

SKILLS FOR STRENGTH

2020 UNISON North West Skills for Strength Convention

	Main Hall	Congress Room	Peterloo Room	Mary Quaile Room
09:30 – 10:00	Registration			
10:00 – 11:10	Opening Plenary - Current challenges and the need to organise Rena Wood, Interim Regional Convenor - Chair Edmund Heery, Laura Smith, Kevan Nelson, others TBC			
Workshop Slot A 11:15 – 12:00hrs	What Trade Unions Can Do to Organise for a Green New Deal Calvin Lawson – Labour for a Green New Deal	UNISON North West Organising Academy – lessons from the class of 2019. Bob Kelly & Academy Graduates	Building power beyond the workplace- ACORN Community union Imogen Woods– Acorn Organiser	Organising with Pride - From lone voices to collective union action for LGBT+ Equality UNISON North West LGBT+ Group
12:00 – 12:15hrs	Break			
Workshop Slot B 12:15 – 13:15hrs	Birmingham Care Workers Victory – A case study in successful political leverage campaigning. Ravi Subramanian - UNISON West Midlands Regional Secretary	NHS Earnings Max campaign. Powerful workplace mapping and charting Louise Chinnery UNISON Centre & Branch Activists	Building for action: Disputes in the North West Lizanne Devonport, UNISON North West Dispute Team & Striking Activists	Digital Organising: how to make social media videos on your phone (workshop 1 of 2) Conor McGurran & Joanne Findlay – UNISON North West Organisers
13:15 – 14:00hrs	Lunch & Campaigns Marketplace (John Tocher Room)			
Workshop Slot C 14:00 – 15:00hrs	Hit 'em where it hurts! Power mapping as an organising tool (or how to Kung Fu fight UNISON style and Win!) Valery Alzaga – UNISON Strategic Organising Unit	Young Workers – the Future is Now! Ellie Drake and Jasmine Fernley - UNISON North West Young Members group	Turning members into activists into stewards – a branch case study James Robinson – UNISON Knowsley Branch (Winner of 2019 Branch Award)	Digital Organising: how to make social media videos on your phone (workshop 2 of 2) Conor McGurran & Joanne Findlay – UNISON North West Organisers
15:00 – 15:15hrs	Break			
15:15 – 16:10hrs	Key Note Speaker: Ethel Buckley – Winning for Workers – lessons from SIPTU			
16:10 – 16:30hrs	Closing Plenary. A reflection on the day and next steps for a stronger UNISON North West Rena Wood- Interim Regional Convenor, Ethel Buckley.			
16:30 – 18:00hrs	BAR			

<p>A</p>	<p>What Trade Unions Can Do to Organise for a Green New Deal</p> <p>Calvin Lawson – Labour for a Green New Deal</p>	<p>This workshop will look at the role of Green/Environment Reps, what they have and can achieve and how to use current law to advocate for the expansion of their role. We will look at examples of workplaces that have made environmental changes following from union action. Examples include the implementation of workplace carbon neutral plans, pension fund divestment and industry specific just transition proposals.</p> <p>The main aims of this workshop will be to look at past examples as inspiration but also develop new approaches and tactics following from these discussion points and how we can better coordinate across environmental movements for industry, local and national change.</p>
	<p>UNISON North West Organising Academy – lessons from the class of 2019.</p> <p>Bob Kelly & Academy Graduates</p>	<p>UNISON North West initiated an Organising Academy in 2019. The main aims are to train our activists to become successful organisers and leaders in their workplaces and branches. In this workshop we will talk about the aims of the academy and some of the activists who have successfully completed the course will explain how it has helped them to use their new skills and knowledge to build a stronger Unison. The workshop should interest any activists who want to learn more about organising.</p>
	<p>Building power beyond the workplace- ACORN Community union</p> <p>Imogen Woods – Acorn Organiser</p>	<p>ACORN is a direct action community union that organises around issues that matter to its members the most.</p> <p>Since it began five years ago ACORN has battled the housing crisis by winning thousands of pounds in repairs for tenants, been on rent strike and won £64,000, stopped numerous evictions, won campaigns on landlord licensing and stopping universal credit evictions in Manchester, Sheffield and Bristol. All through direct action. Not only that, but they've trained hundreds of members up and down the country in how to organise in their communities.</p> <p>This workshop will detail how ACORN keeps on winning and how you yourselves can take the lessons from community organising into your own workplaces and communities through strategy charting and identifying leverage.</p>
	<p>Organising with Pride - From lone voices to collective union action for LGBT+ Equality</p> <p>Adam Hodgson, Ceri Lewis-Shaw, Laura Heaton, John McSwiggan and Eileen Best</p> <p>UNISON North West LGBT+ Group</p>	<p>The UNISON North West LGBT+ Group will take delegates through the journey of LGBT+ rights, highlighting how UNISON has been involved in these campaigns and what rights still need to be won.</p> <p>This session will involve a short presentation about UNISON's LGBT+ History, culminating in a snapshot of where we are regarding LGBT+ rights, what more needs to be done and why these issues are key workplace and community organising issues for UNISON. We will then move on to a practical session about how to recruit and organise LGBT+ workers, utilising UNISON guidance on organising workplace self organised groups, organising at Pride events and organising for equality. Finally, the UNISON North West LGBT+ Group will talk about its action plan and how it can be used to complement branch activity, including through training days, attending local pride events and using LGBT+ awareness and commemoration days to campaign for LGBT+ and workers' rights. Delegates should expect to leave with a number of practical actions they can take back to their branches, details of activities being run by the UNISON North West LGBT+ Group that they can engage with and guides to help them coordinate LGBT+ campaigns in their workplace.</p>

<p>B</p>	<p>Birmingham Care Workers Victory – A case study in successful political leverage campaigning.</p> <p>Ravi Subramanian - UNISON West Midlands Regional Secretary</p>	<p>The UNISON Birmingham Homecare Workers Dispute lasted 18 months (longer than the Miners’ Dispute in the 1980s) and it ended with a complete and humiliating climb-down by Birmingham City Council, who scrapped all of their proposals. Winning a dispute is all about making an employer say “yes” to something they really want to say “no” to. The aim of the workshop will be to explain the tactics that led to this historic victory, and to equip delegates with the skills to make their employers say yes when they are stubbornly saying no. The story of this dispute will give delegates a template of how to run a dispute against any council employer. The lessons from this dispute are transferrable and the template will also allow activists in other types of employer build a strategy to win.</p>
	<p>NHS Earning Max campaign. Powerful workplace mapping and charting</p> <p>Louise Chinnery- UNISON Centre & Branch Activists</p>	<p>The UNISON North West NHS Earnings Max Campaign is an ambitious organising project across seven participating branches to deliver significant increases in membership, identify new activists and win big pay rises for members in NHS trusts.</p> <p>Delivered by NHS Organising expert Louise Chinnery and UNISON North West activists from participating branches, this workshop will run through the power of workplace mapping and charting. UNISON North West experience in recent years has shown that these are vital tools for any branch planning to organise to build power. Workshop participants will leave with the knowledge and practical templates to chart and map effectively.</p>
	<p>Building for action: Disputes in the North West</p> <p>Lizanne Devonport, UNISON North West Dispute Team & Striking Activists</p>	<p>UNISON North West has lead the way in recent years in delivering big ballot turnouts followed by successful industrial action. This workshop will provide an overview of the collective disputes in the North West Region in the last 12 months and explore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building a collective to deliver actions - Developing local leaders - Organising and membership data <p>The workshop will equip participants with an understanding of the process of delivering successful outcomes for members in dispute with their employer.</p>
	<p>Digital Organising: how to make social media videos on your phone (1 of 2)</p> <p>Conor McGurran & Joanne Findlay – UNISON North West Organisers</p>	<p>NB. this is a double workshop and participants must attend both sessions (B and C).</p> <p>Many UNISON branches are now running their own social media accounts in order to communicate with their members. High quality video content is now the bread and butter of any effective social media strategy and if we are going to reach our members (and crucially, recruit non-members online), we need to be producing and posting video clips. But don’t be scared! Producing punchy and powerful video clips is not rocket science. This session will teach you:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) How vital video is to the social media landscape, and why we produce need to produce videos for our members. 2) Why people share videos and what makes a successful social media video. 3) How to plan your own video for social media. 4) Basic tips for filming a video using a smartphone. 5) Tools for editing your video and what to do with it once your clip is finished.

C	<p>Hit em where it hurts! Power mapping as an organising tool (or how to Kung Fu fight Unison style and Win!) Valery Alzaga – UNISON Strategic Organising Unit</p>	<p>After the 2019 Election we know UNISON activists will be at the forefront of defending our NHS, social care, public services and education. It is upon us and our communities to stand up and fight back for the common good. So how do we do that? How do we learn to fight and win? How do go from a defensive position to an offensive one?</p> <p>In this session, we will discuss the best way to campaign by learning how to do power mapping, basic employer research, and effective strategic leverage. When we fight effectively, we win!</p>
	<p>Young Workers – The Future is Now! Ellie Drake and Jasmine Fernley UNISON North West Young Members Group</p>	<p>People often say that young people are apathetic and difficult to engage, but with many of our young members having grown up or come into adult life under a decade of austerity and Conservative rule this couldn't be further from the truth.</p> <p>From mass increases in voter registration to utilising social media to effectively spread campaigning and organising messages, this session will explore just what young people are doing to change our society for the better and how we can best support our young activists in UNISON at both a Branch and Regional level.</p>
	<p>Turning members into activists into stewards – a branch case study James Robinson, Paula Carlyle, Karen Greer, Mike Proudfoot UNISON Knowsley Branch (Winner of 2019 Branch Award)</p>	<p>In just under a year, Knowsley Branch successfully filled every officer vacancy within its constitution. One of the key officer positions being the Education Officer in terms of mapping existing reps training and development as well as ensuring new reps were enrolled on the basic training requirements. Having a brand new leadership in the branch for the first time in three decades, it was an opportunity to review how the branch functions including collective bargaining arrangements, case work and involvement in wider Labour Movement including supporting disputes, demonstrations, rallies etc.</p> <p>This workshop details how the branch went from a handful of senior reps/officers carrying out case work to a position where they have over twenty stewards with caseloads. This includes the benefits of having stewards committees, a greater focus on health and safety and moving away from a model of servicing to one of organising. Come along and hear first-hand experience of those officers and reps who have taken a role in the branch.</p>

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Valery Alzaga is a labour organiser and a social and migrant rights activist. She worked for 9 years in the Justice for Janitors Campaign throughout the U.S., and then went on to share and jointly adapt the social unionism model in South Africa, Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, and the UK. She worked at the "Change to Win - European Organising Centre" for 8 years campaigning in various service and emerging economy sectors including airports, social care, and renewable energy sectors. Valery is now working for the Strategic Organising Unit at UNISON helping develop organising, campaigning capacity and organising resource centres for fragmented privatized workers. She is currently helping various UNISON regions to develop broader organising programs, effective campaign leads, and highly skilled organisers.

Ethel Buckley is Deputy General Secretary of SIPTU and has lead responsibility for Organising and Membership Development. Ethel cut her teeth as an Organiser in some of the most intense industrial battles of the early-to-mid 2000's before transferring to the Strategic Organising Department where she served as a Researcher before being promoted to Sector Organiser. She joined the union's Strategic Management Team in 2011 when she was promoted to National Campaigns and Equality Organiser. In this role, Ethel led campaigns to mobilise young, migrant and LGBT workers. As Services Division Organiser since 2015 she has been central to the Justice for Clerys Workers campaign, organising the National Women's Football Squad and securing legislation to restore collective bargaining rights to certain categories of freelance workers. She has also worked on ending involuntary low working hours and zero hours contracts.

She is a serving member of the Executive Council of the ICTU having first been elected in 2013. She had the honour of being appointed the inaugural Trade Union Organiser in Residence at Ruskin College, Oxford, England. Ethel is a socialist and a feminist.

Louise Chinnery is currently a UNISON National Officer within the Health Service Group. Prior to her current role Louise was an Education Officer in UNISON's Learning and Organising Service Team. Before joining UNISON, Louise organised mostly in private sector workplaces, including a stint working for the Service and Food Workers' Union in New Zealand. Louise is passionate about the power of trade union education and organising to make real change.

Lizanne Devonport has a background in youth and community work in local government, where she joined UNISON and became an activist. After working for the GMB and as a TUC tutor, she has been employed by UNISON in a variety of organising roles for 15 years, and as a Regional Organiser for the last seven. Lizanne now works as part of the Bargaining, Equalities and Representation Team and has Lead role with the Disputes Team working with branches building for and delivering successful industrial action.

Ellie Drake comes from a family of strong trade unionists and has been a member of UNISON for over 3 and a half years. She is the Co-Chair of UNISON North West Young Members Forum, the North West delegate to UNISON National Young Members Committee, the Young Members delegate to UNISON National Women's Committee as well as being a Branch Steward.

Jasmine Fernley has been a member of Unison since she first started her working life 6 years ago. She has been active within the union since her first meeting with the North West Young Members Group in February 2018, which drove her to become more active and take up roles within her branch. She is enthusiastic about continuing to get new activists involved, particularly other young members. She is currently Young Member's Branch Officer and a Branch Steward for the University of Manchester UNISON Branch, and has previously Co-Chaired the UNISON North West Young Members Forum.

Joanne Findlay is an Area Organiser for UNISON North West, currently working predominantly with Merseyside Health branches. Joanne has worked for UNISON since 2015 and has assisted many branches in developing their communications, both online and offline. This includes leading member communications in disputes with AFG and Compass Medirect, and building regional communications including the Care Workers for Change campaign.

Karen Greer is Vice Chair & Health and Safety Officer of UNISON Knowsley Branch. She works at Knowsley Borough Council as an Operational Technical Support Officer. Karen has been a member of the union since she started working for the Council at age 17 and she will not be disclosing how long ago that was! Karen has taken up various roles within the Union and started as a steward in her teens. Last year, Karen completed the TUC Health and Safety Levels 1&2 qualifications. This year, she is undertaking the TUC Health and Safety Diploma which is a first for Knowsley branch.

Edmund Heery is Professor of Employment Relations at Cardiff Business School and an expert in UK Industrial Relations, best known for his work on trade unions. He has led projects on union organizing, union responses to contingent work, the changing role of the TUC, the involvement of unions in Amnesty International, and union policy on equal pay and work-life integration. More recently, Edmund has been involved in research on the UK's Living Wage, the

changing activities of employers' organizations and the resolution of employment disputes. Among Edmund's publications are *Union Voices: Tactics and Tensions in UK Organizing* (Cornell University Press, 2013) (with Mel Simms and Jane Holgate), *Reassessing the Employment Relationship* (Palgrave MacMillan, 2011) (with Paul Blyton and Peter Turnbull), and *Framing Work: Unitary, Pluralist and Critical Analysis in the 21st Century* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

Bob Kelly is the Regional Education Organiser for UNISON in the North West. Bob has over 20 years experience of working in trade union education. Bob has taught courses ranging from basic reps courses all the way up to TUC Diplomas. Bob believes that to build a stronger union, education is the key building block to achieving that goal.

Calvin Lawson is a RMT, Labour and Green New Deal activist. He is the Co-lead of LGND TU Team and North East Region and was part of the LGND TU team that successfully worked with 7 of the 11 affiliated unions to back the GND motion at the 2019 Labour Party Conference. Calvin works with CLPs, Councils and Trade Union Councils across the North East to develop green initiatives such as electric charging points, tree planting and publicly owned energy companies. He has developed networks with UKSCN and XR to make cohesive strategies for local and Union involved actions.

Conor McGurran is an Area Organiser for UNISON North West and is the region's lead for Communications and Media. Conor has worked for UNISON North West since 2016, beginning as a Fighting Fund Local Organiser working on the region's pioneering social care project. Conor was heavily involved in developing the Care Workers for Change campaign's digital presence, utilising social media to recruit new members, identify new activists and apply pressure to employers and politicians. Conor now coordinates the region's media work and digital platforms, as well as supporting branch activists in these areas of work.

Kevan Nelson has been North West Regional Secretary since 2011, before that he worked as Regional Organiser followed by Director of the Executive Office at UNISON Centre. Prior to 2002, Kevan was North West Regional Convenor and a UNISON Branch convenor / secretary for 15 years. Kevan is a passionate advocate of organising and works tirelessly to direct resources and energy towards building an even stronger UNISON North West.

Mike Proudfoot is the UNISON Knowsley Branch Education Co-ordinator. Mike has worked in Local Government for 30 years, with the last 20 years being in variety of roles in Knowsley Council. Mike is currently a Commercial Services Officer within Facilities Management. Mike has responsibility for Performance Management, Menu Building and Systems Administration within the School Meal Services. As Education Co-ordinator, Mike is responsible for ensuring all stewards are ERA accredited and receive the necessary Refresher Training every 5 years. Mike also publicises and encourages Knowsley's Stewards and Officers to attend courses which will enhance their knowledge and skills and therefore provide the best possible representation of our members.

Ravi Subramanian is Regional Secretary for UNISON in the West Midlands. He loves maths and he tries to bring the same discipline used to solve maths problems to help workers win.

UNISON North West LGBT+ Group. **Adam Hodgson, Ceri Lewis-Shaw, Laura Heaton, John McSwiggan and Eileen Best.** The UNISON North West LGBT+ Group is a collection of activists from branches all across the North West who have a wide range of experiences in campaigning for LGBT+ equality. All the presenters are keen members of the group who are committed to making work better for LGBT+ people. Find us on Facebook (facebook.com/unisonnwlgbt), Twitter (twitter.com/unisonnwlgbt) and join our mailing list (www.unisonnw.org/lgbtsubscribe).

Imogen Woods is an elected Director of ACORN nationally and co-founder of ACORN Manchester, a direct action community union. She works for UNISON North West as a Local Organiser.

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