
BFAWU Green Reps Network meeting October 2023

Attendance at the meeting was disappointing, however there was still a lot to talk about.

IER conference

The Union co-sponsored a conference titled 'Working for Climate Justice: trade unions in the front line against climate change' which brought trade unions and climate activists together to discuss how the demands of climate breakdown, greening the economy and just transition can be balanced. There is a report that has been produced alongside this which can be sent to Green Reps should they be interested in learning more.

Online Green Reps Pilot Course with Stockport College

A 3-day course is being put on by Stockport college, 3 Thursdays in November – 9th, 16, 23rd they will be held all day 9.30- 4.30 and will cover the following:

- Understanding the climate and environmental emergencies and identifying the impact on your workplace.
- Working with the branch and members to identify sustainability issues that need to be raised with management.
- How to carry out workplace environmental audits.
- How to review and develop workplace environmental policies and agreements
- Awareness raising and promotion of green workplace practices.

It was discussed how this is a good step forward and hopefully the first of many so that Green reps and those interested in being Green Reps can be trained in the role, if people are interested they can contact the General Secretary who will forward the information on to sign up

European ETUI course on Skills for Labour and Environmental Justice

Starting in January and facilitated on the MOOC platform, this online distance learning course which is available to members has 7 modules:

- Welcome
- Contextualizing the Labour – Environment nexus
- The origins and evolution of the Just transition principle
- Labour and Environmental policies and regulations
- Worker's participation and environmental democracy
- Perspectives from the global south and vulnerable groups
- conclusion

If people are interested in the course, they can contact the General Secretary who will forward the information on to sign up.

PCS National Climate & Biodiversity Service proposal

An inaugural meeting was held on the 30th to discuss a proposal about a National Climate and Biodiversity proposal, the presentation will be shared with green reps for feedback and ideas, the idea of a NCBS was warmly received, though the scale of the challenge to implement it under the current government was recognised and stressed not to be underestimated by the working group.

Environment on the agenda

A lengthy discussion was had about the importance of having the environment as a stand alone item on every agenda, we need to ensure that it isn't an add on to what we do as a union but integrated into everything we do, campaigning, organising, negotiating, health and safety. Climate is part of everything we do and impacts everything we do too.



How we change people's mindsets and get them to see and understand the problems we are facing and that they aren't going away, winters will be colder, flooding will become the norm, summers will be longer and hosepipe bans and droughts again will become normal, which impacts what can be grown, how we transport and move about as well as peoples livelihoods and ability to live normally.

There was an understanding that whilst in a cost of living crisis where having a meal and a warm roof over your head takes priority over everything else, but as a union we need to be connecting the dots for members and reps so that the picture and impact of climate change is clear.

What is happening in branches?

There are lots of great things happening in branches, but we aren't hearing about them, perhaps there should be a stand along item at regional council meetings so that we can begin to share best practice around the branches and regions.

An example was given of pushing for spare land at sites, that may be left for future expansion to be allowed to grow naturally, and whilst it wont be a nature reserve, it can be a home for wild flowers, bees and insects without impacting negatively on the business or operations.

More examples like this are needed.