

## Conference Special

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### 1. **UCU Environment Conference, 18 November 2010**

November 18<sup>th</sup> is the day when UCU environmental activists from across the UK will be meeting up for our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual conference. We've got a great line up of speakers and we are looking forward to finding out the latest developments from our green activists. This will be the opportunity to help set our sustainability agenda for the next year.

There are still a few places left if you want to get involved. To find out more about the conference and register go to:

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=5026>

### Conference Progress report

#### Background

Sustainable development has an increased profile both in the UCU and the FHE sector. The UCU Congress has passed a number of motions since 2007 which set out a significant level of activity to maximise the impact of the union.

In the sector it has moved up the agenda as a result of Government and FHE policy initiatives. The impact of organisations like People and Planet and the NUS has also served as a driver in this area.

#### Summary of key developments 2009-10

- Green Reps – Branches are appointing Green Reps. There is clear evidence of an increase in branch activity and new members and activists. Climate Action Groups and other forums for staff involvement have been set up as a result of the Climate Solidarity Project.

- Publications – UCU publishes a bi-monthly 'Environmental News'. This is an important source of information for branches. The environment is a rapidly evolving subject and activists need a resource which brings together the latest developments. We have published guidance on 'Setting up climate action groups' and 'Energy Management.'
- Education for Sustainable Development – UCU has set up an ESD Working Group at Head Office. We have produced guidance on 'ESD' and placed resources on the website. We have established a Facebook ESD group. We have been accepted as members of the UNESCO UK Forum.
- Environment Association of Universities and Colleges – Have established a strong relationship with the main cross-sector body. A UCU Case Study is published on their site.
- UCU Congress – Motions passed and fringe meetings organised.
- Environment Conferences – UCU Environment conferences in 2009 and 2010
- Training – Worked with UCU Training Dept to deliver first UCU courses in London and Dundee in 2010. Developed UCU specific training pack.
- Links with TUC and other union organisations – Member of TU Sustainable Development Advisory Committee. Actively involved in Campaign against Climate Change TU section.
- Community Alliances - Joint working with Friends of the Earth on Low carbon budgets for local authorities. Initiatives around linking the FHE sector to green jobs / skills in the local community.
- Government consultations – Submission on low carbon skills strategy documents.
- UCU Environment Management – Promoting SD policies in UCU Offices through the Management Working Group.
- Learning and Skills Improvement Service – Input to policy making process for the Learning and Skills sector. UCU referenced in Framework document
- Student link – Established good links with People and Planet and NUS. P&P have included union reference and staff engagement in the Green League table criteria for HE.

## **2011 and beyond**

Our environment work must be central to the organising and recruitment campaigns of the union. Key areas of work should be:

- Organising - We should set a target of every branch having a Green Rep by the end of 2011.
- Job retention / creation – Linking our campaigns to resist cuts and save jobs to the demand for green skills and jobs
- Publications – Production of newsletters and guidance for UCU green activists
- Research – Production of documents for sector and national policy development
- Education for Sustainable Development – Expanding the role of the working group and targeting specific curriculum areas
- Attendance at sector events to ensure UCU is seen as a legitimate stakeholder
- Liaison with other unions - TUC, other unions, and organisations like Campaign against Climate Change
- Student links – Working with organisations like the NUS and People and Planet

- Conferences / workshops - Organising an annual conference and regional events to bring together activists
- Training – Helping to develop the UCU Green Rep training programme
- Community Alliances – Promoting collaboration between FHE institutions and the range of organisations who can be involved in championing a low carbon economy. Linking up green skills with green jobs. For example, FE Construction Departments positioning themselves to take advantage of the future demand for retrofit and renewables.
- International – Promoting sustainable development policies within Education International. Motion to the EI Congress in 2011.

## 2. TUC events

- TUC Conference 'Alliances for green growth'

A number of UCU delegates attended the event held on Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010. Barry Lovejoy, National Head of FE, gave a presentation on 'Green Skills' at one of the workshops.

See this link for speakers' presentations: <http://www.tuc.org.uk/economy/tuc-18729-f0.cfm>

- TUC GreenWorkplaces News: October 2010

The October edition of the GreenWorkplaces newsletter is available at the link below. It contains a lot of information of general interest to UCU green activists and is a useful supplement to our publication. <http://www.tuc.org.uk/workplace/tuc-18758-f0.cfm>

- TUC SW Conference – Champions for Change

UCU activists in the SW region may be interested in the event below. Anyone attending please send us a report for the next issue of this newsletter.

- Friday 19<sup>th</sup> November – Bristol 10:00 – 3:30

<http://www.tuc.org.uk/workplace/tuc-18660-f0.cfm?regional=8>

## 3. Early Day Motion on Climate Change

Please support this early day motion on climate change:

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=41832&SESSION=905>

## 4. Climate Alliance

UCU supports the strategy of developing local alliances to maximise the impact of campaigns. The newly formed Climate Alliance aims to bring together trades unions, environment groups and community networks into a broad coalition. To find out more visit the website and try to get to one of the 3 regional events.

'Building the climate movement from below'. Conferences in Leeds, Oxford and London.

<http://www.climatealliance.co.uk/>

## **5. National Climate March 2010**

Branches should start organising for the next national demonstration. Further information to follow.

Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup>

March on Parliament for a Zero Carbon Britain

Assemble Hyde Park Corner at 12 noon

<http://www.campaigncc.org/climate march 2010>

**For further information please contact Graham Petersen, UCU Environment  
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