

ENVIRONMENT

UNISON Scotland Green Network News

Issue 1 Summer 2008

Act **now** for a strong Climate Change Bill

Experts agree that urgent concerted action in the next few years is crucial if global temperature rises are to be kept below 2 degrees Celsius.

In Scotland we have an opportunity to play a leading international role by supporting a strong Scottish Climate Change Bill.

UNISON Scotland is urging members to click on the union website to contact your MSPs and support four key 'asks' for the Bill:

- reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050.
- set statutory targets of at least 3% year on year emission reductions.
- include emissions from international aviation and shipping in the reduction targets.
- place a duty on all public bodies to consider climate change in all decisions and report on progress annually, with negotiated green workplace agreements.

A consultation on the Scottish Government's proposals has closed.

It is essential we now show MSPs the strength of support for these

measures being included in the legislation.

UNISON submitted a detailed response, one of more than 21,000 responses from supporters of the Stop Climate Chaos Scotland coalition.

All were calling for tough measures and strong political leadership. A draft Bill is expected to be introduced before the end of 2008.

Dave Watson, UNISON Scottish Organiser, said: "More CO2 emissions are generated in the workplace than the home.

"We want the Bill to ensure that the public sector leads by example."

Climate change is the greatest threat facing the world's poor, yet it is countries like our own that are responsible. Scotland, with 5 million people, is responsible for as much CO2 as 150 million people in Bangladesh.

To lobby your MSPs, for the UNISON Scotland response, or for further information, just click on the UNISON green workplace web pages:

www.unison-scotland.org.uk/greenworkplace



Join the Great Carbon Debate

Join a major event on climate change on Saturday 21 June in Edinburgh.

UNISON Scotland sponsors the Edinburgh World Justice Festival, which is free and runs from Sat 14 to Sun 29 June.

The Great Carbon Debate, will look at what can be done about global warming, with sessions on world justice, solutions, green workplaces and building a global movement.

It is from 11am - 4.30pm at St John's Church, West End, Princes Street. Come for the day or just for the session which interests you.

An evening event on Latin American Alternatives is on Mon 16 June. The full list of sessions and a link to the downloadable programme are on page 4.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW ENVIRONMENT NEWSLETTER

If you are interested in green issues and would like to take action in your workplace please sign up for the new green network. We'll keep you up to date and send you this newsletter. Contact Fiona Montgomery 0141 342 2852 f.montgomery@unison.co.uk or Matthew Crighton matthewcrighton@gmail.com



Food For Good means nutritious school meals and healthy food across the public sector

UNISON's Food for Good Charter was launched at East Ayrshire's Gargieston Primary School, one of the schools pioneering fresh, local and healthy school meals. The Charter aims to encourage healthy food across the public sector. It covers sustainability, fair trade, proper pay and employment conditions and animal welfare.

Lilian Macer, chair of UNISON's Health Group Executive, said: "Sustainability should be at the heart of food policy." The Charter, Poster and Recruitment leaflet are at: www.unison-scotland.org.uk/foodforgood

Environment news updates

CLIMATE CHALLENGE FUND

Are you or your branch thinking about innovative community action to cut greenhouse gas emissions?

It might be worth taking a look at the new £18.8 million Climate Challenge Fund. Millions of pounds in grants are available for local communities in Scotland coming up with big ideas to reduce their carbon footprint.

Information on eligibility and applying to the Fund is available from Keep Scotland Beautiful.

The Sustainable Development Commission Scotland is co-ordinating a CCF Alliance of organisations able to offer applicants advice and support with their proposals.

It may be that a particularly innovative and creative bid from a workforce, perhaps jointly with the employer, could qualify as the 'community' required to qualify for funding. Full details on: www.itsourfuture.co.uk/climate_challenge_fund/index.html

ANNUAL CLIMATE REPORT

The Scottish Government's second annual report on Scotland's climate change programme can be viewed at: www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/05/20102350/0

TRAVELLING GREEN AWARD

West Dunbartonshire's Travelling Green project has won a COSLA Excellence Award for encouraging Primary Five children to walk to school and keep active. The council worked with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde.

SCHOOL CHILDREN TO HAVE SAY ON CLIMATE BILL



More than two hundred Scottish school children are involved in an exciting project on protecting the planet for their future.

WWF Scotland and Children in Scotland are working with the Children's Parliament, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People on the Children's Climate Project.

Twenty Members of the Children's Parliament from the Western Isles, South Ayrshire, Fife and Edinburgh, are spending a weekend with expert facilitation to support them holding informed discussions and coming to their own conclusions on legislation to tackle global warming.

FESTIVAL

These children, aged nine to fourteen, will also engage another two hundred youngsters in their own areas in discussions. They will have opportunities to question politicians, civil servants and NGO heads and will present their conclusions in a public event at the Festival of Politics on 23 August.

The children will then meet with MSPs in the autumn and submit their views to the Parliamentary Committee(s) scrutinising the Scottish Climate Change Bill.

Scottish green workplace branch action

Congratulations to UNISON branches who are going green and taking up environmental issues in the workplace.

A number of branches have started to get active and we hope to feature more examples in future newsletters, so please keep UNISON Scotland up to date with what you are doing.

Several branches across Scotland have helped publicise cycle to work schemes offering savings on buying a new bike.

In the Scottish Gas branch, Mike Nisbet, support services manager in the Edinburgh call centre, has been involved in organising a 'Switch Off' campaign.

This aimed to change staff behaviour to ensure PCs and monitors are switched off at the end of the day.

He said: "We have managed to reduce things from 75% being left on down to about 15%." This has saved more than 300,000kw hours per year.

Other initiatives include Green Days - with stalls, advice and visits from organisations like Edinburgh Council Recycling Scheme, and a Green and Wellbeing Team.

A staff of 1400 work at the Granton centre and many are young people with a real interest in cutting the office carbon footprint. Mike now walks four miles to and from work with a colleague and the Team has put other interested staff in touch with one another for groups walking to work or going for lunchtime walks.

Robert Barnes, who is National Convener for residential energy, is on the Green and Wellbeing Team.

He said: "I am proud that the membership in this office are getting involved in these valuable projects."

Edinburgh Local Government branch is also working hard on climate change, including looking to secure a workplace agreement involving UNISON environmental reps playing a key role in the council's planning on the issue.

Vice Chair Matthew Crighton was one of a number of staff and activists who attended the STUC Climate Change Conference in February.

His reports from that and the Campaign Against Climate Change conference in London were sent to branches and are on

continued on p 3.

UNISON - the green union

UNISON has a strong and longstanding commitment to environmental issues and was the first union at UK and Scottish level to join the Stop Climate Chaos coalition.

New work under way to support branches in stepping up action includes a toolkit being launched at National Delegate Conference.

This will provide a half day branch development activity to support branches to think about how they and their employer engage on environmental issues.

Branches can also develop an action plan for putting climate change and other environmental issues further up the agenda in their workplace.

Training for environmental representatives will be developed and courses will be made available in Scotland once there is sufficient demand. (See below for TUC courses including Scottish online one in October 08.)

Check the UNISON conferences web page at the end of National Delegate Conference to see what delegates have voted on for further campaigning.

(<http://cms.unison.co.uk/ConferenceDetail.asp?ConferenceID=214>)

There's an old saying that 'if each before their own door swept the village would be clean'.

UNISON does not claim to be perfect by any means but the union has launched a number of internal initiatives to ensure we put our own house in order, while campaigning locally

and internationally on climate change. In a whole range of ways the union organisation is seeking to reduce our carbon footprint.

Mains water in Scottish offices has replaced bottled water and video conferencing facilities have been installed UK-wide to reduce the need for travel, including flights. In the first five weeks staff travelled 21,000 fewer miles. The video conferencing is expected to save £250,000 over a year.

Further work is under way and at UK level, you can download Changing the climate in UNISON, the union's Environmental strategy and action plan 2008-2010. This is at:

www.unison.org.uk/acrobat/17271.pdf

Both the UK and Scottish websites have environment links on their home page. On the UNISON home page go to 'green issues' under 'Get Active' on the members section.

On UNISON Scotland's site, don't forget to click on the 'Revitalising Our Environment' link to lobby your MSPs for a strong Climate Change Bill.

The Green Workplace home page also has links to the Green Workplace Briefing and the Environment Manifesto with ten things to do to tackle climate change. The manifesto showcases some of the work UNISON members across Scotland do to protect our environment. It will soon be updated to cover recent developments.

www.unison-scotland.org.uk/green-workplace

workplace action continued from page 2. ³

the Scottish Left Review website in the current issue.

RECRUITMENT

Branches can promote their environmental policies and campaigns as part of recruitment work.

The environment is an issue politicising many people, particularly younger workers. Staff are also usually involved in recycling at home and expect to see action on these issues in their workplaces.

The new Food for Good Charter materials on the UNISON Scotland website include a recruitment leaflet for public service catering staff.

Other branch activities include recycling work in South Lanarkshire and support for World Development Movement campaigns in East Ayrshire, where the branch is also speaking with the council about car parking and public transport issues.

SAMPLE AGREEMENT

Branches can see a sample workplace agreement on the UK website.

UNISON drafted a claim to the Environment Agency to establish a Greening the Workplace agreement with the trade unions.

It seeks to establish a network of union environmental representatives. If successful it will be one of the first of its kind in the UK.

Energy, Transport, Water, Food and Waste are the key areas focused on.

The Agreement would set up a National Joint Environmental Partnership Forum and lists a thirteen point policy statement including, for example:

Aim to minimise pollution and waste, cut travel, introduce a Green Transport Plan, provide mains fed drinking water, improve energy efficiency and maximise the use of renewable and recyclable materials.

The draft agreement is at:

www.unison.org.uk/business/pages_view.asp?did=6526

Environmental representatives - TUC Training Courses Scottish online course in autumn 2008, Stow College

UNISON is backing campaigns at UK level for legislation to give environmental representatives the same facilities and facility time as other recognised union reps. Meanwhile the TUC has some free training courses for union reps. In Scotland a three month online course run by Stow College starts on October 27 2008. It will help union reps to: identify environmental changes affecting the workplace; research and identify appropriate environmental legislation, policies and information and identify environmental problems and opportunities for trade union action.

For details and contact information see: www.unionlearn.org.uk/courses/index.cfm/citem/3416 or email bcorrigan@stow.ac.uk Or see the TUC Union Learn pages and search courses for environment.

Edinburgh World Justice Festival - Climate Change & Latin American Alternatives

There's a whole range of free events on in June as part of the Edinburgh World Justice Festival.

Although some of it clashes with National Delegate Conference, it is hoped members might find plenty of interest, particularly the two events UNISON is directly involved in.

These are The Great Carbon Debate, in St John's Church on Saturday 21 June, and an evening of Latin American Alternatives on Monday 16 June.

From 6pm on the 16th, in Augustine United Church, George IV Bridge, you can browse stalls and watch Latin American themed DVDs.

Refreshments available.

FILM

At 7pm there is a showing of an award-winning film *Tambogrande - Mangoes, Murder and Mining in Peru*. This follows a community's inspirational non-violent resistance when a foreign mining company wants to relocate them after the discovery of gold under their farmland.

The film is introduced by Michael Connarty MP.

At 8pm you are invited to come and learn about ALBA, the Bolivarian alternative for the Americas 'striking a blow against the IMF, the World Bank, free trade and neo-liberalism'.

A panel of speakers will discuss and respond to questions.

The evening is organised by UNISON Scotland with the Venezuela Information Centre, Bolivia Information Forum, Peru Support Group and Scottish Cuba Solidarity Campaign.

DEBATE

The Great Carbon Debate on 21 June is supported by UNISON Scotland, Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, Scottish Education and Action on Development, WWF Scotland, Christian Aid, Transition Towns Network, Friends of



the Earth Scotland, World Development Movement Scotland and many more.

Doors open at 11am with stalls, Fair Trade tea and coffee etc. Sessions running from 11.30-12.30pm, 1.30-3pm and 3.30-4.30pm. You can attend the whole day or whichever parts are of most interest.

Lunch provides an opportunity to chat with speakers and other experienced campaigners.

The first session is an exploration of the various solutions proposed to climate change and the role of the individual.

At the second, after lunch, voices from across the world will describe the impact of climate change on their lives and what preventive action is needed.

GLOBAL

The final session is an invitation to think about how to develop a global movement powerful enough to force governments and corporations to take action which will transform the work economy.

Activities for children may be organised. Check the EWJF website for an update.

The Festival coincides with Refugee Week (16 - 22 June) and other events include: The Asylum Monologues, Burmese Voices, Africa: Charity or Justice, The Campaigner's Guide to Changing the World, the Alternative Olympics, Understanding the Energy Crisis and a Book Festival.

UNISON says that public services are the key to international development and tackling climate change.

For the full programme see: www.ewjf.org.uk

What's On Diary Dates

Saturday 14 June

Peace Chain around Faslane. 11.30am assemble at Faslane Peace Camp. 12 noon march off to form chain. On 14 June 2007 the Scottish Parliament voted against the UK Government's plans for a new £75 billion nuclear weapons system to replace Trident. Buses from Scottish cities.

Contact Scottish CND 0141 423 1222. scnd@banthebomb.org

Monday 16 June.

TUC conference. 'Trade Unions and Climate Change - A Just Transition.' Congress House, London.

16 to 29 June

EWJFestival as featured on pages 1 and 3.

Saturday 21 June

Rally against global poverty and for human rights. 10.30am Kelvingrove Park, Glasgow. Bands and Speakers. Marks end of World Alliance for Citizen Participation (CIVICUS) conference on 60th Anniversary of UN Declaration on Human Rights.

5 June to 16 July

Changing Seasons art exhibition at The Ruthven Gallery in Auchterarder, supported by Stop Climate Chaos Scotland. It explores the destruction caused by climate change.

www.theruthvengallery.co.uk

Saturday 23 August

12.15-1.30pm. Members of the Children's Parliament Climate Change Project (see page 2) present their conclusions at the Festival of Politics at the Scottish Parliament. Tickets will be on sale.

September

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland hosts a speaking tour by Inuit leader Aqqaluk Lyngé. He is Vice-Chair of the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC), and chair of the Greenland ICC. Details of public events will be on the SCCS website nearer the time.

www.stopclimatechaosscotland.org

December

UN Climate talks in Poznan, Poland will be a focus again for putting further political pressure on world leaders.

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