

UNISON

‘There for you’

NEWSLETTER

We are UNISON’s registered charity offering FREE and confidential services, benefits and support including:-

- **Financial Assistance - if you are in financial hardship due to unforeseen circumstances**
- **Small Grants**
 - **School Uniform May- July** (application forms available May 2017)
 - **Winter Fuel Dec-Feb** (now closed for 2017)
- **Links to Credit Unions - for loans/savings**
- **Wellbeing breaks - during illness/respite for carers**
- **Support & information – listening support & sign posting**
- **Debt advice - freephone 0800 389 3302**

UNISON debt line (0800 389 3302) can offer free and confidential advice and support with debt and budgeting



They can tell you about a range of possible solutions in dealing with your debts and support you in taking the best course of action.

They are also aware of the type of grant that UNISON’s charity ‘There for You’ can provide, and will refer members to us if they think that we can offer additional help

THERE FOR YOU AGM

Tuesday 20 June 2017

We are pleased to announce details of our Annual General Meeting 2017 which is open to Branch Welfare Officers, Branch Secretaries, NEC, members of the regional welfare committees and visitors

Date: 20 June 2017 – 12.45-14.00 (registration from 11.30am)

Venue: The Brighton Centre, Auditorium 2, King's Road, Brighton BN1 2GR

The registration deadline is **5 May 2017** which will be strictly adhered to.
To obtain a registration form please click the link below:

[AGM Notice 2017](#)

[AGM Registration Form 2017](#)

Or go to <https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/services-support/there-for-you/>

Or contact 0207 121 5620

Winter Fuel Grants

- The total number of applications received for Winter Fuel Grants was 811 compared with 583 in 2016 – an increase of 39%
- Grant payments were made totalling £30,550.
- 75% of completed assessments qualified for a grant
- 60% of applicants had never applied for a winter fuel grant before
- 18% qualified for a grant under new Housing Benefit criteria
- Of the completed applications 200 were declined overall for the following reasons:
 - Out of criteria 85
 - No Contact from member 115

Region	grants awarded	% of total
Eastern	14	2
East Midlands	43	7
Greater London	39	6
North West	109	18
Northern	91	15
Northern Ireland	59	10
Scotland	56	9.5
South East	20	3
South West	26	4
Cymru/Wales	40	6.5
West Midlands	46	8
Yorkshire & Humberside	68	11

Bereavement Support Payment

Overview of the changes:

No age restriction now provided under state pension age and sufficient National Insurance paid and the lump sum if you have children is now £3500.00. (the new payment is disregarded by means-tested benefits and the benefit cap)

This replaces the 3-tier system of

- Bereavement Payment
- Bereavement Allowance and
- Widowed Parent's Allowance

The old Bereavement Allowance was only available to people aged over 45 at the time their spouse or civil partner died

- The new benefit is available to people of any age up to state pension age, and extends support from 12 to 18 months
- In addition, the new payment will now not be taxed, and will be subject to a disregard in the calculation of means-tested benefits and the benefit cap, helping those on the lowest incomes by providing extra cash at a time when it is need
- The new Bereavement Support Payment restores fairness to the system by being available to all people under state pension age whose spouse or civil partner made sufficient National Insurance contributions.
- The new Bereavement Support Payment is designed to help people with the additional and more immediate costs of the grieving period (instead of the notion of bereavement benefits replacing the deceased spouse or civil partner's earnings). This means a higher initial lump sum, and extending payments to 18 months to support them through a difficult time.

The Bereavement Support Payment consists of:

- an initial lump sum of £3,500 for people with children and £2,500 for those without children
- a further 18 monthly instalments payable to the surviving spouse or civil partner of £350 for those with children and £100 for those without

The regulations for the new Bereavement Support Payment becomes available to people whose spouse or civil partner dies on or after 6 April 2017

For more information see government website <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/better-support-for-bereaved-families>

Bereavement Support

Worried about paying for a funeral?

‘There for you’ works closely with
Down to Earth



Who offer practical support for people struggling with funeral costs

Call them free and in confidence on 020 8983 5055

downtoearth@qsa.org.uk



Down to Earth gives:

- information on how to plan a meaningful funeral
- practical and emotional support throughout funeral planning
- guidance on accessing financial support to help with funeral costs
- help with administration, telephone enquiries and practical arrangements

To access There for You – UNISON welfare support:

- **contact your local branch welfare officer. If you do not know who this is please contact :**
- **UNISON Direct on 0800 0857 857 or**
- **There for You 0207 121 5620;**
thereforyou@unison.co.uk;
- **For work issues contact UNISON Direct 0800 0857 857**
- **To join UNISON please contact 0800 171 2193**

For further information:

please contact UNISON There for You

020 7121 5620 thereforyou@unison.co.uk

UNISON Centre, 130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY Registered charity 1023552/Sc0 38305