



RET MEM BUL

Bulletin for Retired Members

Online successor to WiseEye from the RMG National Committee

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MESSAGE FROM THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE (FEBRUARY 2026)

Greetings to our union’s Retired Members on behalf of the RMG National Committee (NC). This issue brings you a report on our Annual Delegate Conference (ADC) which took place at Rochester Row on 28 January. The ADC reflected on the work we have done and can do in future for Retired Members and a few things that have happened since.

This bulletin comes from the Retired Members' Bulletin Editorial Group, which consists of myself, Arthur Bavister, Julian Hayhurst & Tim King. We are also grateful for contributions from Janice Turner and Group Secretary Mike Macdonald.

Andrew Ruffhead, Group President

GUEST SPEAKER – MIKE CLANCY

Delegates welcomed Prospect General Secretary Mike Clancy who gave a very upbeat report to the conference on the continued success of the union and answered delegates' questions. "We've just over 162,000 members, the largest it's ever been," he said. "The most brutal measure of success is how its membership is growing and comparing with other unions. We are without doubt bucking a trend, and we do that through the accumulated efforts of reps and staff."



Clancy talked about current pensions issues, including the failure of Capita to pay the pensions to members of the Civil Service Pension Scheme since it took over the scheme administration in December. "This is a damning indictment of outsourcing to some extent," he said. "When you undervalue public services and denude public sector investment, this is the end point of it. We are in urgent talks and they must have a problem because they are reaching out to us, but if they aren't prepared to change anything the answer's probably no".

Ensuring that processes change so pensions are paid is a clear priority for Prospect so we shall update members throughout the year on progress.

Many retired members are keen to continue to play an active part in the union and the RMG had advocated for this. The General Secretary explained to delegates that the NEC was going to put forward a rule change to the upcoming Prospect biennial conference to amplify their voting capacity, "that will give a wind of change in voting for retired members at national conferences. The NEC have been persuaded."

THE ADC GETS UNDER WAY

There was a packed agenda, but in the end only one motion was guillotined. Our hardworking Standing Orders Committee (SOC) was badly hit by three separate health crises. Mike Kain had retired in the Autumn, Fran Butler was in quarantine using a Teams link, and Bob Avery had to unexpectedly dash home after lunch. Incidentally, Mike Kain’s

contribution to the smooth running of Prospect & RMG conferences will be reflected in a long service award from Prospect.

Andrew Ruffhead was re-elected unopposed as Group President. Tom James was re-elected unopposed as Vice-President. Doug Hyam was elected unopposed to the vacant position on the Standing Orders Committee.

ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Conference carried Motion 1, from Wales. This instructed the National Committee (NC) to press the National Executive Committee (NEC) "to raise with the UK Government and the TUC the need to take active steps in the UK and elsewhere to counter global warming".

Motion 2, from East Anglia, contained a proposed motion for the Prospect National Conference, but was remitted to the NC. The NC had advised that Prospect was already a crucial and respected stakeholder, leading work in several TUC workstreams. It was meeting the majority of the five goals of the motion whilst others would duplicate work or divert resources for little or no gain.

PENSIONS

Conference remitted Motion 3, from Central Southern. This wanted an end to pensioners having to make Pension Credit applications by ensuring that pensions income was adequate. It also saw an anomaly in the difference between state pensions, where over time the gap would get larger. The NC cited expert advice that this was an over-simplification of a system where Prospect had successfully negotiated for members to receive a higher payment through their employers' pensions scheme than the various taxpayer-funded second pensions such as SERPS. As a result, many members with a basic state pension & an occupational pension were amongst the pensioners with highest total pensions.



WIDER ELIGIBILITY FOR OFFICERSHIPS?

Motion 4 from South West Midlands was the only item in the rule-change section. It proposed that "elected Deputy Area Representatives be recognised as valid candidates for the roles of President or Vice-President". The NC had argued that only full Area Representatives had the necessary experience of the NC's work. There was a 10-9 vote in favour of the change, with several abstentions. Rule-change motions need a two-thirds majority, so the motion was lost.

PUBLICISING PROSPECT SERVICES FOR RETIRED MEMBERS

Conference carried Motion 5, from East Anglia. The NC was instructed to ensure that one bulletin a year informs Retired Members about avenues for seeking assistance from Prospect and clarification of the issues that Prospect can assist with.

CONCERNS ARISING FROM THE DATA BREACH

Four Areas submitted motions reflecting their concern about the data breach that occurred in June 2025.

Conference carried Motion 6, from Wales. The NC was instructed to seek clear assurance that members' personal data was now secure, plus compensation for the members most seriously affected by the breach.

Conference voted against Motion 7 from Scotland South which wanted to double the one-year availability of the Experian "Identity Plus" service. Instead, it carried Motion 8, from Southern, which instructed the NC to "seek an extended period of cover for those whose data has been compromised".

Conference carried Motion 9 from South West Midlands. It instructed the NC to press the NEC to review notification arrangements. It argued for members to receive speedier individual notification of cyber-attacks affecting Prospect, and that the information should go to **all** members.

MAKING BEST USE OF RETIRED MEMBERS

Conference carried Motion 10, from North East. It proposed greater efforts to promote Retired Membership and wanted branches to "involve Retired Members in appropriate campaigns and activities".

Conference also carried Motion 11, from East Midlands. It instructed the NC to ensure that the NEC "utilises the experience of Retired Members for the benefit of Employed Members, in areas such as Workshops and Mentoring".

IMPROVING THE LOT OF RETIRED MEMBERS

Conference carried Motion 12, from Southern. It instructed the NC to press the NEC to increase the Prospect mileage rate.

Motion 13, from South West Midlands, noted the valuable work done by the National Pensioners Convention and the financial crisis it was facing. The NC was instructed to press the NEC to increase financial support, promote greater awareness of the NPC's work, and improve publicity about the NPC funding page. The motion was carried. (Recall the union has already doated £2000.)



Conference carried Motion 14, from Scotland South. Its aim was to counter negative portrayals of pensioners. The NC was instructed to campaign (via the NPC & NEC) "to promote the significant, ongoing, financial and social contributions that pensioners continue to make".

REACHING OUT TO THE WORKERS

Conference carried Motion 15, from CMMDN. It instructed the NC to publicise what has been done on Resolutions #34 of 2017, #35 of 2017 and #3 of 2023. (In the case of the first two, not very much.) The motions wanted Retired Members to encourage young workers to take up union membership, assist companies with pre-retirement courses, and to have their offer of support accepted by the Public Services Executive Committee.

It is worth recalling that the RMG supported working members by its contribution to lobbying on the Pensions Protection Fund.

FINANCE

Conference carried Motions 16 & 17 from Scotland South. The NC was instructed to work with the NEC to campaign for the unfreezing of tax thresholds, and to lobby the Government to retain the £20,000 provision for pensioners contributing to Cash-Only ISA accounts. This would allow members to reduce the risk associated with the higher returns from stocks-and-shares ISAs.

Conference remitted Motion 18 from South West Midlands. The NC was instructed to campaign "for legislation requiring that every community without a bank branch must be provided with a fully functioning Banking Hub". The NC argued that this was ambitious.

Some of the concerns would be achieved by greater access to cashpoint machines & post offices, and legislation was liable to result in higher bank charges for all pensioners.

POSITION ON PALESTINE ACTION

Motion 19 from East Anglia opposed the proscription of Palestine Action. It also proposed a National Conference motion requiring the NEC to collectively sign a "Protest is not terrorism" open letter. Opposition speakers made the following points:

- The website of Palestine Action clearly states its aim to "dismantle" the modern state of Israel.
- Palestine Action is committed to criminal acts in furtherance of its objectives, even if anti-terrorist legislation is a questionable basis for proscription.
- Arrested protestors were publicly expressing support for a criminal organisation.
- The open letter (that all NEC members would be forced to sign) explicitly defended criminal methods.
- Such a motion in the name of the RMG would undermine Retired Members' efforts to be respected by the union as a whole.

Despite three delegates speaking in support, the motion was heavily defeated.

OTHER MOTIONS ON TRANSPORT

Motion 20 from East Anglia was the only one to be guillotined when time ran out. It wanted the NC to request the NEC to lobby for measures to ensure that Retired Members in rural areas were not unfairly disadvantaged if the Government takes forward pay-per-mile taxing for road vehicles. The motion was remitted to the NC which supports it.

Conference passed the only emergency motion, which was from London Central. It followed the January 2026 confirmation by the London Councils collective that it was planning to carry out a review of the Older Person's Freedom Pass. The NC was instructed – through representations to the NEC and NPC – to pursue protection of concessionary travel for pensioners, not just in London but in any region that decides to follow London Councils' example.

DELEGATES FOR BRIGHTON

After the ADC, the NC elected 12 RMG delegates to the 2026 Biennial National Conference on 6-9 June. They are Andrew Ruffhead, Tom James, John Attree, Arthur Bavister, George Betke, Ireen Goulding, Julian Hayhurst, Tim King, Stan Kordys, Mike Moriarty, Bryan Puxley and Tom Smyth.

NOTICE FOR MEMBERS OF THAMES VALLEY AREA

The Area's Annual Members' Meeting is to take place on Wednesday 25 March at 10.30 am at Reading International Solidarity Centre, 35-39 London Street, Reading RG1 4PS. Tea and coffee will be available from 10 am. Postcodes covered by the area are AL, HP, GU, RG, and SL, but all Retired Members are welcome.

The guest speaker will be RMG President Dr Andrew Ruffhead. The meeting will receive a delegates' report on the ADC and hopefully elect two new Area Committee members. For more information, contact Arthur Bavister (a.bavister@btinternet.com or 01635 46947).

