



Workplace Environment reps

According to the TUC, environmental reps “can act as a conduit between management and members/staff, feeding concerns, suggestions and responses in both directions, and working with the workforce and management to develop best environmental practice”.

We believe, along with the TUC and other unions that environmental reps should have the same rights and facilities time as other recognised union representatives.



Stopping climate change THE ROLE OF TRADE UNIONISTS

Who we are

The Campaign Against Climate Change (CaCC) is an umbrella group that exists to secure the action we need to minimise harmful climate change and its impacts.

The campaign seeks to raise awareness about the gravity and urgency of the threat from climate change and to influence those with the greatest power to take effective action to do so with the utmost speed and resolution.

In February 2008, we held a Trade Union conference, which attracted over 300 delegates. Since then, we have hosted fringe meetings at union conferences and involved

union speakers in other climate events.

Many union branches are already affiliated to the campaign and we are proud to be supported nationally by the UCU, PCS, CWU and Connect unions.

Resources and Further Information

The Campaign Against Climate Change: www.campaigncc.org —including audio & video from our Trade Union conference.

CaCC Trade Union Working Group: <http://cacctu.wordpress.com/>

The TUC website on Sustainable Workplaces: www.sustainableworkplace.co.uk

The environment and Climate Change —a guide for union reps, published by the Labour Research Department, June 2007 (£5 from www.lrdpublications.org.uk)

Climate Outreach and Information Network (COIN) run courses on Climate Change for Trade Unionists. www.coinet.org.uk

Contact us

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Climate Change is one of the greatest threats facing our planet.

The world's population faces increased numbers of extreme weather events —hurricanes, flooding and heatwaves—coupled with their associated disasters —disease, drought and famine.

We won't all suffer equally. In the words of the Chairperson of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, “It's the poorest of the poor in the world, and this includes poor people even in prosperous societies who are going to be the worst hit”.

We must make major reductions in Green House gas emissions in the next decade, yet governments

are not acting with the urgency required.

They are not for instance willing to take on the large energy companies and multi-nationals when they resist the changes needed. Consequently, the action that trades unionists take in the next few years will be crucial.

We are told by employers and others that each of us must “do our bit”—such as turning off computers and photocopiers at night.

But individual actions are limited when compared to the huge changes we need. The onus must be put on employers to reduce the workplace “carbon footprint”.

Instead of asking each staff member to turn

their computer off and disciplining those who don't—it would make more sense for the employer to invest in technology to automate the process—saving money and reducing energy use.

Trade Unionists have always been concerned about the environment—whether it's the working environment and health and safety, or the impact of industries on the wider community.

This is why Trade Unions have always been at the forefront of campaigning for legislation to improve working conditions, and for legislation nationally that will reduce workplace emissions and bring investment to more sustainable industries.



Tony Kearns
Deputy General
Secretary, CWU

▣ The science around the issue of climate change is irrefutable. The trade union movement needs to make up its mind about the issue.

Is it going to stand back and allow Governments and big business to hijack this issue and use it as yet another weapon with which to beat the working class?

Or will it realise that the members we represent will be the people who will suffer most, and yet be expected to deliver a new economy on a changing planet.

Our principle of solidarity demands that we do all we can to defend our members, undertaking whatever action is necessary to halt this catastrophe.

But we must also stand shoulder to shoulder with the world's poor as they suffer drought and famine.

Global capitalism exploits us all—including the world's resources—regardless of the human and environmental impact'



Picture: Angela Stapleford

What you can do

- * **Join the Campaign Against Climate Change**
- * **Get your branch/region to affiliate**
- * **Find out what your union policy is on the environment**
- * **Elect environmental reps**
- * **Campaign for changes to working practices**
- * **Get your branch to pass policy encouraging employer action**
- * **Access TUC resources & courses on environmental questions**

Jobs and the environment

We should not accept the false choice between jobs and the environment.

If employers tell us that they cannot make environmental improvements without losing jobs, then we should remember that they may be happy to make redundancies when profits are threatened.

If their sole priority is their profits—then we in the unions need to stand up for the planet and its people.

There is no need for and there should not be any job losses because of a shift to more environmentally sustainable industries and working practices.

If the government can find millions of pounds to prop up Northern Rock, for instance, then it could easily fund re-training and re-deployment schemes to safeguard jobs—if it is willing to make this a high enough priority.

The move to a more sustainable society would create employment opportunities.

In order to reduce emissions to sustainable levels we would need massive government investment, creating jobs across the country.

Take transport—we need a rapid shift from road transport to the railways—this would require both the improvement of existing railway systems and its expansion.

A study by the University of California at Berkeley

proved that renewable energy systems are much more employment intensive than their fossil fuel counterparts

Gas and Oil are likely to employ 1 person per Mw of generation over the lifetime of the facility. Wind power could employ up to 2.8 people per Mw and Solar



Adrian Askew
General Secretary
Connect

▣ With around half of all carbon emissions generated at work climate change must be an issue for all trades unionists.

We have to engage with this issue both in terms of carbon reduction and the employment implications of moving to a low carbon emission economy.

It affects us all as socially responsible individuals. However, individual action will not be enough to meet the challenges ahead.

By acting together, we can put the necessary pressure on government and policy makers, and deliver the real changes that will be needed in workplaces.'

energy plants could create over 10 jobs for the same capacity.

A more sustainable society would be a better place to live—more energy efficient homes and workplaces, car-free roads and less pollution, better public transport, towns and cities designed for people.

Unless we grasp the challenges ahead, then it will be left to government and employers to impose changes which will then be more likely to be of a kind which will make working people pay for the climate crisis.

Trade Unionists have a crucial role to play in making sure this doesn't happen.

Climate Change action can help build Unions

● A CWU survey of young members found Climate Change was the second most important issue to them after house prices. Activity around the issue will help recruit new members and involve existing members.

● Unison members at Kings College University London, recently won a campaign to make the College sign up to a Ride2Work scheme to supply staff with cheap cycles