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1. **UCU Environment Conference**

The second UCU national environment conference held on November 18th, 2010 was a big success. Over 50 participants met to review the work of the union during 2010 and develop an action plan for 2011. The day was structured around the 3 themes pioneered by the UCU, in the last 2 years, of campus, curriculum and community. The workshops identified the opportunities available to branches to increase the UCU profile in all 3 areas.

We are grateful to all the guest speakers who contributed during the day. Interviews with a range of participants and extracts from the keynote speeches can be accessed by following the link: <http://www.ucu.org.uk/envcon>.

2. **UCU Green Jobs Project**

UCU is delighted to announce that we have received funding from the trading arm of Battersea and Wandsworth TUC from money raised via the Glastonbury Festival. It is for a 2 year project in partnership with Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, Trades Union Congress and the Institute of Public Policy Research.

It will help us to press the case for bridging the gap between the green skills needed and the current curriculum offer. It could support initiatives across the FHE sector but the immediate priority identified by the UCU Education for Sustainable Development Committee is low carbon construction skills. The ESD meeting on January 13th had representatives from some of the partner organisations and agreed to target the development of community alliances to support the supply and demand for green jobs. This is particularly important for Construction departments in the FE sector if they are not going to lose out to the private providers that are being set up to deliver a range of retro-fit and renewable energy skills.

It provides UCU branches with an opportunity to be proactive around job creation at a time when we are on the defensive and facing job cuts in many colleges

The immediate focus is in SW London where UCU has already initiated alliances in Wandsworth and Merton. We will soon be circulating material based on this pilot that can be adapted in other regions.

3. Adult and Learning Sector Developments

The Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) has drafted 'A framework for moving towards a sustainable learning and skills sector'. UCU is represented on the focus group that has drafted the document. UCU FE and Community Education branches are urged to send in comments on the draft. We have argued that there needs to be a clear reference to the role of trade unions in order to help ensure that institutions include this as part of a leadership strategy. LSIS has produced an Index that can be used to self assess progress within an institution. It can be viewed at:

<http://www.gooii.net/clientarea/lsis/build/index.php>.

LSIS are also piloting 2 courses which UCU branches may want to raise with college management:

- **Leading Sustainable Development** supports senior leadership teams and governing bodies in developing strategic responses to the sustainable development agenda.
- **Leaders of the Future in Sustainable Development** is a two-day residential programme for anyone with lead responsibility for sustainable development within their organisation. It aims to build participants' capability and confidence to be leaders, influencers and change agents in their organisation, and equip them to work across the organisation to embed sustainable development in all areas of activity. The Leaders of the Future in Sustainable Development programme is being held on 2nd-3rd March 2011 and registration is now open.

Full details of both of these programmes are on the programmes area of the LSIS website at <http://www.lsis.org.uk/Services/ProgrammesServices/Pages/default.aspx>.

4. UCU Green Rep Courses

The next round of 2 day courses will take place as follows:

- Leeds – May 4th / June 8th, 2011
- Devon (venue TBC) – June 2nd-3rd, 2011

Further details from Abbie Jenkinson, UCU Training Officer, at: ajenkinson@ucu.org.uk.

5. People and Planet Green Week

A large number of FHE institutions are putting on events during Green Week starting February 7th, 2011. Branches are advised to:

- Liaise with any P&P groups within their institution to find out what is being planned
- Check the P&P website for ideas and resources:
<http://peopleandplanet.org/gogreenweek>
- Give us feedback on what you did.

Also for our HE activists, P&P has just published the methodology for its 2011 Green League table. Find out the criteria by which your university will be assessed by going to:

<http://peopleandplanet.org/navid11797>

6. Government Policy

The claim 'to be the greenest government ever' is starting to look increasingly suspect. The cuts to the FHE sector are bound to have a negative impact on our ability to push forward on sustainability, added to a range of policy decisions on cutting funding like the Warm Front programme. The Guardian has produced a spin meter to help you make an assessment on whether the claim stands up:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/jan/14/government-greenometer>

Save the Forests

This is an area where the Government is clearly at odds with its claims. UCU members are urged to contact their MP and state our opposition to the sale of nature reserves, and ask for their support on this issue.

Caroline Lucas has tabled an Early Day Motion, specifically related to opposing the sale and supporting the Forestry Commission - see below link:

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=42211&SESSION=905>

When contacting your MP, it'd be worthwhile asking them to support this issue by signing up to the EDM. It means you will have a specific ask, and they can show full support by taking a solid stance and publicly stating their opposition. The above link also lists MPs who have already supported the EDM - if your MP is already on there, It's still worthwhile contacting them anyway and showing your support for their position.

7. International Policy

There have been mixed reviews of the agreement reached at Cancun. For UCU it represents another lost opportunity to put in place a protocol needed to reduce global warming.

Environment Secretary Chris Huhne said the deal at Cancun in December would underpin the government's efforts to create green jobs and growth, and boost the EU's case to increase its ambitions to a 30% cut in CO2 by 2020. For the TUC, the agreement highlights the need for a new national dialogue between unions, government, industry and other stakeholders. The government is drawing up a Green Economy Road Map for mid-2011. For a more detailed report from the TUC see:

<http://www.tuc.org.uk/social/tuc-18935-f0.cfm>

8. Energy Management

UCU branches need to make sure that they have up to date information on how their institution is managing energy. A new White Paper argues that energy risks are increasing for business:

Financial, legislative and reputational risks associated with energy use are increasing for businesses, warns a new white paper commissioned by npower from the London School of Economics (LSE). According to the latest statistics from npower's Business Energy Index,

businesses now rank energy as posing a greater risk than credit and security or health and safety.

To manage these risks, businesses need to ensure that energy is considered at board level and that effective risk management strategies are pursued that bring together energy consumption and procurement.

For further information go to www.npower.com/whitepaper.

Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Consultation – In order for branches to find out how much energy is being used in their institution the requirement under CRC to publish this was a good starting point. The latest consultation is looking to remove that duty from all but the very large users. This would be a backward step and UCU has pressed to keep this duty in place.

9. News from the TUC

Follow the link below for the latest Green Workplaces news from the TUC:

<http://www.tuc.org.uk/workplace/tuc-19017-f0.cfm>

10. Get in Touch

Don't forget to tell us what is happening in your branch / institution. Our target is for every branch to have at least 1 UCU Green Rep. Make sure you notify me

(gpetersen@ucu.org.uk) who this person is so that we can add them to our contact list.

Also we want more case studies of branch action to put in this newsletter.

**For further information please contact Graham Petersen, UCU Environment
Co-ordinator email: gpetersen@ucu.org.uk**