

Womens SOG

COVID restrictions has had its challenges for both Norma and Tracy, as a result we have been unable to fulfil many of our commitments to our Women Members and for that we are sorry. We promise to do better next year.

We have been very fortunate to be able to manage a significant budget from the Branch, however for the third year running, we have been unable to spend this!

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 you, our Women members.

We will ask our members what type of meetings they want to return to i.e. online, in person and when they would like these to take place e.g. lunchtime, weekend or evening.

We will promote existing learning and development and also ask our members what learning and education they would like the Branch to provide.

We will discuss Women events with other UNISON Branches in the Edinburgh area- and hope to work with other sectors of UNISON to achieve this.



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.

Tracy attended a spectacular talk on a new service that is being provided to victims of sexual assault in Lothian- Sexual Assault Response Coordination Service (SARCS). SARCS is a national service, being hosted and delivered in NHS Lothian. She promoted this to NHS Lothian's Networks. At the time of writing this, Tracy is glad to report that it will be the focus at each of the staff networks- BME, Women's, LGBT+ and DEN. Tracy would like to see this as a presentation at one of our Steward committees.

attending Women's Conference in that capacity! A role she has been told she will be good at and is looking forward to taking on the challenge!

Norma and Tracy will be attending the Branch development days in October 2023, and hope to influence the work plan for 2024.

Norma is currently representing the Scottish Region women's group on the National Women's Committee where support for staff working in abortion services and buffer zones to protect patients and workers forms part of the NWC workplan having been carried at this year's NW conference. The Scottish Region motion also carried at 2022 conference 'Never forget to Lift as you rise' is something that Tracy and Norma feel passionate about. A part of this calls on self-organised groups to develop a programme which will support and mentor women activists into leadership roles in branches and regions recognising the different experiences of women.



We attended our most recent branch development days and had some excellent feedback on how we could improve our involvement with our women members. We are reviewing our work plan to look at different ways of engaging with members and seeking women's views on what matters to them and what support that they may need in the workplace. There has been much discussion around the menopause and how women continue to be adversely cared for by employers through current sickness absence management processes. Nationally there are likely to be some legal challenges on this and we will keep our members informed. We would like to work together to support activists who are supporting women to be fully informed on how best to support women at this time.

Our branch membership is made up of 81% women members. Our workplan will very much be focused around supporting our women members to be supported be informed and to get involved.

Please join Tracy and Norma in making 2024 Our Women Members' Year. Your UNISON Branch needs you- please join us in making your Branch even stronger still!

*Norma Black - Joint Women's Officer
Tracy McBurnie - Joint Women's Officer*