

**Branch Meeting**  
**Tuesday 25th January**  
**6.30 p.m.**

STUC  
333 Woodlands Road  
Glasgow  
G3 6NG



Bill Goudie, Branch member and NHS Greater Glasgow employee director, at a recent meeting of NHS reps

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- **Waiting times**
- **Branch budget**
- **Branches under attack**
- **Tube holiday deal**

## Anger Over NHS Pension Reform Plan

NHS staff have reacted with fury to Government proposals to 'modernise' the NHS pension scheme. The proposals, which were unveiled earlier this month for a three month consultation period, propose major alterations to the current scheme. For example, current pensions are based on final salary; a career average revalued (CARE) scheme is one of the proposed alterations. This would significantly disbenefit anyone who had career progression, although giving some

extra to those whose careers stagnated.

Another of the proposals is to increase the minimum retirement age to 65 from the current 60. Staff working after 65 (and reaming in the scheme) would enhance their pension. Amicus and the TUC have attacked the proposals.

Existing staff will have all their current service and benefits protected until 2013. After that any pensions benefit earned will only be payable from age 65.

## Branch Meetings 2005

**Tuesday 25th January**  
**Wednesday 23rd February**  
**Thursday 31st March**  
**Tuesday 26th April**  
**Wednesday 25th May**  
**Thursday 30th June**  
**Tuesday 30th August**  
**Wednesday 28th September**  
**Thursday 27th October**  
**Wednesday 30th November**

## Contacts

Chair	Donald Sime	0141 211 2246
Secretary	Maureen Jenkins	0141 201 3044
Treasurer	Richard Shaw	0141 201 0412
Vice-chair	Helen McFarlane	0141 211 0800
Assistant Secretary	Vacant	
Safety Officer	Derek Anstee	0141 211 2128
Women's Officer	Helen McFarlane	0141 211 0800
Newsletter Editor	James Ito	0141 201 0798



## **Waiting times: a differential approach**

by Donald Sime

Health Minister Andy Kerr announced to the Scottish Parliament in December an investment of up to £15 million per year in the private sector to speed up waiting times. At the very same time the Minister wrote to SPRIG saying that he would not countenance NHS staff covered by the Agenda for Change agreement (i.e. not medical staff) continuing to receive Wait Initiative Payments of triple time beyond 30<sup>th</sup> June 2005.

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## **Branch budget: education a priority**

Until this year, the Branch received 5% of its members subscriptions to cover running costs such as room hire, postage, delegate's travel expenses etc. This has now been cut to 3% and the Branch has had to review all of our expenditure to enable us to stay within budget. Despite the 40% reduction in our income, the Branch plans to spend up to £1000 on the education and training of members and representatives within our groups. In order to assist with this process, it is intended to elect a Branch Education and Development Officer.

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## **Health Service Branches under attack**

by David Houlston

A proposal has been put to the union's lay National Executive Council by the full-time secretariat that Branches must be based on the geographical home address of the members and that they should have at least 2000 members. This arbitrary figure, with no supporting evidence provided, would mean the end of many of the union's NHS Branches with the members being transferred to "general" branches. There have been a series of restrictions placed on Branch activity in the new union, but this is by far the most serious—it is yet another attack on the democracy of the NHS lay Branch membership of the union.

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## **Tube holiday deal**

Members thinking that the Agenda for Change (AFC) holiday entitlement (41 days including public holidays after 10 years service) is in anyway generous should compare it with the deal struck between London Underground and the RMT union. The agreement gives tube staff a 37.5 hour working week (just like AFC) but 2.5 hours of this are 'banked' and added to annual leave bringing the total up to 52 days holiday per year—11 days a year more than NHS staff.

## **Branch Meeting Tuesday 25th January**

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of previous meeting and arising.
3. Correspondence.
4. Election: Branch Education Officer
5. Discussion: Future of Branches
6. Reports.
7. Motions.
8. A.O.C.B.

The next meeting of the Branch will be held on Wednesday 23rd February at 6.30 p.m. All meetings are held in the Scottish Trade Union Congress, 333 Woodlands Road, Glasgow G3 6NG.  
(Tea, coffee & biscuits 6.15 p.m.)

