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Welcome to the July newsletter. This will be our last issue for 2012-13. Enjoy the summer break and we look forward to working with you during 2013-14.

### **1. UCU Congress Environment Report 2013**

UCU held a successful fringe meeting with the NUS and People & Planet on Friday, May 31st. It was called to discuss staff / student campaigns on ethical investment. It followed the debate on the motion below that was passed unanimously.

#### ***Better choices for a better future***

*This congress believes that sustainable development should be a core organising principal for the FHE and skills sector. This means moving away from treating environmentalism as a token issue or as a bolt-on to other activities. It means moving towards choices that integrate sustainability into business practice. In particular:*

- 1. using the focus on employability to embed education for sustainable development across the curriculum*
- 2. building divestment campaigns from high carbon portfolios. The average pension fund has 55% of its assets invested in high-carbon sectors*
- 3. promoting international, national and community based campaigns that address fuel poverty and the de-carbonisation of energy supply.*

*Congress calls upon the NEC to develop a coalition of unions and students that will contribute to delivering these objectives.*

*Congress calls upon sector employers to recognise the trade union role and establish procedures that promote embedding sustainable development.'*

In September we will be publishing our review of the 2012-13 academic year. There have been plenty of developments – not all of them good. In order to make the annual report representative of the work of our UCU Environment Reps we are asking for short case studies that reflect some of the initiatives and issues that the union has been engaged in. Please send your contributions to [gpetersen@ucu.org.uk](mailto:gpetersen@ucu.org.uk)

## **2. Ethical Investment Campaign**

Following the motion passed at UCU Congress in May (see above) we have wasted no time in addressing the question - Is your pension inflating the carbon bubble? UCU members attended a meeting 'Climate Change and Pensions' organised by the TUC with ShareAction, (previously Fair Pensions) the movement for responsible investment. Following the meeting we discussed an education sector strategy. This will consist of training for our trustees and intervening at meetings of the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), Teachers Pension Scheme (TPS) and others where UCU has membership.

<http://www.fairpensions.org.uk/>

Watch this space for our autumn campaign schedule linking up with ShareAction, NUS and People & Planet and staff and students on campus.

## **3. Greener Jobs Alliance**

The GJA quarterly meeting on July 24<sup>th</sup> at UCU Head Office will review the current state of play on education for sustainable development. In the Further Education and Adult sector we have witnessed the closure of the Learning Skills and Improvement Service. LSIS had a very strong sustainability brief and many institutions have benefited from the support they provided. UCU would like to place on record its appreciation of the work of Conrad Benefield who led the sustainable development programme. We will be working hard with other organisations in the sector to strengthen the work of the Sustainable Development Alliance for Learning and Skills to fill the gap that has been created.

The GJA will be responding to the 'Skills for a Green Economy Report' and highlighting the skills gaps in the Government's industrial strategy. We will also

submit proposals as part of the HEFCE consultation on 'Sustainable Development in HE framework'.

#### **4. Trades Union Congress**

Date for your diary. The TUC will be holding its annual 'Climate Change' Conference on Monday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2013 at Congress House. Details are yet to appear on the TUC website but we will circulate them when they become available.

#### **5. Green League Table**

The People & Planet Green League Table was published in June, 2013.

<http://peopleandplanet.org/green-league-2013/tables>

If you are in HE and you haven't checked how your institution performed we strongly recommend that you do. The UCU Branch at Glasgow Caledonian University assessed their results and calculated that if the university had effectively engaged with the UCU they could have got the extra point needed to move from a 2:1 to a First. A perfect illustration of how the sector is missing out by not properly engaging with staff. The branch commentary on this can be found at:

<http://caledonianunion.com/2013/06/13/gcu-green-league-success-but-lack-of-trade-union-involvement-robs-us-of-first-class-result/>

#### **6. UCU and GJA at Glastonbury Festival**

The UCU sent a UCU/Greener Jobs Alliance team of 11 people to serve drinks with the Workers Beer Co. at Glastonbury Festival in June. Thanks to Becca Richards, from the SW Regional Office who was the Team Leader, and the other members of the team who raised over £1,000 for our campaigning work. This money will be used to part-fund the production of the new Campaign against Climate Change '1million climate jobs' pamphlet, and to sponsor the international trade union summer school event (ref below). Next stop – Latitude Festival.

#### **7. International Summer School**

UCU sent 2 delegates to the annual Global Labour Institute summer school at Northern College this month. A wide range of topics was discussed including international campaigns on climate change. Mahmoona Shah, UCU Bradford

College delegate, has provided us with a detailed report of the week and comments that it 'was very interactive' and 'great fun'.

The politics of climate change discussion can be accessed on Day 2 #ISS13

<http://global-labour.net/>

## **8. UCU ILO Report**

UCU attended the International Labour Organisation conference in Geneva in June. 'Sustainable development and decent jobs' was one of 4 main discussions. Despite weaknesses in the final document it can still be used along with the Rio+20 outcomes, to build national and international action for a low carbon transition. The UCU report can be found here:

<http://www.ucu.org.uk/environment>

### **Get in touch**

**If you are a UCU member looking for advice on sustainable development or have ideas for greening the FHE sector please let us know. Contact: Graham Petersen, UCU Environment Co-ordinator:  
[gpetersen@ucu.org.uk](mailto:gpetersen@ucu.org.uk)**