

Ageing Well Public Talk Series 2024/25

Talk 6. *Lifelong learning - How the continual renewal of skills benefits us all*

- **Sarah Hayes - Head of Learning and Organising Services, UNISON**
- **Stevie Milward - Workforce Learning Development Organiser, UNISON**
- **Jenny Griffin - Trade Union Organiser and part of the Learning Team, UNISON Cymru/Wales**
- **12th February 2025**

Slide 3: Embracing *Lifelong learning*

How the continual renewal of skills benefits us all.

Image: Home office space with a desk, computer, plants and framed photos mounted on the wall.

Logos: Unison College and Unison the public service union.

Where:

- UNISON
- UK's Largest UNION
- Over 1.3 Million members
- Full time and part time staff
- Provide public services
- May be employed in both the public and private sectors.
- Across 12 regions and Nations in the UK

Who:

- Sarah Hayes / Jennifer Griffin / Stevie Milward
- UNISON College – provide learning and training opportunities for our members.
 - Health and social care
 - Education and early years including HE and FE
 - Police Probation and CAFCAS
 - Water, energy and transport
 - Business and environment
 - Community and voluntary
- National / Regional / branch and workplace

What:

- Activist training and development
- Member learning:
 - Transferable / transversal skills
 - Job application / interview skills
 - CPD and career development
 - Mental health and wellbeing
 - Equalities and green skills
 - 'Functional' and Digital skills

Life Learning:

- Self-motivated continuous learning
- Professional and personal

- Formal and informal
- Dynamic processes not a means to an end

Slide 4:

5 Pillars of Ageing Well:

- Nutrition
- Hydration
- Physical Activity
- Social Engagement
- Cognitive Stimulation

Slide 5:

Diagram:

Inner circle: Individual

Second circle: Their work and workplace

Third circle: Delivery of public services

Outer circle: Community and society

Mental Health issues - £70bn cost to the government in 2014.

40% of the 370,000 new claims for disability benefit.

- Learning helps people cope with stress and major transitions.
- Learning can help keep dementia at bay.
- Learning can contribute to a positive sense of accomplishment.
- Learning can help reduce stigma and raise awareness around mental health.

Slide 6:

- New technologies and practices
- When companies are unable to fill jobs with skilled workers, this may also impact their ability to serve their customers adequately.
- Learning = Relevance
- Estimated 20% of the workforce will be significantly under-skilled for their jobs by 2030.

Portrait image with quotation: "...[this digital skill course] has given me more confidence, not to be scared of a computer or to be frightened of deleting something..." Judy, Residential Home Carer

Slide 7:

Contents of table 1:

Degree or equivalent £15.64

Higher education £12.68

3 GCE/A Levels or equivalent £9.47

4 GCSE grades A*-C / level 4 and above £8.62

Other Qualifications £8.03

No Qualifications £7.50

Contents of table 2:

- Year of award 2024, 63x 60 credits, 6x 30 credits, total 69
- Year of award 2023, 95x 60 credits, 10x 30 credits, total 105
- Year of award 2022, 133x 60 credits, 20x 30 credits, total 153
- Year of award 2021, 94x 60 credits, 10x 30 credits, total 104

- Year of award 2020, 119x 60 credits, 18x 30 credits, total 137
- Overall, 504x 60 credits, 64x 30 credits, total 568
- Total awarded (approx.), £242,000 60 credits, £14,000 30 credits, total £256,000

Slide 8:

Diagram:

- Over 20,000 each year supported by ULF before its closure.
- Over 10,000 instances of learning through the UNISON College in 2024, either nationally, regionally or carried out by ULRs.
- Excel, Confidence building, Neurodiversity awareness.
- Over 40,000 union learning reps.

Images on a timeline:

Image 1: A mother teaching a young child to read.

Image 2: Three people holding a meeting around an office table.

Image 3: A grandmother holding a baby.

Image 4: A student in a graduation cap and gown.

Image 4: An older woman gardening.

Slide 9:

Image 1: A mother teaching a young child to read.

Well, that was the start of me getting into reading books. I started recording what I've read back in 2017 and have now read 122 books... and counting.

Now I can read to my children.

Dawn Alden – Talking hands: Makaton Charity recommended Tutor Makaton for babies and families – for our early years workers.

Supports communication as signs are easier to use than spoken language and as a result of this frustrations are also reduced for young children.

Slide 10:

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- UNISON's Staff Skills academy+
- 1755 active users
- 1696 completed courses
- The majority were from the school's sector
- Popular courses in this area:
 - ADHD awareness
 - Become a high level TA
 - Autism Awareness Bullying Awareness

Image 1: Teacher high fiving a young pupil in a classroom setting.

Image 2: Teacher helping a young pupil with artwork in a classroom setting.

Slide 11:

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Christine Jackson

“I am most proud of delivering a trans inclusion session in my employer, because there was resistance to it, and it was/still is very needed. That we offer so much transformative learning”

- Deaf awareness
- Neurodiversity awareness
- Challenging racism
- Trans Allyship

Image: Christine Jackson and colleague, holding a UNISON Northern poster and flag to celebrate 2024, Year of LGBT+ workers.

Slide 12:

Lin Robinson – East Midlands

“It’s given me the tools to help me recruit and organise in my workplace and the opportunity to be much more visible.

The first thing I did on completing the training was to meet the Leader of the council and ask them to sign the Learning Charter which we did in September 2024.”

Image: Lin Robinson meeting with members of the council, holding up the signed Learning Charter.

Slide 13:

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‘I’m just’... to ‘I can’

“This week we officially opened SkillsZone, a dedicated space at our Killingworth site to support colleagues who don’t usually work with computers to access learning, explore digital skills, get guidance on accessing pensions or upskill for that next role.”

Changing attitudes and building confidence and self esteem

Promoting wellbeing

Image: Colleagues at the opening of SkillsZone in Killingworth.

Keeping members up-to-date, keeping their learning relevant.

Slide 14:

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Image 4: A student in a graduation cap and gown.

Image 4: An older woman gardening.

Video: Innovate Trust / UNISON Cymru Wales Learning Partnership – Inspire! Adult Learning Award winner 2024 <https://youtu.be/q8wQSbf6xrw>

Slide 15: Embracing *Lifelong learning*

How the continual renewal of skills benefits us all.

Image: Home office space with a desk, computer, plants and framed photos mounted on the wall.

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Slide 16: Ageing Well series of Public Talks

- Dr Jitka Vseteckova (pictured), Senior Lecturer, Health and Social Care
- “Being mindful of eating well, hydration, physical activity, learning new things and social connections can delay the decline caused by ageing. Come and join us for the series of public talks with the title Ageing Well”

Slide 17: Summary of related resources to The Ageing Well Public Talk Series

Podcasts

- Vseteckova J & King J (2020) COVID-19 Interview podcast for The Retirement Café: [‘Ageing Well Under Lockdown’](#)
- Vseteckova J & Broad E (2020) Podcast – Open University & The Parks Trust [Keep Me Walking - researching with people living with dementia and their carers](#) –
- Vseteckova J (2020) Podcast - [Areas of research with The Open University](#)
- Broad E, Methley A & Vseteckova J (2021) Podcast OU & The Parks Trust & Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust - [Spotter sheet and mindful walking](#).
- Vseteckova J, Methley A, Broad E (2021) Podcast OU & The Parks Trust & Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust [Preventing brain decline while ageing](#)

Slide 18:

- Methley A, Broad E, Vseteckova J (2021) Podcast OU & The Parks Trust & Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust [Walking therapy](#)
- Vseteckova J, Methley A, Broad (2021) Podcast OU & The Parks Trust & Northamptonshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust [Understanding our memory](#)
- Araya Y, Broad E, Vseteckova J (2022) [Engaging with our environment](#)
- Joannidi H, Araya Y, Broad E & Vseteckova J (2022) [Sense of self during aging: how mindfulness and nature can help](#)
- The above podcasts can be also seen on [The Parks Trust YouTube Channel](#)

Slide 19:

- Vseteckova J & Grimes C (2024) [Six ways to look after your brain health in your 20s and 30s](#)
- Vseteckova J (2020) [Ageing Well Public Talks Series](#)
- Vseteckova J (2019) [5 reasons why exercising outdoors is great for people who have dementia](#)
- Vseteckova J (2019) [Depression, mood and exercise](#)
- Vseteckova J (2019) [Five Pillars for Ageing Well](#)
- Vseteckova J (2020) [Ageing Brain](#)

Slide 20:

- Methley A & Vseteckova J & Jones K (2020) [Green & Blue & Outdoor spaces](#)
- Vseteckova J, Borgstrom E, Whitehouse A, Kent A, Hart A (2021) [Advance Care Planning \(ACP\)](#)
- Vseteckova J (2020) [Walking the Parks with The OU and The Parks Trust](#)
- Vseteckova J, Methley A, Broad E (2021) [Understanding our memory](#)
- Araya Y, Broad E, Vseteckova J (2022) [Engaging with our environment](#)

Slide 21:

- Hedges V & Vseteckova J (2023) [What should I expect when I am nearing the end of my life?](#)
- Joannidi H, Araya Y, Broad E & Vseteckova J (2022) [Sense of self during aging: how mindfulness and nature can help](#)
- Mehta S, Vseteckova J (2023) [Ageing, health inequalities and person centred care](#)
- Mehta S, Vseteckova J (2023) [Ageing, health inequalities and integrated approach to care](#)
- Araya Y, Broad E, Vseteckova J (2023) [Ageing well by connecting and learning about nature outdoors](#)

Slide 22:

- Vseteckova J (2022) [Pharmacotherapy while ageing](#)
- Joannidi H, Araya Y, Broad E & Vseteckova J (2022) [Sense of Self during ageing – how mindfulness and nature can help](#)
- Mehta S (2022) [Medicines and personalisation while ageing](#)
- Gale B (2022) [How can we prepare for death while ageing?](#)
- Gale B (2022) [Valuing death at home: making preparations](#)

Slide 23: Care and caring related

- Vseteckova J, (2020) [How to age well, while self-isolating](#)
- Vseteckova J, (2020) [SHORT FILM - Ageing Well in Self-Isolation](#)
- Vseteckova J, (2020) [ANIMATION - Keeping healthy in Self-Isolation](#)
- Vseteckova J et al (2020)
- [COVID-19 The effects of self-isolation and lack of physical activity on carers](#)
- Taverner P, Larkin M, Vseteckova J, et al. (2020) [Supporting adult carers during COVID-19 pandemic](#)

Slide 24:

- Robb M, Penson M, Vseteckova J, et al. (2020) [Young carers, COVID-19 and physical activity](#)

- Penson M, Vseteckova J et al. (2020) [Older Carers, COVID-19 and Physical Activity](#)
- Vseteckova J & Methley A (2020) [Acceptance Commitment Therapy \(ACT\) to help carers in challenging COVID-19 times](#)

Slide 25:

- [AGEING WELL PUBLIC TALK SERIES WEBSITE](#)
- [Ageing Well Public Talks' Series 2023/2024](#) repository on ORDO Collections
- ['Ageing Well Public Talks' Series 2022/2023](#) repository on ORDO Collections
- ['Ageing Well Public Talks' Series 2021/2022](#) repository on ORDO Collections
- ['Ageing Well Public Talks' Series 2020/2021](#) repository on ORDO Collections
- ['Ageing Well Public Talks' Series 2019/2020](#) repository on ORDO Collections
- [Midlife MOT OpenLearn Course](#)
- OpenLearnCreate Course on ['Ageing Well' 2019/2020](#)
- [Home exercise no equipment – no problem](#) *Blog*