

UNITY



Devon County Branch
December 2008

THE NEW I.S.A. - IT IS NOT A SAVING SCHEME!

From 2009, yet more bureaucratic checks are being put into place to monitor the workforce – this is the **Independent Safeguarding Authority**.

All new job applicants will need to apply for ISA registration from October 2009 onwards, with existing employees and volunteers needing to be registered from 2010, starting with those staff with the oldest CRB checks.

WHO NEEDS TO REGISTER?

Everyone who works with – including on a voluntary basis – children and vulnerable adults **WILL HAVE TO BE REGISTERED**. If you are not registered then you will not be allowed to work with the client group. To be clear, people working for specified organisations with frequent access to sensitive records about children and vulnerable adults will also need to register – that will mean ‘back office’ staff such as clerks and finance assistants. In all, over one million people will have to go through the registration process throughout the country with thousands of us being affected in Devon.

HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

It will cost £64 per registration but, as UNITY went to press, it seems as if DCC will be picking up this cost.

WHAT ARE THE DANGERS?

UNISON is very concerned about this both on a local and national level. The system seems to be very thorough – however, even if someone has made an allegation against you which has been proven to be untrue it will still show up on the check and you face the strong possibility of not attaining registration and therefore being unable to work.

There is a process for ISA registration and yes, it does involve more form filling. There is also the right to appeal against decisions made - eg – an unsuccessful registration application and Devon County UNISON is opening talks with the employer to ascertain just how it is envisaged how this scheme will be implemented .

YOUR PAY – TALKS CONTINUE

By now, you will have received your backdated 2.45% (to April 2008) pay increase in your November pay packet.

That may be not the end of it as talks are still ongoing. As UNISON and the Local Government Authority could not reach agreement, the matter has been referred to ACAS, - the decision it makes following representations by all parties will be binding and should be known soon.

If there is an additional award on top of the already paid 2.45% then UNISON will let everyone know as soon as possible and would expect it to be paid into employees accounts at the earliest opportunity.

Additionally, the unions have also agreed the wording for next year's pay claim (2009 – 2010).

We are seeking a one year across the board pay increase of at least the level of retail price inflation with additional increases for the lowest paid.

Let's all hope for an additional bit of good news this Christmas!!!!



Why did the elf put his bed into the fireplace?

He wanted to sleep like a log!!

Adult Community Services

Support Services Review

The formal consultation for the review of Business support services including finance started on 1 December 2008 following a Joint Consultation Committee (JCC) meeting and will end on 28 February 2009.

The focus of the review is to redesign ACS Support Services to meet the needs of the new business model including specialist services such as Learning Disabilities / Mental Health / Sensory and the Emergency Duty Team.

There will be a number of consultation events early in the New Year in different venues across the County and it is important that you attend these, so your views can be heard. Although there are more Jobs than staff you need to bear in mind that there will be a recruitment process, and in order to secure a post you might be required to move to a new location.

A future for Public Service Pensions? Secure for now, BUT...

will pensions be adequate? Are they affordable and how can they survive public "pension envy" currently making it big in media headlines?

Final salary schemes like the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) provide equivalent to 2/3 of pay after 30/40 years service when the lump sum is also included and are open to new members joining. In the private sector most final salary schemes are closed to new members and are dwindling in number because of the rules and costs involved. Though we started on the new LGPS this April, crunch time will come around 2012 according to UNISON pensions expert Glyn Jenkins at the Retired Members Conference due to the rising cost of all Government Pensions schemes paid by the taxpayer and politicians lumping in our LGPS which we pay for with our wages as deferred pay, and this action was confirmed by the top LGPS official Terry Crossley at a recent seminar in Cornwall.

How can Public Sector pensions survive pension envy?

Just because pension provision is collapsing elsewhere is no reason to attack those schemes that are still sustainable and working. If reasonable schemes are closed, millions of low paid workers will stop saving for their retirement and have to rely on the State. This is the real risk for the 'tax payer' of the future. Most public sector pension schemes provide adequate not "gold plated" benefits, now much more transparent than before and cost sharing of true costs/savings are being negotiated. Average Local Government pension for a man is £3,800 and for a woman £1,600. Women are low paid, take breaks in their service to care for children and elderly relatives, work part time. Pension envy must be fought against and the above figures quoted whenever the media try to report on gold plated pensions for public servants. Full state pension is £90.70 per week for single person. Official poverty line is more than £150 per week. State Pension has never been enough to live without other sources of income. It would be much nearer to the official poverty line if it had been increased by the better of National Average Earnings Retail Prices Index since 1980. Since 1980 it has gone up in line with Retail Prices Index. From 2012 the Government propose that future increases will go up in line with national average earning instead.

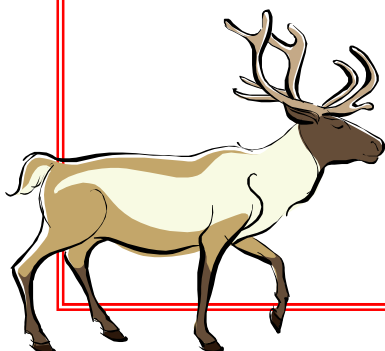
What are the main issues for UNISON?

Campaigning against 'pension envy' and misinformation about final salary schemes in the private and public sectors to ensure that schemes are not undermined and remain open to new starters. Ensuring future negotiations are based on accurate data. Establishing a negotiating forum to ensure costs are shared fairly and the scheme remains sustainable. Above all we need to make our members aware of the strong temptation of politicians to undermine our scheme that work well with the excuse that others don't.

Devon County will hold their Annual Investment and Pension Fund Annual Staff Consultation at County Hall Exeter on Friday 6 February 2009 at 2:15 If you are in the Devon LGPS either as contributor or pensioner DO come along and take part!

Thanks to Carol Jackson and Colin Lomax, Retired Members

Roberto Franceschini.





**Seasons Greetings
to
all Members
of
Devon County Branch
of
UNISON**

And finally!!

What do snowmen wear on their heads?

Ice caps!!

