

Welcome to **NGSU**



**An introduction to
Nationwide Group Staff Union**



When things go wrong at work – be it injury, illness, sex discrimination or bullying – unions are often the only way to secure redress or compensation. Last year alone, union legal services won a record £330 million for their members.



TUC

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“

I love my job so it was fantastic to be able to do this, because they keep my job open and on the same terms and conditions. I can fulfill my dreams and have the security of work to come back to.

”

Nicki who took a three month break to sail the Med under the Union and Nationwide agreed unpaid leave scheme.

1 Welcome

JOIN US TODAY – TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER

Welcome to Nationwide Group Staff Union (NGSU). We are the Union that represents the employees of Nationwide Building Society and its subsidiary companies.

An invitation to join

I would like to invite you to join our Union. As a Union member, you'll join over 13,500 other employees in working together to help make Nationwide a great place to work. We've already been successful in securing better pay, better holiday entitlement, flexible working and equality of opportunities for all. The more members we have the stronger we will be and the more we can achieve on behalf of our members.

Join Today

We all have demanding jobs and busy lives. That means it is very easy to put off joining the Union until 'later' but 'later' can turn into 'never' and 'never' means not taking advantage of our many services and benefits. That's why I recommend that you join NGSU today.

I look forward to welcoming you as a member soon.

Best Wishes
Tim Poil,
General Secretary



**To join call us on 01295 710767 or
visit our website www.ngsu.org.uk**

2 Why join NGSU?

Here are some good reasons to join NGSU – you'll find out more about what NGSU can offer you in the rest of this booklet.

Better pay and benefits – we've negotiated some of the best pay awards in the financial services sector in recent years.

Better terms and conditions – we've worked with Nationwide to provide terms that are amongst the best available and in many cases exceed statutory entitlements.

Equality of opportunities – we've campaigned to ensure everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential at work.

Fair treatment at work – our skilled team of professional advisers represent members at disciplinary and capability hearings and make sure they are treated fairly.

Resolving grievances – we help members resolve problems at work about pay, terms and conditions and working relationships.

Employee involvement – our Representatives make sure your voice is heard across the organisation on all matters about working conditions.

Help and advice – we provide free confidential advice on all aspects of working life at Nationwide.

Free legal advice – NGSU members can get free 24 hrs assistance from our legal help line and free personal accident and compensation advice.

Saving you money – NGSU members are able to take advantage of some great benefits including discounts on a range of goods and services.

Cash prizes – you can also win great cash prizes in our monthly subscription draw.

Keeping in touch – we'll keep you up to date with issues at Nationwide and the wider world of work and social issues.

3 About NGSU

Nationwide Group Staff Union is an independent trade union that has been representing employees of Nationwide since the early 1970s. We are the only union that is recognised by Nationwide, which means only NGSU can negotiate terms and conditions on your behalf.

We have a team of paid officers whose sole purpose is to work to protect and promote the interests of our 13,500 members.

We are affiliated to the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and our members benefit from the range of services, training and information the TUC provides.

We do not support or make donations to any political party.



Your Union

When you become a member of the NGSU it is you, and the other members, who are the driving force of Union policy. The issues that the Union will pursue are decided at our National Conference by elected Representatives acting on the views of members in local constituencies.

When you've joined – join in! There are many ways to tell us your views and get involved in union activities. It's your union – please help us to make working life a better one for you and your colleagues

Working with Nationwide

We are an independent union but seek to work closely with Nationwide for the benefit of our members. This is what Nationwide says about NGSU in its Personnel Manual:

“Nationwide recognises the importance of staff representation and, although membership of the Union is not a condition of employment, encourages employees to support the activities of the Union by becoming members.”

4 Working for you

All workers have minimum rights and standards that are required by employment and health & safety law. At NGSU we work with Nationwide to negotiate improved rights. One of the reasons we are successful in achieving better terms and conditions is because of our strong membership. Well over 70% of Nationwide employees are members of NGSU. The more members we have, the stronger our voice. That's why it's really important that you join the Union – don't leave it to your colleagues to work for better conditions – add your voice too.

Here are some of the improved conditions we've negotiated for you:

Pay and Benefits – some of the best pay awards and allowances in the financial services industry – so say Income Data Services (IDS)*.

Equal Pay – regular equal pay audits to ensure that pay structures are fair regardless of gender or hours worked.

Holidays – 24 days holiday plus bank holidays when joining Nationwide and increasing to 30 days with length of service.



Sick pay – enhanced Sick Pay for up to six months and if you're unable to work beyond that you may be eligible for Prolonged Sickness Benefit.

Enhanced Maternity Benefits – ten weeks at full pay and a £200 bonus when you return to work. Plus the right to phase your return to work over four weeks and to request to work flexibly after that.

Paid Paternity leave – two weeks' paternity leave at full pay plus time-off to support your partner at antenatal appointments.

Flexible Working – the right for all employees to request flexible working – not just those with young children or who have caring responsibilities.

Flexible Retirement – the right to work up to age 75 – keeping all of the normal terms and benefits.

Security of Employment – we work to secure the long term future of jobs but as it may be necessary we've negotiated some of the best terms for those who need support in redundancy situations.

*Income Data Services (IDS) conduct benchmarking surveys into pay and employment conditions



“

I had to write to you about the fantastic benefit of using the NGSU Financial Services Commission Rebate Scheme. I took out a life policy for myself and my partner as we have bought our first home and the service of the IFS adviser was excellent.

NGSU member

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5 Trouble at work

We help and support individual members with problems at work. This might be helping someone raise a complaint about their working conditions or representing them through a disciplinary or capability hearing.

Protecting Your Interests

Even in a well run organisation like Nationwide disputes can occur. Each week our skilled team of professional advisers represent members who are facing disciplinary hearings or who need assistance in pursuing a grievance.

NGSU has a proven track record in these situations. Most of them are resolved with a little advice or assistance but in some cases more formal representation is required. It's good to know that you have the strength of the NGSU around you when you need it.

All Officers of the Union who represent union members at formal hearings at Nationwide are fully trained and accredited. Our Officers can represent you at disciplinary, capability and grievance matters and we can really help to make sure proceedings are fair

and that any decision is consistent with previous cases and within a range of reasonable responses. If necessary, we'll take additional legal advice to make sure your employment rights are protected.

Members Only

No one enters employment thinking that the need for Union representation at a formal hearing will be necessary but life can throw up unexpected surprises and it is best to be prepared. If you join NGSU during your probationary period you will have access to individual representation after your first month's subscription. If you join after your employment has been confirmed, you'll be eligible for individual representation after three months' subscriptions. So don't wait until you need help – join now to secure the full protection of the Union.

**Call us on
01295 710767**

6 Here to help

We help many members every day by listening to their concerns and pointing them in the right direction. It may be simply checking out what terms and conditions you're entitled to or helping in a practical way, for example, in helping you develop a case for flexible working. All advice and support is free and confidential and specialist advice is available from our legal experts if needed. We'll only take things further for you if you want us to.

There's a good chance that whatever your issue we've helped someone with similar concerns in the past – so don't suffer on your own, we're here to help.

Legal Helpline

All NGSU members and their families are eligible for free 24 hour legal advice from Law Express. You can call them on 08700 433 653. The legal team at Law Express can help point you in the right direction on all types of legal issues – not just employment related. It's a confidential service and there is no limit to how often you call. You'll also have access to a special website providing information about legal matters.

Personal Injury Advice and Compensation

The Union's solicitors, Irwin Mitchell, can support you in the event that you suffer a personal injury. If you've got good grounds to pursue a case Irwin Mitchell will act on your behalf; the Union will pay the bill and you keep all the compensation.



I rated the service very highly in all areas including speed of call-back, satisfaction with advice given and the ease of discussing the problem over the phone.

NGSU member on Law Express



7 Saving you money

We know that you want value for money from your membership subscriptions so, although our primary aim is to protect your interest at work, we have been able to negotiate a range of excellent benefits for our members.

Here are just a few examples and you can view all of our services and benefits on our website.

Holiday Offers – you work hard so make time to relax and enjoy your leisure breaks! We can offer some great discounts from our Travel Club. The Travel Club will try to beat most prices from travel agents, teletext and internet deals.



Life Insurance Commission rebate schemes – get independent advice and commission back on life insurance products.

Personal Finance – benefit from our negotiated rates to help stretch your finances. Our Union credit card provides competitive interest rates and balance transfers. Get a free tax code assessment – are you eligible for a tax rebate?

Insurance – NGSU members benefit from competitive rates on a range of insurance products including: buildings and contents insurance; motor insurance; travel insurance; pet insurance; medical expenses; critical illness and cancer related insurance.

Legal Help – for the times you need the support of a legal professional our solicitors, Irwin Mitchell, can offer NGSU members discounts on a legal services, such as wills, conveyancing and family matters.

Discounts – enjoy days out at some of the UK’s top attractions such as Alton Towers at discount prices. NGSU members can also get great deals on electrical goods, energy, eye examinations from Vision Express and Open University study resources.



When I called your travel club to see if they could better the holiday deal I had found to Crete I wasn't expecting any great break-through but I was amazed when they undercut the original price by almost £90. Needless to say I booked it straight away...

NGSU member



8 Subscription draw

NGSU members are eligible to subscribe for a chance to win fabulous cash prizes in our monthly subscription draw. Members can buy up to 10 chances (£1 per chance) every month for the chance to win...

1st Prize £15,000

2nd Prize £5,000

3rd Prize £2,000

4th Prize £500 (three prizes)

5th Prize £200 (three or more prizes)

How it works

Every month we pay out 75% of the draw subscriptions back as prizes.* The bigger the subscription pot the more prizes are paid. The Union puts the remaining 25% of the money towards the administration and running of the union – helping to keep the cost of subscriptions down.

How to subscribe

Only NGSU members are eligible to subscribe. Call us on 01295 710767 for your application form.



* The amount and number of prizes is subject to the draw fund – please see our website for draw rules

“

Thanks for sending me a cheque for £500 and thanks to Nationwide Group Staff Union for the Draw.

NGSU member

”

9 Keeping in touch

Good communication with our members is really important to us and we have a variety of ways of keeping touch.

NGSU online – our website includes information about the Union; terms & conditions at Nationwide; details of all our services and benefits and interactive features too – such as our members’ chat room; quick polls and surveys. You can visit us online at www.ngsu.org.uk or via the ‘You and Nationwide’ section of Nationwide’s Intranet.



Report Magazine – we’ll send you two copies of our Union magazine to your home address every year. In addition, we publish two editions of the magazine in digital format available online.



Report Special Issues – when there’s something we need to tell you about we’ll send out a paper version of a Special Issue and it’ll be available in pdf format on our website.

Union Mail – our monthly newsletter (paper and pdf versions) with comment on work issues; union news; details of the latest benefits and services; and the subscription draw winners.

E-mail Newsletter – give us your e-mail address to receive a monthly newsletter direct to your in-box keeping you abreast with the latest issues about employment with links for further information.

Have your say

The Forum is our online chat room – exchange views with other union members about issues at work or activities of the Union.

10 You've joined – join in

There are lots of ways to join in with the work of the Union. You can simply tell us your views or get involved by becoming a union officer or Representative. Nationwide recognises the important work that our Representatives do and provide paid time-off for them to fulfil their duties. NGSU provides the training and support you need to be effective.

District and Department

Representatives – organise and represent members in their local area and pass views to the National Executive Committee – the elected body that governs the way the union is run.

Disciplinary Officers – are specially trained to help and represent members who are facing disciplinary or capability action.

Health & Safety Representatives – undergo TUC training and get involved in promoting a safe and healthy working environment.

Employee Involvement Committee members – are union members who represent employees in a range of Nationwide committees that consider all aspects of the working environment.



“

I have been banging my head against a brick wall with regards to my pension. Nobody would help... except Toni! Thank you so much.

”

NGSU member who nominated Toni Chambers for The Rep of the Year 2007 (Toni went on to win!)

NGSU Advisory Committees

The Advisory Committees are a forum for groups of members to share experiences and concerns and they are an important source of information and feedback for the Union. They work to ensure that all employees of Nationwide are treated with respect and dignity and have an equal opportunity to fulfil their potential. They also have the opportunity to participate in the TUC's equality conferences.

There are currently four Advisory Committees and all members are eligible to join.

Members from Ethnic backgrounds

Members with Disabilities

Members who are Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender

Members aged over 50

For more information please visit the Equality section on our website.

“

There was common agreement that as people had contributed into the pension funds there was no reason why they should be denied the same pension rights as their heterosexual colleagues.

”

NGSU reps standing up for pension rights at a TUC conference

11 Join us

It's easy to join:

During Induction – most employees will have the opportunity to meet a Union Officer during their induction course – simply complete and return an application form at the end of their presentation.

Online – you can join online at www.ngsu.org.uk. All employees can access the Union's website from

Nationwide's Intranet – just follow the link from the 'You and Nationwide' home page.

By Post – you can send your application to the Union's office in Middleton Cheney – see back cover for address details.

Don't forget to tell us if you'd like to join our monthly subscription draw.



...and here's why

“

The Union has been absolutely amazing. I don't have the words to say how much they have helped. We had a really good team which I would never have been able to afford without the help of the Union – before this happened I didn't even know the Union's solicitors were there to handle cases like this. The Union made me feel important – to them I wasn't just an employee.

”

Jenny was in training to be a customer services manager when a robbery at her branch left her with such severe post traumatic stress that she was forced to leave work. Thanks to the help of her Union and its solicitors Jenny took out a personal injury case and was awarded compensation.

To become a member of NGSU why not join online at www.ngsu.org.uk

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Web **www.ngsu.org.uk**



Individual Cases Officers are available on site at Nationwide House Swindon, Northampton Administration Centre and Portman House Bournemouth.