

## NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

Lancashire: UCU officials and branch officers have been engaged in lengthy negotiations at Lancashire County Council Adult Education regarding changes to the contract of employment for teaching staff. A final agreement is on hold until One Connect Limited (OCL) reviews the number of groups of staff not on the standardised terms and conditions following the Equal Pay Review of 2010.

Walsall: Walsall Adult and Community College adopted a shortened version of the AOC scale to improve teaching staff pay and progression and also fractionalised a large proportion of the sessional workforce. This year they are adopting an improved pay scale into other areas of the college and most recently and significantly for assessor trainers. The College has welcomed collaboration with UCU in the pay scale work.

Durham County Council Adult Learning Services: In the last academic year Durham hived off some of its Adult Learning to local Colleges leaving many part time tutors without any work or reduced hours. Members became aware of this only at a very late stage but with UCU support were able to get some resolution. This year the rest of the service has been reorganised. UCU again intervened to ensure members were treated fairly and continues to battle for a number of part-time staff who have been denied pay protection along with their full time colleagues.

Birmingham: the adult learning service is undergoing a reorganisation of all the line management following an OFSTED report. UCU achieved a situation of no compulsory redundancies following the restructure. Birmingham Council has signalled its intent to move on to the fractionalisation of more sessional hours. However more worrying is the proposal to move some non teaching managers away from the negotiated Birmingham Adult Education contract and to place them onto the Birmingham local government contract.

Coventry Adult Education: UCU has now managed to reach agreement that all teaching staff will have the option of transferring to fractional contracts. This is a considerable achievement as it gives members far more contractual protection than the sessional/casual contracts some of the members suffer at the moment.

Leicester & Leicestershire: Both Leicester City Council & Leicestershire County Council are now planning major systemic reviews of their Adult Skills & Learning Services. Initial, informal consultation with staff and UCU in both services has already raised the spectre of serious job losses. The local UCU branch opposes the cuts and believes these services are critical in connecting adult learning to other strategic outcomes for the two local authorities in such difficult economic times. Health improvement, well-being, self-motivation & better community cohesion are well documented outcomes for the individuals & communities who use these services, over and above any formal qualifications gained.

Not a member yet? Here's how to join: <http://join.ucu.org.uk>

- We are the main education union representing teaching staff and managers in Adult and Community Learning including full-time, fractional salaried and hourly-paid part-time lecturers.
  - UCU members can get representation and support from trained UCU representatives and full-time officials as well as expert legal advice.
  - UCU adult and community learning branches across the country negotiate pay and conditions of service at a local level.
  - We represent your profession and ensure government and professional bodies respond to your views. UCU campaigns on a range of issues: defending jobs and education provision; raising professional issues; supporting adult basic skills and we continue to campaign against cuts in the funding of ESOL
  - Other benefits include pension and financial advice, and counselling from Recourse
- For more information: [www.ucu.org.uk/whyjoin](http://www.ucu.org.uk/whyjoin)

## **COMMUNITY LEARNING TRUSTS**

The 2011 White Paper on Informal Adult Learning set up local committees of all adult and community learning providers and users to create a comprehensive local offer. UCU attended the latest meeting of the Community Learning Stakeholder Reference Group. The purpose of the group is to allow key partners the opportunity to contribute to the implementation of community learning objectives. The meeting focussed on a progress update on the 15 community learning trust pilots involving over 40 providers. The pilots are all working around one of four themes: collaborative planning and partnerships; community engagement and consultation; generating additional resources and widening provider base.

The pilots are progressing well and the key messages which have emerged from visits include: additional bureaucracy kills innovation; small amounts of funding and time make a difference; the adult and community learning workforce must be engaged, especially volunteers; partnerships are key and 'something for something' - small cash or time donations lead to higher retention. BIS will publish an interim report shortly and the final report in the summer.

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## **FUNDING**

The Adult Safeguarded Budget that funds local authority adult and community learning services is now called the Community Learning Fund. Community Learning providers will get the same allocation as 2011-2013. However local authority adult and community learning services are being hit by local authority cuts and many are restructuring their adult learning provision - including placing it in another department or directorate. There are continual reports of redundancies in these services. UCU's FE Branch News dated Friday 1 March has a fuller explanation of all the funding changes including those to the Adult Learning and Skills Budget that most ACE services use for accredited courses. There is a Note on FE funding on the UCU web site under Branch Resources.

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## **ADULT AND COMMUNITY LEARNING WORKFORCE SURVEY**

The second report on the covering the period 2011-12, has now been published. You'll find it at:

<http://www.excellencegateway.org.uk/node/26700>

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## **BUILDING UP UCU MEMBERSHIP**

A big local issue increases union membership. By far the biggest concern is job security. From year to year our work contracts change and our hours can be reduced. At Community Education Lewisham recruitment was high when colleagues felt threatened due to the presence of management consultants. Regularly communicating with potential members about what UCU is doing - especially by talking to them - definitely helps. Membership subscription rates vary depending on what you earn (£2.58 per month if less than £5,000). I will try at UCU Congress to lower this for those working 4 hours a week or less. Annie Holder (National Executive Committee member)

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## **UCU'S ANNUAL ACL CONFERENCE 21 JUNE 2013, UCU HQ**

Latest: Liz Lawson, BIS, will be speaking about Community Learning Trust pilots.

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**GET INVOLVED:** The more members that become active the more we can achieve. If you are interested in being a rep, support and training is available. Or become a contact and distribute information. Get in touch with your branch if you would like to discuss this. One way to help UCU is by distributing recruitment leaflets and displaying posters. Order them here: <http://www.ucu.org.uk/buildtheunion>