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Welcome to Janet Pantland who joins us as Environmental administrator. If you would like to join the environment network distribution list, please contact her (jpantland@ucu.org.uk).

1. UCU Climate Solidarity Project

Great news! We have been successful in our bid for project money to DEFRA. It is a joint 2 year project with 3 other unions – PCS, CWU and NUT – and the Climate Outreach Information Network (COIN). The aim of the project is to establish Climate Action Groups in England. The project started on July 1st, 2009 so we need to plan how we are going to deliver on the targets that have been set. These are:

- Train 45 UCU members to present climate change issues to their peers and encourage the creation of Climate Action Groups. Each presenter will aim to do 6 workplace presentations in their area / region.
- Establish 275 Climate Action Groups in either the workplace or community. These will work on targeted projects to make carbon reductions in the workplace and at home
- Support reduction measures by approx 1,900 members and other staff.

We have already set up an additional email list of those members who have expressed an interest in being involved in this project. They will receive further information on a regular basis as it develops. If you would like to be added to this list please contact Graham Petersen.

Training of UCU presenters will be carried out in 5 waves over the 2 year period. It will start in 2 venues in September, 2009:

London – Saturday, Sept. 12th from 10am – 4pm
Leeds – Thursday, September 17th from 10am – 4pm

Venues are to be confirmed. Travel costs and food will be provided. Please reply to **Graham Petersen** (Graham.petersen@south-thames.ac.uk) if you are interested. We need approx. 5 UCU members for each workshop as this will be run jointly with members of the 3 other unions. Further information will be circulated by the end of August but please put one of these dates in your diary **now** if you would like to attend. Dates for other workshops later in the project will be circulated later in the year.

2. UCU Environment Conference – 25th November 2009

Another crucial date for your diary is **Wednesday, November 25th, 2009**. We will be holding a conference at UCU Head Office from 10.30 – 4.30. This will be a major event for UCU environmental activists where we will look at developments in the education sector as well as those at national and international level. There will also be a progress report on developments in the Climate Solidarity project above. Further details will be circulated in the September newsletter. We hope it will provide a great opportunity to meet up and push this issue into the forefront of our organising strategy.

3. UCU Congress Environmental Report

The motion below was passed at UCU Congress in May, 2009.

This branch recognises the importance of the UCU increasing its profile on environmental issues.

In particular with:

- 1. Employers – Improving environment management in the workplace*
- 2. Staff – Identifying opportunities to raise employee awareness*
- 3. Students – Linking with campaign organisations like People and Planet*
- 4. Sector bodies – Strengthening links with bodies like HEFCE, EAUC, and Government departments to develop policy in areas like ‘greening the curriculum’*
- 5. Public – Supporting campaigns that strengthen the profile of the trade union movement in relation to ‘anti-environment measures’ like Heathrow expansion*

UCU will need to:

- 1. Promote the role of UCU environment reps and seek formal recognition within institutions*
- 2. Provide environment courses in the 2009-10 reps training programme*
- 3. Organise a 1 day conference in late 2009 to help co-ordinate strategy.*
- 4. Liaise with other unions to map out the skills and jobs needed in a ‘green new deal’ prior to the Copenhagen summit*

There was a successful fringe meeting attended by delegates which considered some of the practical steps the union should take to implement some of the measures in the motion.

Many of these are now being taken forward. For example:

- NUS - a joint communiqué was issued with the National Union of Students on World Environment Day (<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3914>). We hope to build on this through the year at both local and national level. UCU Branches and Associations are urged to contact local NUS officers to explore joint working.
- Sector bodies – Meetings have been arranged with HEFCE and the LSC to identify joint initiatives.

4. UCU Environment Training

UCU is planning to run its first environment training course aimed at UCU reps and members. The course will use the new TUC Training Manual ‘Targeting Climate Change’. It will take place over 2 days on **Wednesday, February 10th** and **Thursday, March 11th, 2010**. That means there is plenty of time to arrange release to attend and book your place. The course will be held at UCU Head Office in London. For further details contact Abbie Jenkinson (ajenkinson@ucu.org.uk).

5. Consultation on a carbon reduction target and strategy for higher education in England

HEFCE will issue a joint consultation between HEFCE, Universities UK and GuildHE on developing a carbon reduction target and strategy for higher education in England. Higher education needs to play its part in meeting national targets for carbon reductions and this signals to institutions a more demanding approach to carbon reductions and the need for carbon plans. Through this consultation HEFCE will seek views on a sector level target(s) to reduce carbon emissions; a proposed strategy for supporting carbon emissions reductions; and HEFCE's initial thinking on linking capital funding to performance against carbon management plans.

The consultation will be published around the end of July on the HEFCE web-site; hard copies will follow. As part of the consultation exercise there will be consultation seminars on 3 and 7 September. You will shortly be able to register for these events at www.hefce.ac.uk under Events. UCU will be in discussions with HEFCE about the new strategy. Further information about HEFCE's actions to support the sector in reducing its carbon emissions is available at <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/lgm/sustain/carbon/>. Alternatively e-mail sustainabledevelopment@hefce.ac.uk

6. Awards and League Tables

You can check whether your university or college was given a mention in either the:

2009 Green Gown Awards

This took place on June 23rd, 2009 with entries from 100 colleges and universities. To find out more go to: http://www.eauc.org.uk/green_gown_awards

People and Planet Green League 2009

This was unveiled on June 18th, 2009 in the Times Higher Education by People & Planet, the UK's leading student campaign network. The award-winning Green League is the only league table showing the environmental performance of Britain's universities. Nottingham Trent University topped the league, followed by the London School of Economics (LSE) and Oxford Brookes University. <http://peopleandplanet.org/green-league-2009>

7. UK Low Carbon Industrial Strategy

Defra will be holding a series of regional events to promote and explain the UK Climate Projections launched last month. More detail on the projections is available here: <http://ukcp09.defra.gov.uk/>

The provisional dates for these regional events are below. As soon as Defra have confirmed dates I will circulate them to you in order for you to share with interested contacts in the regions. The events are open invitation and it would be good to have UCU representation at as many of them as possible. Still to be confirmed but the current schedule is:

- East Midlands - 31-Aug
- North East - 07-Sep
- South West - 14-Sep
- Yorkshire Humber - 21-Sep
- South East – 28 Sep
- North West – 5 Oct
- East England – 12 Oct
- West Midlands – 19 Oct
- London – 26 Oct

8. Support renewable energy

The fight to save wind turbine production on the Isle of Wight continues! 600 jobs are threatened at the UK's only wind turbine blade factory on the Isle of Wight. It is crucially important that everyone bombard the energy minister Ed Miliband with phone calls and emails. Tell the government that this closure cannot go ahead!

Minister Ed Miliband says that Vestas refused to keep the wind turbine factory open even if the Government put in money. The Government should now take over the factory and produce wind turbine blades there under a new management accountable to the workforce.

Now is the time to hold ministers to account, to force them to sit up and take notice of the loss of jobs and livelihoods and sustainable energy production. Miliband promises 40,000 green jobs, let's make sure that he delivers – starting with the 600 jobs at Vestas.

What you can do:

- Ed Miliband's e-address is milibande@parliament.uk. His phone number in his Doncaster constituency is **01302 875 462**, and at Westminster, **020 7219 4778**. Flood him with calls for the Government to take over the Vestas factory and keep it producing, under new management
- Organise and send messages of support - from yourself personally, from your UCU branch or committee, or from other organisations you're involved in. Send to savevestas@gmail.com.
- Spread the word.
- Check out <http://savevestas.wordpress.com>

9. Countdown to Copenhagen

Early Day Motion

EDM 1654: UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Anderson, David

11.06.2009

That this House notes the publication of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiating text ahead of the forthcoming climate change talks in Copenhagen; further notes its recognition that reducing emissions will require a transition towards an economy based on more sustainable production, consumption and promotion of sustainable lifestyles; welcomes the UNFCCC's recognition that this should be underpinned by a just transition of the workforce which is central to achieving an agreement on climate change and includes the active participation of all stakeholders; believes that the mistakes of previous economic restructuring, when entire industries and communities were neglected cannot be repeated; and calls on the UK negotiators at the forthcoming climate talks to reflect widespread support amongst trade unions and other civil society organisations in the UK for this just transition clause to be included in the final UNFCCC agreement.

Please contact your MP to sign up for this EDM

Go to <http://findyourmp.parliament.uk/> to find your MP's contact details

10. Green Jobs Commission

The Commission is sponsored by several unions, including the UCU. The purpose is to produce a report: a thoroughly researched plan for the government-funded creation, in Britain, of one million climate jobs. The report will be used primarily as the basis for campaigning activity with the trade unions and secondarily for lobbying government. It is to be published in November, during the run-up to Copenhagen. The Commission is looking for volunteers with expertise and interests in five areas: skills training, manufacturing, renewable energy, transport and economics. Each chapter will propose investment programmes, and other greenhouse-gas reduction measures, including details of the number of jobs created, the cost, and the predicted emissions reductions. If you would like to get involved please get in touch with Graham Petersen.

11. Local action

UCU member, Alison Plaumer, is the Green Co-ordinator at Sussex Downs College. A read through the newsletter she produces for staff illustrates some of the wide range of initiatives that UCU activists can engage in:

(<http://www.sussexdowns.ac.uk/Page/Show/GreenPromotion>).

'I have an input into a range of areas across the college. This includes working with management to develop policy and practice, liaising with relevant staff about organisations who can help us become a sustainable college. I work with teachers on the curriculum, assisting the process of integrating sustainability in their work, and co-ordinate a range of Green promotional activities across all our campuses, including Green weeks and Green travel days.'

For further information about the work Alison is involved in she can be contacted at:

Alison.plaumer@sussexdowns.ac.uk

An option worth exploring is using continuous professional development (CPD) as a mechanism for getting our message across.

At South Thames College the UCU Branch Environment Officer offered to deliver one of the workshops for the Staff Development Day on July 3rd, 2009. It was agreed to provide 2 x 1.5 hour sessions on 'Environment Awareness'. The workshops were attended by 35 staff and 22 indicated that they would like to be involved in the creation of Climate Action Groups on the main college sites. This has now been agreed with management and will be piloted in the autumn term. As you can see it fits with our Climate Solidarity Project mentioned at the top of this newsletter and could be a method employed elsewhere.

In the next newsletter we would like to profile the work of a UCU green activist in HE. Please contact Graham Petersen if you would like your work featured.

12. Publications

Labour Research Department (LRD) has produced the publication that was based on the survey which UCU members participated in. It is called *Unions and climate change – the case for union environment reps*. It is strongly recommended that each branch and association obtain a copy as it is a very useful resource to support workplace initiatives. Copies can be ordered direct from LRD. £5.50 per copy or less for bulk orders:

www.lrdpublications.org.uk/publications.php?pub=BK&iss=1464

A new TUC publication, *Changing work in a changing climate*, looks at how workplaces will need to adapt to hotter summers, wetter winters and more storms and floods. It finds many employers are unprepared to equip their workers with the knowledge, skills and equipment to work safely and effectively in a changing climate. A copy of *Changing Work in a Changing Climate* is available at:

<http://www.tuc.org.uk/extras/adaptation.pdf>

<http://www.tuc.org.uk/economy/tuc-16338-f0.cfm>

Don't forget we would like to hear from you. Email any questions, answers and in particular case studies and things that have worked to: Graham Petersen, UCU Environment Co-ordinator: graham.petersen@south-thames.ac.uk