce myself. I am Liam Kerr and am currently the Interim Recruitment Officer alongside Ian Kilgour, for UNISON Lothian Health Branch.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our previous Recruitment Officer Irene Salkeld for all her hard work over the many years she has served in the role. Irene will be a huge loss as Recruitment Officer.

The local Stewards Committees have annual recruitment plans and are regularly out recruiting in their local areas. It is the role of the Recruitment Officers to support this activity. We in Unison don't just look out for our new members, we like to be visible in all areas to make staff feel supported within the workplace. Retention is very important as well as recruiting new members and by regularly walking round our wards and departments we hope members feel valued and listened too. We, in Unison Lothian Health Branch feel this is very important. On average we recruit 130 new members each month. We recruit a lot of our new members when we are celebrating our "international days". These are specific days in the year set aside to celebrate a particular section of the workforce, such as International Healthcare Support Worker Day, International Nurses' day, International AHP day, International Estates and Facilities day. We like to celebrate the hard work of our members, so we put a focus on these days and use them as an opportunity to listen to what our members are looking for from Unison.

Looking ahead to 2025 the Recruitment Officers will work closely with the Campaigns Officer and Campaigns and Events Committee to plan, develop and deliver a calendar of exciting initiatives, events and celebrations to support and acknowledge the work of the current members and to encourage people to join Unison. A key focus for the year ahead is mapping our membership in the workplaces. We will pilot this initiative in Midlothian Community Hospital and look at membership density. This allows us to identify areas where staff are not joining Unison, meet with them and try to ascertain what we need to do as a union to encourage them to join.

Finally Ian and myself would like to say a massive thank you to all our members for being part of our Unison family. We would also like to thank the Stewards in the branch for their dedicated recruitment activity and supporting the many initiatives we deliver.

*Liam Kerr/Ian Kilgour
Recruitment Officers*



Campaigns Officer

2024 was the first year of the Branch having a Campaigns Officer. We are a proud campaigning branch and already had an active Campaigns & Events Committee, so the natural next step was the Campaigns Officer to lead the Committee. Each area within the branch is represented on the

Committee. This Committee plans and supports all of our events. It has been a busy year for the branch with many events attended by our stewards & members. Every year we celebrate several "International days" across our NHS job families and their contribution to the NHS. We always like to give small tokens of appreciation to our hard working members such as pens, lanyards, badge holder and of course lots of cake. This year was no exception and our members seemed to enjoy the celebrations.

We take time to remember those workers who lost their lives whilst performing their duties on International Workers Day, which is always on 28th April. Representatives from the Branch laid a wreath in Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian in memory.

This event is closely followed by International Workers Day and this is always on 1st May. This event is celebrated across the world. Edinburgh joint trade unions will come together on the first Saturday in May and hold a march on the Royal Mile to commemorate the struggles and victories of working-class people. Unison Lothian Health Branch Stewards had the honour of leading the parade this year and marched proudly behind the City of Edinburgh Pipes and Drums.

In June we were invited to take part in Newtongrange Gala Day Parade. Miners Gala Days were a huge part of working-class communities in years gone by and it is an absolute honour to be involved. This was the first year for the Dalkeith Festival after an absence of a few years, so when the Committee asked us to join in the parade our stewards gladly accepted. We decorated the Mobile Advice Centre in Unison colours and marched in front of it. Again, a privilege to be asked.

On the second Saturday in July, for over 138 years, trade unions have gathered in Durham for the biggest and oldest celebration of the trade union movement in the world. This is the branch's third year of attendance.

Along with a number of Stewards, members and kids and our sponsored pipe band, the City of Edinburgh Pipes & Drums, we participate in the parade alongside thousands of other trade union activists. This gala day celebrates working class culture, international solidarity & community. During the parade the pipe band have the opportunity to play in front of the labour movement leaders, invited guests, local dignitaries & the thousands in the crowd. It is a great honour for us to be involved in this great tradition

Lothian Health Branch are also involved heavily with TUIC (trade unions in the community) as one of its founding members, which is based at Craigmillar. The whole ethos of TUIC is to take the trade union movement back to its roots – to the working class communities it started in. Each year TUIC hosts a Fun Day in August. The branch stewards not only marched in the parade but took the time to work on the stalls (all set up with donations of clothes, toys, bric a brac) and everything was given away free to the people living in this community. The day was a huge success with bands, free food & entertainment. Unison stewards certainly helped towards making this event successful.

Auchengeich colliery saw the largest loss of life in a post war pit disaster in Scotland with 47 men being killed. Aberfan in Wales saw the death of 144 people in 1966 and of those who died there were 116 children. Both these tragedies are remembered with a memorial service each year and a delegation from the branch attends and lays a wreath in remembrance of those who lost their lives. So, 2024 has been a busy campaigning year for your branch and next year will be just as busy I am sure. Look out for these events being advertised and come along and participate. We would love to see you there. Thanks to all of the Stewards in the branch who readily give up their own time to participate in these events.

Denise Wilson
Campaigns Officer



Education Officer

A busy year for Lothian Branch stewards in 2024 as we continued to explore and deliver training across many platforms and in different styles. Popular training opportunities include a session on a Friday afternoon after our monthly branch committee which is delivered with dry wit and humour by Gordon McKay, sessions are both challenging and fun exploring employment law, policies and current practise. These sessions keep stewards fully up to date, with the golden rule “there is no silly question?” This encourages all stewards to engage and be interrogative and get the most out of this informal, fun yet informative session.

Several training activities continued to be run in house by our senior and most experienced stewards, particularly Branch Chairperson, Grace Forrest. This includes updates re Policy and processes and the newer One for Scotland Policies as they become updated. These sessions are a must attend for all our new stewards and those on ring-fenced facility time, and expected attendance by all to a session when updates are announced. This ensures we provide the very best representation to our members.

We have also been accessing Regional Training, some courses are able to be delivered online which has been helpful in supporting staff to be released to attend

training and others are still delivered face to face, which our branch continues to identify as a preferred option. As a branch we also adopt other styles of learning and development opportunities which include shadowing, peer support, these opportunities are for all stewards to compliment classroom style learning and maximises on building confidence and developing styles of practise.

The Branch welcomed 9 new stewards in 2024 that have all completed training throughout this year and are now fully accredited stewards. Lothian Health Branch continues to access Scotland wide regional training for our new stewards, Feedback remains positive about the training delivered and we will continue access for our future stewards. We also re-accredited 9 of our existing stewards; renewal of Employee Relations Act training is mandatory every 5 years for accredited stewards and again ensures relevant and up to date training for stewards.

This year we attempted to have all our stewards complete 1 day Equalities training, this was ambitious but we delivered the programme throughout the year via branch lay tutors and regional officers and have reached a 90% compliance . This will be an annual course moving forwards to ensure all new stewards attain this training in 12 months following their accreditation. We ran our courses for these in house at our NewHailes Office which has a fantastic training room and is accessible for all with great transport links and parking, training delivered by branch lay tutors and our regional office. As large branch opportunities for stewards from different localities to attend training together is important in continuing peer support and shared learning.

Training and development for 2025 continues to focus new skill skills and consolidation, our development days incorporated a session reviewing what had worked well and what stewards were seeking as development opportunities for their own learning journey.

Commitments for 2025 include:

- Continued commitment to equalities agenda including delivery of the 1 day Equality course on a rolling programme and the inclusion of Challenging Racism training.
- Training delivery re communication and the challenges at times this presents and public speaking, presenting
- Disability and health – including neurodiversity, reasonable adjustment and use of both Disability and Carer's passports.
- Continue to work with the Lead Stewards and local stewards committees to identify training needs and development opportunities.
- The training and development of the Stewards will be delivered via a variety of routes including internal training, Regional Unison training and external agency training if appropriate.

As Education Officer I will endeavour to attend Regional sessions linking in with The Learning & Organising Committee to look at best practise and education priorities. This will help to shape development opportunities for the Branch.

Louise Allan, Education Officer



Health & Wellbeing Officer

It is that time of year where like all of the other teams in UNISON the Wellbeing team get together to reflect back over year. In that time, the one thing that is consistent is that we get busier and busier every year.

The increased demand has meant that this year we have, for the first time in two years started a waiting list. The last email sent out advertising the service generated over 35 referrals.

Having a waiting list means that we have to work on needs based triage system and the confidential application allows us to do just that. Not until we have all those on the list allocated with sessions in the diary do we advertise the service again, although referrals do come in throughout the year out with advertised times.



The service continues to help our members through difficult times, and we are seeing more and more people with depression, anxiety, stress and burn out than ever before. Stressors from the demand of the workplace as well as the social economic environment all play a part, and these are showing no sign of improvement in the near future. UNISON will continue working to reduce the workplace stressors for all our members, ensuring that the employer provides the services to look after their staff.

All of us need to look after ourselves particularly when you are asked or expected to do more in work and at home.

We all need to learn to put in boundaries and ensure we are in good health and have a balance between work and home life that works for YOU. UNISON Lothian Health Branch wanted to do more than leave it to the employer to provide well-being support and that is how this (unique to this Branch) service came about.



We have had one work shop this year that was well attended and included guided meditation as well as self care tips and tools to assist in that all important life work balance Valerie, Lisa and myself will be organising smaller workshops that will take place in our Health and Wellbeing Room at Newhailes in Musselburgh.

The workshops really gave those that attended a real understanding that putting yourself first is not a luxury to fit in when you can, but a necessity to ensure good mental and physical health, without which we cannot truly look after others or be really productive at work. The workshops will give our members some tools for looking after themselves and also gives an insight into the 1:1 coaching and the courage to come forward to ask for the service.

For us as coaches it is an honour to be able to provide this service to those needing some help during or after difficult times as many of us in our branch working within a health sector have needed help at times in our own lives. As a branch we are very proud of this service and we are grateful to and thank our members for trusting us and using our service. The uptake in the Coaching programme has surpassed our expectations.

It is also important to note that managers support members of staff in attending these sessions as it can often help to reduce/ prevent sickness absence and assist those that attend in returning to work as well as increasing productivity.



This year we have seen 33 members to date, with each and everyone engaging with and getting the benefit of this service. Many of those attending for the 1:1 sessions report an overall improvement in their life work balance, finding their voice and having the ability to say no without the guilt as well as increased confidence and self esteem.

Valerie Lisa and I are all looking forward to continuing with and developing the service into 2025 and beyond.

Debbie Reilly
UNISON Health and wellbeing officer





International Officer

Unison has a Scottish International Committee which meets three to four times per year and its remit is to work with trade unions across the world to call out injustice and Unison has very strong relationships with our counterparts/comrades across the globe. The right to organise and the right to strike are enshrined in the constitution. As the Branch International Officer I continue to play an active role in all of these campaigns as well as supporting local demonstrations.

NICARAGUA

On 11 October, President Daniel Ortega announced the severance of diplomatic relations with Israel, condemning once again the 'brutal, criminal war and the continued genocide carried out by the Israeli government against the Palestinian people.

Susan Sim, one of the Branch retired members, attended for the October 24 Nicaragua Webinar entitled "Church and State in Nicaragua: Probing the Relationship."

The Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign Action Group (NSCAG), which Lothian Health branch is affiliated to, works with Nicaraguan trade unions from various sectors, all of whom are members of the FNT

(National Workers' Front). Since 2007, when the FSLN (Sandinista National Liberation Front) returned to power, Nicaragua has undergone a remarkable transformation and the trade unions have seen the restoration of their rights following 17 years of a right-wing government. This period saw the decimation of the labour and trade union movement, with thousands of public sector workers sacked and the trade unions severely weakened. Nicaragua remains the second poorest country in the Americas after Haiti.

Some 65% of Nicaraguans work in the informal sector, for example selling goods at traffic lights and as ambulant market sellers and street sellers. The trade unions see the fight against poverty as one of their main tasks. They have prioritised employment creation and the improvement of working conditions for their members. A tripartite agreement between Government, the private sector and the unions was put in place at the beginning of 2014. The right to organise and the right to strike are enshrined in the constitution, although there have been only three strikes since the FSLN came back to power (as opposed to almost 500 during the neo-liberal years).

JUSTICE FOR COLUMBIA (JFC) SCOTLAND EVENT AT SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT, WEDNESDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2023

Unison Scotland has long had connections with this campaign. We recently met with members of the campaign as part of their work to revitalise their activity in Scotland. At this event, we heard from relatives of young people killed by the Colombian Army and their fight for truth and justice. JFC is supporting peace talks with armed groups and social reforms but they can only do this with trade union support. Although Colombia elected its first ever trade union-backed government in 2022, the country faces a struggle to overcome conflict, violence and high inequality. JFC is supporting peace

talks with armed groups and social reforms that can benefit millions of working people - but they can only do this with trade union support.

KURDISTAN

Scottish Solidarity with Kurdistan hosted a media event in October in Glasgow to keep attention on Abdullah Ocalan, referred to as the Kurdish 'Nelson Mandela' who has been jailed and held in solitary confinement on the Turkish island of Imrali for over 23 years.

I attended this event in late 2023 and Susan Sim (retired International Officer) attended in 2024.

Sam McCartney Award

This is an annual event remembering Sam who is much missed across Unison Scotland International Committee which he chaired. Solidarity with Palestine was one of Sam's passions. I recall Sam speaking at one of our Branch meetings a few years ago.

A speaker this year, Mohammad, talked of growing up in the Aida Refugee camp in the West Bank in Palestine. He spoke emotionally about the horrific conditions for the Palestinian people in Gaza and the West bank as so many people around the world continue to demand a ceasefire but the bombing continues. Mohammad participates in Outreach work for the Lajee Centre in the camp. They are supported by the Unison Northern Ireland Branch. We receive regular updates on activity which is circulated to our Stewards.

*Laura Turnbull,
International Officer*



UNISON Labour Link – Your Union Working to Make Lives Better

UNISON's Labour Link ensures the priorities of our members are taken into the Labour Party and become part of Labour's programme for government whether it be at Westminster, Holyrood or one of Lothian's council districts.

In the months since Labour has been elected to government at Westminster, we have seen a significant pay award for NHS workers, voted on and agreed by UNISON NHS members, which was then also applied in Scotland, again agreed by our members.

We have seen legislation introduced to improve employment rights giving you protection from unfair dismissal from day one of employment rather than after two years. Legislation has also commenced on stopping employers forcing staff to sign zero-hour contracts and to prevent businesses from sacking workers and then re-hiring them on lower pay.

Labour is bringing the railways back into public ownership and creating a green infrastructure and promoting wind energy. All these measures give our members better pay, securer jobs and lower bills.

At Holyrood while Labour is not in power UNISON have worked with to prevent the National Care Service proposals in their current form from becoming law. The proposed National Care Service would have put the NHS we know at risk and would have privatised jobs and services.

At Council level UNISON work with Labour Councillors, many of whom are our members, to promote better services and to keep jobs in the public sector and on decent terms and conditions.

Labour Link meet regularly with Labour MPs, MSPs and Councillors and have seats on all of Labour's governing bodies. It is our engagement and involvement that give our members influence and ensure our voices are heard.

Where we disagree with Labour, and we do the way all friends and colleagues do at times, the Link means we can tell them that and work to change their minds and not stand shouting on the sidelines.

The Labour Link is about what UNISON can do for you, to make your lives and the lives of your family better. Thank you to those who are in the Link, I hope those who are not will think about joining, and I hope more of you will become active. UNISON is Your Union, please help to ensure it reflects your values and what is important to you.

Gordon McKay UNISON, NHS Lothian
Labour Link Officer



Welfare Officer

The cost of living still continues to affect our members and this year I have assisted many members to apply for financial assistance through UNISON's Charity "There For You".

As Welfare Officer I have a list of additional support that is available and again am able to sign post members to other relevant help available. For example UNISON'S debt line, CAB, or local foodbanks & pantries where appropriate.

Unison continues to support our low paid members throughout the year via our "There For You" charity with Winter Fuel Grants and School Uniform grants and the new Winter Essentials Grant. These services are invaluable and UNISON Welfare will do all it can to support members in their time of need.

As always, all members can approach myself as Branch Welfare Officer directly or contact their local UNISON Office for my details and be assured the information you share with me is held in the strictest confidence. I will help, support and advise where I can.

Megan Reilly
Branch Welfare Officer



Womens Officer

2024 has been a difficult year as both Norma and Tracy have had some work pressures that have found them struggling to dedicate enough time to the role. However, it has not stopped them celebrating the introduction of the Menopause Policy across NHS Scotland. Furthermore Lothian Health Branch put forward a Motion to our Scottish Health Conference asking for a change in the rules for ladies who suffer a loss during pregnancy making them fairer. We have now successfully had our Policies changed to reflect this.

In February the Branch set a delegation to Women's Conference in Brighton. The Delegation enjoyed listening to debate and motions on many important women's issues (Too many to mention!)

Our own Rakiya Suleiman spoke passionately on three Emergency Motions including Motion 3b Women and Children of Gaza ' - A motion that was overwhelmingly supported by Conference.

Tracy is attending this years Women's Conference, as a member of the Standing Orders Committee and Norma will be attending as a member of the National Executive Committee. We have a delegation from the Branch also attending.



Unison Lothian Health branch membership is made up of 81% women members. We will be developing a workplan for 2025 and hope to engage as many of our membership as possible next year. We are look forward to working with our Equalities Officer and our other Self Organised Groups on issues that impact jointly. Our workplan will very much be focused around supporting and informing our women members and a hope more of you will become active and involved in the Branch.

Please join us in making 2025 our Women Members' Year and Lothian Health Branch a stronger branch. We have some amazing plans for the coming year. We will compile a list of women members in the Branch and create regular news updates for our Women members. We will ask the members what type of meetings they want to participate in i.e. online, in person and when they would like these to take place e.g. lunchtime, weekend or evening We will be running our first in person event in the New Year- watch out for the details! We will look to establishing a quarterly event for our Women members online looking at key issues affecting our Women Members including: Menopause and Pensions

We continue to commit to working together with all of the SOG leads, where appropriate.

*Norma Black & Tracy McBurnie
Joint Womens Officers*



Youth Officer

This year, the Youth Forum has made significant strides in engaging with our young members, expanding the forum, and strengthening our connection with the wider community. Through a range of activities, events, and campaigns, we have worked hard to promote the trade union movement, ensuring young people entering the workforce and those already involved in their communities understand the value and power of collective action.

Throughout the year, the Youth Forum has been actively involved in various community-focused events and campaigns, aiming to raise awareness of union issues and recruit new members. Key highlights include Craigmillar Fun Day which is a family-oriented event that brought together people in the community and introduced them to the benefits of joining a trade union. Freshers' Fayre is an annual recruitment event targeting new students, helping them understand the importance of unions and how they can get involved.

Young Members Month (November) is again an annual celebration that helped further strengthen connections within the youth membership and provided a platform for learning and engagement.

Collaboration has been a key focus this year. We have worked closely with several other forums and self-organised groups within UNISON, such as the Black Members Self-Organised Group. We Partnered on initiatives to support and engage black members in the union. Teaming up for joint stalls and recruitment efforts, specifically for the Year of the LGBTQ+ Worker. This partnership has been hugely successful, attracting many new members to both the youth forum and the broader union.

Recognising the importance of skill development and knowledge-building, the Youth Forum has invested in several training opportunities this year. These sessions have allowed our members and stewards to improve their understanding of the trade union movement and youth-specific issues, ensuring we are equipped to support young workers. Our youth forum attended key events such as the Young Members Conference and meetings with the National Young Members Committee, enabling us to stay updated on national trends and advocate for issues that matter to young members.

As a result of our efforts, we have seen a marked increase in young member recruitment. The combination of direct outreach, fun stalls, and interactive events has sparked greater interest and involvement. Additionally, our walkabouts at various sites have allowed us to connect with young members directly, ensuring we cover all areas and continue building engagement. We are encouraged to see more young members becoming active participants in the Youth Forum.

The Youth Forum remains committed to expanding our reach and continuing the work we've begun this year. We will build on the momentum we've gained and continue to advocate for young workers across all sectors. Our goal is to further strengthen our collective voice, support each other in uncertain times, and ensure that all young

members feel empowered and represented within the union.

The Youth Forum would like to express our sincere thanks to all members for their ongoing hard work and dedication. Despite the challenges we have faced this year, UNISON has remained a powerful force for change, and together, we can continue to build a brighter future for young workers.

UNISON has your back. Together, we are stronger.

Youth Officer, Chloe Campbell



Retired Members Officer

As always, the Retired members in the Branch have been active. Our first meeting of the year was held in Edinburgh on 13th March 2024, and we had a number of different discussions relevant to retired members.

Sadly, none of us were available to attend the Retired Members Conference in Glasgow but we will aim to get folk along next year. Our second meeting was on 12th June, and we invited a guest speaker who failed to turn up. This was disappointing as they were due to deliver an update on the current situation with WASPI.

Our annual summer outing was delayed until 1st October when 15 retired members enjoyed a fantastic day out at New Lanark. These activities are great team building events and we certainly see the benefit with the number of active retired members in Lothian Health Branch.

We continue to contact Unison members who have retired. I personally contacted 4 this year but sadly haven't had a response to date. We will keep trying though. We held our annual meeting in early November. We used the Unison Office meeting room at Newhailes and it proved to be a very popular choice so we are considering our venue options going forward.

In 2025 we want to be more proactive in getting newly retired members to join our group and we will have a focus on this. We will also try to get guest Speakers along to most of our meetings as they are always popular

Sheena Callaghan, Retired Members Group



Lifelong Learning Coordinator

UNISON Scotland has met a huge demand for member learning and delivered a huge number of courses using ZOOM and Teams platforms. UNISON continues to deliver courses online and in person.

Member preference is in-person due to the sharing of best practice and experiences across the Branches.

As Lifelong Learning Coordinator I continue to work with our Communications Officers to ensure that the UNISON courses are advertised to you in a timely manner via our revamped member learning Intranet page and via our member distribution list.

To support Activist Learning, as a Lay Tutor for UNISON, I continue to co-deliver UNISON courses for Stewards and hope to return to delivering learning to members too. This has proven difficult in 2024 due to a reduced Scottish Union Learning Funding allocation from the Scottish Government, caused by funding cuts from Westminster.

I have worked closely with Quilters, who have delivered a number of pension awareness sessions and have also ran 1:1 sessions with members at the Little France Campus, the Western General Hospital and St Johns Hospital, with more sites planned for 1:1 member advice. These sessions have been well received by our members and have enabled them to make positive life changes. Many of our members have reduced their hours and have taken the choice to prioritise their work life balance as a result.

Thank you to our members, I was overwhelmingly re-elected to UNISON Scotland's Learning and Organising Committee and continue to represent you on this - putting our Health members views and opinions forward. Through collective membership, I can influence YOUR training and development. I intend to stand again for this committee in 2025 and hope that you, through your local activists, will support my nomination when it comes.

In 2025 I would like develop a learning programme based on what you, our members, would like to learn. Please feel free to email me with your ideas. Thanks

TRACY MCBURNIE
LIFELONG LEARNING COORDINATOR



Equalities Officer

No report submitted.



Black Members SOG

The Black Members Self Organised Group keeps on growing tremendously and we currently have 100 members who are active within the group. It was our aim to create a legacy following on from the Year of the Black Worker in 2023 and the Self Organised Group has certainly achieved this. We are hoping to see more positive changes in our workplace with the help and encouragement of the wider branch. We are grateful to the Branch Committee and Regional Organiser whose support enables us to grow each year.

Three of our Shop Stewards and 1 low paid member attended the National Black Workers Conference this year, whilst 2 of our stewards attended the Health Conference and the National Delegate Conference. We continue to represent Black Members who specifically request to be supported by Black Stewards. Our Black Members Self Organised Group Stewards have met 4 times in 2024 and we have also managed to have 2 Meetings with the wider group. We held one meeting in May in person at Danderhall and the other was online in September. The online meeting was well attended with 40 members joining. We also held several education sessions on how our members should be treated at work and to recognise bullying and harassment in the workplace.

We ensured members knew how to and why they needed to raise any issues as early as possible with their local Stewards to ensure they are appropriately represented. In 2025 we are hoping to recruit more members to join the Self Organised Group and become active.

We will continue to mentor new stewards as well as encouraging more members to become activists. We already have 4 members interested in training to become accredited Shop Stewards. We are keen to develop a succession plan for the role of Black Member Officer. We are planning to celebrate Black History month in 2025 and will invite Black Members to tell their stories on the day. We are also planning to invite members of the other self-organised groups to some of our meetings in 2025.

Our 2024 annual meeting was held on 21/12/24 and 50 members registered to attend.

*Tina Makedenge, Mary Ann Oloju,
Rueben S Akoh.
Black Members Officers*



Disabled Members SOG

2024 has been a time of change for the SOG. We welcomed Angela Carroll as the joint Chairperson. Angela currently work as a Deputy Charge Nurse in ELCH.

Angela has a recognised hidden disability which has and continues to affect her daily and work life. However, she is committed to supporting and guiding members who

require the help at a difficult time. The goal is to see the SOG grow for the benefit of our members. The additional support could help members stay in employment and knowing others who have faced issues in the workplace and have overcome this with the support of Unison could benefit them. Angela is really keen to see the website page grow, especially with links to all the various disabilities. These will be approved sources so that staff know the information they will be finding will be current and appropriate.

This year we revamped our webpages with the help of the Branch's Communication Team. Please access the site – all comments and suggestions are welcome. We would also like to hear from you – your stories and experiences of having a disability. Remember, you don't need to have a diagnosis to be covered by the 2010 Equality Act, just to have a condition or illness which has or is expected to last for a year or more and which impacts on your life and ability to work. We will work with your local stewards to support you. Drop either of us an email any time with your queries. We always aim to get back to you within 3 working days.

We worked in collaboration with our LGBT+ colleagues at stalls across Lothian to celebrate Unison's Year of the LGBT+ Worker. It is our intention within the SOGs to work more closely together in 2025.

As in previous years Margaret sits on the Scottish Disabled Members Committee, an elected seat, and on the Scottish Health Council Committee. This has enabled her to provide Unison input at Scottish Government level for two important workstreams: Anchors Workforce and the Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy Board. The Branch contributed to this through the survey, as a test Branch, on your experience of Jobtrain which has informed a national report. She ensures she is always driving home disability issues. Margaret has also just been elected to sit on the National Pharmacy Workforce Forum to represent disabled people's views. One key piece of work was a tour East Lothian Community

Hospital to provide a report highlighting where there were issues for disabled staff working in the hospital – as well as disabled patients/ visitors. Working in collaboration with Reg Lloyd, the Branch H&S Officer and Thomas Miller Unison Lead and other unions, Margaret was wheeled around the site in a wheelchair for a disabled person's eye view.

This year we looked at the issues relating to disabled members having independent access to disabled public toilets across the UK. Some of the toilets within our hospitals are locked so members have the embarrassment of asking to use a key. Sometimes they cannot wait. To support our members, we have purchased a number of RADAR keys to unlock these doors. Any member can ask for a key if they contact the Branch Office who will forward your request on. The keys can be expensive – our charge is merely that you sign up for the SOG.



National Disabled Conference, Brighton, October 2024



Royal Edinburgh Hospital LGBT+ stall, October 2024

We also have keyrings and pens available.

Looking forward to 2025, we intend to develop with our Learning Officer a number of short information sessions on disability and intersection matters to be provided online and with copies to be available later on the website. Please get in touch with topics/ideas you would like to see us cover.

We will also create on our webpage a list of useful links for stewards and members. All these organisations will be vetted.

Finally, we will develop a very short survey - no more than six questions – asking you if, in your opinion, things have changed for disabled staff since we first asked in the 2022 Year of the Disabled Worker. We will advertise when this goes live, and we encourage you to complete it. It's your chance to influence what we target moving forward.

Margaret Callander and Angela Carroll



LGBT+ Self-Organised Group

Unison designated 2024 as The Year of the LGBT+ Worker and it has been an outstanding year for the Unison Lothian Health Branch LGBT+ Self-Organised Group (SOG), as we have seen significant growth and active member engagement across a range of campaigns and events. The

LGBT+ SOG has seen an exciting increase in membership, growing from 6 to 25 active members this year. This growth is a testament to our collective commitment to fostering an inclusive space and promoting engagement with LGBT+ issues and support networks within our branch.

Communication is a key priority, and two newsletters were circulated this year, keeping members informed on branch activities, event updates, and important developments in LGBT+ rights and resources. We also developed and launched an online joining form, making it easier than ever for members to get involved in the LGBT+ SOG and ensuring seamless access to support and community.

Additionally New pages on unisonlothianhealth.org were created to provide dedicated space for LGBT+ and Year of LGBT+ Workers information, further boosting visibility and accessibility for members.

We hosted four social events in 2024, providing members with an opportunity to connect, network, and discuss issues that matter in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

As a Branch we always ensure that our LGBT+ Activists attend any relevant Conferences and this year was no exception. Two delegates attended STUC LGBT+ Conference to ensure the branch membership's interests were looked after. Our Activists also attended Unison LGBT+ Conference and we submitted a motion titled "Urgent Call for Immediate Access to Autism Assessment, Diagnosis, and Support for LGBT+ Members via the NHS." This motion highlights the often-overlooked mental health and support needs of LGBT+ individuals and will remain a core part of our advocacy moving forward.

This year, our branch secured representation on both the Unison LGBT+ Regional Committee and the Scottish Health

Committee. Through these seats, we are strengthening our role in shaping policies and raising awareness about LGBT+ issues at a broader level.

As 2024 was the Unison Year of the LGBT+ Worker, we wanted to ensure maximum visibility and engagement. Our team participated in 11 roadshows across NHS Lothian, raising awareness on LGBT+ rights, promoting inclusion in the workplace, and advocating for LGBT+ workers. We proudly represented our branch at Pride events in Edinburgh, Stirling, and Fife, standing in solidarity with the LGBT+ community and celebrating the progress and resilience of LGBT+ individuals.

As we prepare for 2025, our focus will be on enhancing engagement, improving accessibility to resources, and ensuring our members feel supported and represented.

Key priorities include:

We will launch a SOG poll to gather feedback on issues that matter most to our members. Understanding these needs will guide our activities and advocacy in 2025.

To foster real-time communication, we plan to create a WhatsApp group for SOG members. This group will allow us to connect more dynamically, share updates, and build a stronger sense of community.

We aim to work closely with other Self-Organised Groups within the branch, facilitating cross-group learning, advocacy, and solidarity.

Social events will remain a priority, as they provide valuable opportunities for members to connect, share experiences, and support one another.

The LGBT+ SOG is excited for the opportunities that lie ahead in 2025 and remains dedicated to advocating for the rights, well-being, and representation of our LGBT+ members. We encourage members to stay connected and visit

unisonlothianhealth.org regularly for updates on our ongoing initiatives and upcoming events. Together, we will continue to build a more inclusive, supportive, and empowered community for all members.

Stewart Young
LGBT+ Officer



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NHS Lothian Charity are excited to have launched the new Staff Lottery, exclusively for NHS Lothian staff.

The first draw will take place at the end of September 2024. For as little as £1 per month, deducted from your payslip, your Staff Lottery offers you a chance to win incredible prizes while helping to make healthcare better for everyone.

- Top prize £1,000
- Second prize £200
- Or four £50 prizes, every month!

It is simple to play, all you need to do is sign up today.

The quickest and easiest way to sign up is by scanning the QR code or visiting: nhslothiancharity.org/staff-lottery.

You'll need a few personal details and your payroll number too.

You must be 18 years old or over, be employed by NHS Lothian, receive your salary through NHS Lothian payroll, and live in Scotland to claim a prize from your Staff Lottery, managed by NHS Lothian Charity.



