

In this newsletter

1. 27th October branch meeting
2. More information
3. Video on Prison Education
4. Survivor's pensions
5. The current UCU strike action
6. 2016 RMB conference
7. UCU Equality Conference
8. Parliamentary Constituency boundary changes
9. The Prevent Duty
10. Book Corner.
11. South West TUC pensioners conference.
12. TTIP
13. Campaigns and Causes.
14. Brexit; Sally Hunt's article in THE
15. The role of retired members.
16. Standing Orders for branches.

1. Branch meeting

Thursday 27th October 2016
12.00 a.m. – 2.30 p.m.

Venue: UCU Office. Labour Party Rooms
26b Clifton Hill, Exeter EX1 2DJ

A buffet lunch will be provided if you let
us know a week in advance.
ucu.swest@gmail.com

2. More information and news can be obtained from these websites. We suggest you have a browse.

UCU National Website: <http://www.ucu.org.uk>

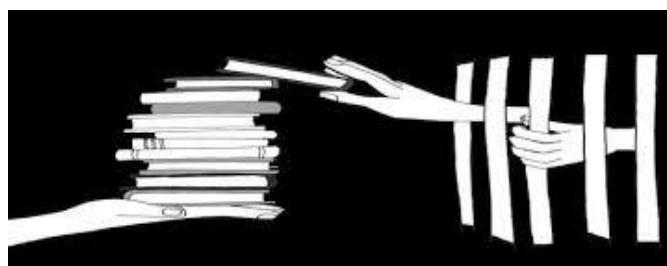
AgeUK: <http://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

68 is too late: www.68istoolate.org.uk

National Pensioners Convention (NPC): <http://npcuk.org>

3. Prison education.

Last year we had Philippa Davey as a speaker on Prison Education. Despite the many challenges and often poor working conditions experienced by prison educators, [this new short film](#) shows how UCU members can transform lives.



Philippa can be contacted at the Exeter SW Region office. exeter@ucu.org.uk

4. Survivor's pensions.

This is a branch campaign. Since the Reviews by TUC and HM Government in 2014 the various schemes have moved away from final salary to working life contributions for determination of pensions.

There appear to be a number of anomalies. For example the NHS death in membership fact sheet is dated 07/2012 which predates the TUC/Government Review of 2014. Does this mean that the NHS scheme is self-funded (as in the case of local government officers) or is there an exception to the apparent ruling in 2014? If so are there implications for the teachers and other schemes?

We have contacted UCU HO and await their response.

John Daniell. SW RMB.

5. The current UCU Strike Action.

A UCU member at UWE Bristol wrote to the UWE branch negotiating secretary as follows: *“always very happy to follow Union decisions during disputes; and I will certainly take action with colleagues on Tuesday - but I do wonder at the sense of calling strike days at a time when few of us have responsibilities on campus and we are unlikely to be missed by management. Some junior members of staff in my department have suggested to me that, as far as they're concerned, it will simply feel like losing a day's pay without making any impact on the university.”*

Here is the reply: Very good point, why did we select that day? We think it deserves a shared reply.

The national union decided at congress (start of June 2016) what actions were going to occur. We anticipate this will be a prolonged and perhaps escalating action. The negotiating team had proposed we have a one day strike in July. There was also a proposal for another one day strike in August. We argued successfully that August was a dead month and that was simply pointless. We won that. The same argument did not win for July, though we pointed out that for our institution there was no sensible action we could take to have a university wide impact in that month.

Despite our protests the FE sector and the research institutions felt they could have an impact, and so it was determined there had to be a one day strike. We of course had to accept the vote from Congress. So we are obliged. That left a problem of when to have one?

It really left us with having a strike to impact on award ceremonies or perhaps the odd resit or to find another reason. We considered a few, but as your colleagues point out there is nothing really useful. So we do our duty and we decided that the best thing we could do was join with other colleagues in dispute, to have at least some public exposure. So we picked the NUT strike, 5th July, as appropriate collaboration and to join with them in a rally.

This is a long action, and we shall be taking further strike actions. Those we hope to be able to target, we plan to have impact on process, and days will be selected when we can make a significant impact. We are not keen on hurting

our students before, at or after they are at university, but it is likely that to have impact we shall need to look at award boards and such like, and student progress may be threatened. Of course it won't if they actually give us a proper pay rise.

We seek to resolve rather than fight issues, and you are entitled to a reasonable workload, not obliged to do anything you are asked and work yourself to death. Know your contract.

Andy Tubb UCU-UWE Negotiating Secretary

6. 2016 RM conference

An annual meeting of representatives from UCU retired members' branches will be held on Wednesday 23 November 2016 at UCU head office, Carlow Street, London

It will run from 11.00 am to 16.00 pm with registration and coffee available from 10.30 am. Lunch and refreshments will be provided.

https://www.ucu.org.uk/rmb_annualmeeting

Branches can register 2 per retired members branch who will be elected at the branch meeting on Oct 27th. The deadline for registration is 5pm on Thursday 9 November 2016.

7. UCU Equality conference Dec 2016.

UCU's annual equality conference combines a joint equality conference for black, LGBT, disabled and women members as well as dedicated sessions for the four constituencies, joint sessions, various workshops and guest speakers.



Thursday 1 December to Saturday 3 December 2016 (not all delegates will need to be there for the full 3 days)

As in previous years this will consist of a plenary session for all delegates, 4 separate equality group meetings, and two workshops. There will be time for motions and nominations in each equality group. All sessions will have relevant guest speakers. There will be plenty of time for networking with other colleagues during the conference.

Venue: The conference will be held at: Conference Aston - Hotel & Conference Centre, Birmingham.

Timetable and registration at <https://www.ucu.org.uk/membersannualgroupscconference>

8. Parliamentary Constituency Boundary Changes.

How long have we had true democracy in UK – that is *one elector one vote*? Surprisingly, to me anyway, within my lifetime.



In the United Kingdom up to 1948, people affiliated with a university were allowed a vote in both a university constituency and their home constituency, and property owners could vote both in the constituency where their property lay and that in which they lived, if the two were different. Some university-educated property owners could even vote in three different constituencies. After 1910, the Liberal Government was intent on passing a Plural Voting Bill that sought to prevent electors who appeared on the electoral register more than once from voting more than once. However, before the bill could pass through parliament, the Great War started and the bill was shelved. These practices were finally abolished by the Representation of the People Act 1948, which first applied in the **1950** General Election.¹

The Boundary Commission proposals announced in September 2106 will see an overall number of seats from 650 to 600. Projections based on the proposals show Labour as the biggest losers and in relative terms the Tories as the big winners. The Liberal Democrats would lose half their GE2015 seats and the only Green MP in Brighton will be out. It will be the first reduction in the number of seats in Wales since the Great Reform Act of 1832 and see Wales be reduced from forty seats to just twenty nine.²

1. Wikipedia.

2. <http://politicalbetting.com/>

Jo Corke SW RMB

9. The 'Prevent duty' refers to Section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 which contains a duty on specified authorities including colleges and universities to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'.

The Prevent strategy had three specific stated objectives:

To 'respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat faced from those who promote it'.

To 'prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support'.

To 'work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation'.

Many colleges and universities, including UWE, are already developing guidance and UCU have published a briefing on their website which is designed to inform members and allow branches to engage with that process.

At its 2015 Congress, UCU passed a policy which set out the following objections to the Prevent duty:

- It will seriously threaten academic freedom and freedom of speech.
- The broad definition of terrorism will stifle campus activism.
- The intention to force our members to be involved in the racist labelling of students is unacceptable.

The Prevent Agenda will force our members to spy on our learners, is discriminatory towards Muslims, and legitimises Islamophobia and xenophobia, encouraging racist views to be publicised and normalised within society;

The monitoring of Muslim students will destroy the trust needed for a safe and supportive learning environment and encourage discrimination against BME and Muslim staff and students.

The Prevent agenda will help racist attitudes to flourish.

The Prevent strategy was first published by the Government in 2015 and is part of their over-all counter-terrorism strategy, CONTEST. The stated aim of the Prevent strategy is to 'reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism'.

[UCU UWE Bristol newsletter summer 2016.](#)

10. Book Corner.

Jane Senior, (who I wrote my MED thesis on) has since been written about in a lot more details by Sybil Oldfield in the book *Jeannie*. * I spoke to Sybil on the phone a couple of years ago. Ever since I did my thesis I had felt guilty that I had not written up *Jeannie* as a book as she was an incredible, and unknown, pioneer. The first high ranking female civil servant and promoter of fostering for pauper children. Then I discovered that Sybil had done just that. I was really pleased as it meant I didn't have to! I contacted Sybil and found that she had also tried to locate me (unsuccessfully) using my thesis in her work. She is based at the University of Sussex as Emeritus Reader.

Jane Senior, née Hughes, belonged to an extraordinary network of female friendships in the 1860s and 70s, which included the pioneering social reformers Olivia Hill and Florence Nightingale, the photographer Julia Margaret Cameron, George Eliot, Anny Thackeray (daughter of the novelist), Caroline Stephen (younger sister of Leslie Stephen) and Kate Collins (Dickens's daughter and Wilkie Collins's sister-in-law). Sybil Oldfield's biography reconstructs this empowering network of women, as it bore upon the personal and public facets of Jane Senior's life. A continuity emerges of the friendships between women and their collective participation in the larger gender struggle.

Jane Elizabeth Senior, known as "Jeanie" to her intimates, was the first woman civil servant, appointed government inspector of workhouses in 1873 by the radical president of the Local Government Board, James Stansfeld. Her remit was to report on the education of "pauper girls". A letter to Stansfeld lauding the appointment was signed by the great women activists of the day, among them Harriet Martineau, Ernestine Rose, Josephine Butler and Florence Nightingale.

Oldfield describes Senior's years of charitable work leading to the appointment, including her part in the founding of the Red Cross, and emphasises her social awareness and radical sympathies, shared with her brother Thomas Hughes, reformer and author of *Tom Brown's School Days*. Balancing the emphasis on female friendship, Senior's intense relationships with men, notably G. F. Watts, Prosper Merimee and her own son Walter, are also detailed.

Jeannie championed foster care as opposed to keeping children in huge 2000 plus institutions where they were totally unprepared for life outside the poor house.

When the Conservatives returned to power she lost her post (No change there then) dying not long afterwards.

* Synopsis of *Jeanie - An Army of One*:

The life and work of Mrs. Nassau Senior 1828-1877. Sybil Oldfield.

Paper presented at a Voluntary Action History Society Seminar, May 2006

http://www.vahs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2007/02/Synopsis_of_Jeanie_An_Army_of_One.pdf

Jacqui Hughes Bath.



11. SW TUC Pensioners Conference

The next annual Conference of the South West TUC Pensioners will be held at the Weston College, Knightstone Campus, Knightstone Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 2AL on Thursday, 20 October, 2016 from 10.30 a.m. to 3.30pm.

As an affiliated branch we are sending two delegates, John Daniell and Jo Corke.

Nomination of Delegates to the South West TUC Pensioners' Committee. The Committee has 22 seats. To stand for nomination to the South West TUC Pensioners' Committee you must either be in attendance at the South West TUC Pensioners' Annual Conference or present your apologies. If you are interested in standing, let us know.

John and Jo SW RMB

12. TTIP may have failed.



The European Union's long-planned trade deal with the US has collapsed with negotiations showing no sign of progress despite three years' of talks, according to Germany's economy minister, Sigmar Gabriel. (28.8.16)

Matthias Fekl, the French minister for foreign trade, has said his country will call for an end to the deal: Mr Fekl told France's RMC radio station that "we need a clear, clean, definitive stop" to the negotiations. (30.8.16)

So it may be the end of the road for the TTIP trade deal that many people across Europe thought would put our democracy and NHS at risk.

13. Campaigns and Causes.

All members for whom UCU Head Office has an email address receive a weekly Campaigns update. If you receive this newsletter, but not the weekly updates from Head Office it, then let us know and we will ensure you are on the HO circulation list.

Ucu.swest@gmail.com

14. Brexit.

This article first appeared in The Times Higher.

By any definition, further and higher education are international and outward facing. UK education has always had among the most international of labour forces. Our range of students also reflects the cosmopolitan nature of our universities and colleges.

Some 15 per cent of university academic staff and 5 per cent of students are EU nationals - helping to make the UK a top destination for students from around Europe.

Research and innovation are most likely to flourish in an open, global-facing society. That is why the UK has continued to attract not just thousands of students to study and academics to work here, but also international funding. In the university sector last year, EU funding supported almost 9,000 direct jobs, £836 million in economic output and a contribution of nearly £577 million to GDP.

I have been approached by many worried academics since the vote; worried about their own position as EU nationals; worried about their colleagues; worried about their students; worried about EU funding upon which thousands of jobs depend; worried about the upsurge in hostility to migrants that has been fed and encouraged by some parts of the media.

If colleagues from the EU feel they are no longer welcome to study or work at our universities, the damage to our international academic reputation will be near fatal. The impact will not just be felt in lost research income, but through a brain drain of UK academics abroad and the loss of one of our key strengths as a producer of skilled labour. So what needs to be done in a post-Brexit world to protect our universities and colleges?

Here are four things that UCU is demanding politicians do now:

First, we need a commitment that those EU nationals who are here now can stay. Their economic contribution is enormous and any other message - such as the idea that they could be used as bargaining chips in the Brexit negotiations - will damage the UK's reputation.

Second, we must quickly establish the potential loss of research, social fund and fee income arising from Brexit and make sure our universities have sufficient public funding to continue to compete with the world's best.

Third, we need the government to drop its now irrelevant higher education bill and instead call an immediate nonpartisan inquiry into how we can ensure that our colleges and universities remain open to staff and students from around the world.

Fourth, we need politicians and the press to recognise their responsibilities.

Blaming immigration is an old game of course, but in a climate where almost all politicians seem to be frightened of outlining its benefits, we risk damaging our society beyond repair.

I see our colleges and universities at the forefront of the post-Brexit world. In difficult times, we must continue to make the case for what they stand for: openness to new ideas, access to opportunity for all, and - of course - collaboration with each other wherever we come from.

Sally Hunt, General Secretary UCU.

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/8383/Four-things-that-must-happen-to-protect-higher-education-after-Brexit>

15. The Role of Retired Members.

Recruitment of members has always been a priority. However with the savage cuts in FE and potential for the same in HE, replacing lost membership is now critical. It may be that we, as retired members are able to help.

16. Branch rules.

Branches are asked to adopt or adapt the model local rules adopted by Congress 2016.

Standing orders for the conduct of business at local general meetings

<http://tinyurl.com/swrmb01>

South West Retired Members Branch are invited to read the two documents and make comments to ucu.swest@gmail.com which will be gratefully received,

We wish to recommend to the branch meeting on 27.10.16 that we adopt these as the Standing orders for the conduct of business at our general meetings.

Jo Corke

17. UCU Journal.

By way of background, at the 2015 Congress, Preston College branch submitted a motion which called for 'the re-introduction of a regular UCU journal/magazine or newspaper at the earliest possible opportunity.'

When the motion came to be discussed, it was noted that producing a hard copy magazine would cost in the region of £250,000, or around one third of the campaigns budget, and would mean diverting resources currently earmarked to support national and local disputes. It was also stated from the platform that the last magazine 'UC' had very low readership levels.

In noting this, Preston College branch and others made the valid point that nonetheless there was no hard copy publication that they and others could use to demonstrate the union's worth to members and potential recruits.

The platform accepted this point and it was agreed by Preston College branch to remit its motion on the basis that the union would put together an affordable, annual report style publication which branches could use in both hard copy and in an on-line format to promote the union.

The publication that was created in response to this decision is UCU@work and [it can now be downloaded here](#).

Matt Waddup
UCU national head of policy and campaigns

For more information

**please contact ucu.swest@gmail.com
or contact the officers here:**

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