

NEGOTIATION  
REPRESENTATION  
SUPPORT

UNISON is the largest trade union representing council workers in Britain ... and Derbyshire County UNISON is the single largest trade union branch in the whole of the East Midlands.

We are here to assist you in many different forms at work; from ensuring your health and safety to challenging bullying, to individual representation should you find yourself in disciplinary trouble or having problems with sickness and attendance.

But don't wait till you've got a problem - we can't deal with issues retrospectively! Sign up today and get the extra insurance of UNISON in your workplace.

**STOP PRESS**

Your local representative Elisa McDonagh has recently been elected as the branch Women's Officer for the year 2009/10.

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Welcome to the first UNISON newsletter created especially for Call Derbyshire members. In each issue I hope to keep you posted on what is happening within your union at a Call Derbyshire, branch and national level. However if you want any further information or don't understand anything please get in touch with [elisa.mcdonagh@unisondc.plus.com](mailto:elisa.mcdonagh@unisondc.plus.com)



representing **Call Derbyshire** workers

negotiation  
representation  
support



# Elisa McDonagh

## YOUR WORKPLACE REPRESENTATIVE

I was elected by members within Call Derbyshire as your steward towards the end of 2008.

As your elected steward, I hope to be able to support and advise any Call Derbyshire member on any workplace issues.

I aim to be the first and main point of contact with our union for you as members, acting as a link between all of you and the Derbyshire County branch office. I will act as a spokesperson for you as members.

My main priority is to ensure you are aware I am your elected representative and what I can do to help.

I am keen to find out what you think our workplace issues are.

I've arranged a workplace meeting for 16th April, more details to follow soon.

I am arranging for the provision of a UNISON noticeboard where latest news can be posted.

If you would like to speak to me about anything or require support, advice or representation. I'm very happy to come in to work early, stay late or chat during my lunch break (I'm on 2pm lunch daily). Either e-mail me [elisa.mcdonagh@unisondc.plus.com](mailto:elisa.mcdonagh@unisondc.plus.com) or come and find me and we can arrange to talk privately.



## UNISON ALSO PROVIDES

- WELFARE ADVICE AND SUPPORT.
- MORTGAGE OFFERS.
- PREFERENTIAL INSURANCE RATES - BOTH HOME AND CAR.
- A TRAVEL CLUB.
- BREAKDOWN COVER.
- ITS OWN HOLIDAY VILLAGE IN DEVON.
- FINANCIAL BENEFITS AT THE DENTISTS AND OPTICIANS.
- AND MORE.

## family friendly policies?

### LEAVE FOR WORKING FAMILIES.

### WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Derbyshire County Council claims its "ethos is to support and recognise employees' work-life balance and to provide policies and guidance that reflects the needs of employees who have family and consequent caring commitments, whilst maintaining a high standard to our customers".

But as we all know, sometimes well-meaning words don't materialise into actions!

That is where UNISON can help!

### WHAT DOES THE POLICY COVER?

The policy includes

- maternity and paternity rights
- adoption guidelines
- urgent, personal and domestic leave
- bereavement and flexible working arrangements

Occasionally UNISON finds that some managers are unaware of the existence of some of these policies or claim they no longer exist. This is not so.

### APPLYING FOR FLEXIBLE WORKING

There are various forms of flexible working available including job shares, term-time only working, a compressed pattern of working such as 4-day weeks or 9-day fortnights etc



Obviously, the type of working available does depend to some extent on the work discipline. However, in general, UNISON believes that nothing should be ruled out automatically.

You should first discuss working flexibly with your manager and then submit a formal written request. Your manager must meet with you to discuss your application within 28 days and inform you of their decision within another 14 days. You can appeal if the request is turned down.

Full details are in the council's Leave for Working Families policy.

If you want UNISON assistance, contact Elisa.

### WHAT'S A TRADE UNION?

A trade union is an organisation formed by workers, for workers, to fight for our rights together. By yourself, you can be ignored or picked on - and who will support you? The idea of a trade union is 'strength in numbers'. All the major gains in the workplace, including health and safety issues, have been won by workers coming together in trade unions and showing collective strength.

### COLLECTIVE REPRESENTATION

Later in 2009, the county council have promised to finally sort out job evaluation. The results of the evaluation will have longlasting effects for all workers. As a UNISON member, you will be entitled to a vote on the proposed changes; if you're not a member others will be voting on your future pay.

### INDIVIDUAL REPRESENTATION

Sometimes we find ourselves in trouble at work. It may not even be our fault. Senior management may try to take issue over sickness periods. Or we could face a disciplinary hearing over an accusation from a member of the public. This is where UNISON steps in. Without proper representation, you could be in deeper trouble.

