Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability

Course Pack Contents

1. **Greening the Workplace (TUSDAC)**
2. **Environmental Glossary & Rio Declaration**
3. **PowerPoint Presentation (Exercise2)**
4. **TUC/TUSDAC Environment Survey**
5. **ENACT: T&G Environmental Policy**
6. **Workplace Pollution Reduction (T&G Booklet)**
7. **Eco-auditing (T&G Booklet)**
8. **The Sustainable Workplace (TUSDAC/ACBE)**
9. **T&G Health & Safety News no.10 Winter 2006**
10. **The EU Sixth Environmental Action Programme: a summary**
11. **The UN Millennium Development Goals**
12. **Securing the Future: the UK Government's sustainable development strategy**
13. **Course Exercise Pack**

Further Course Documentation / Booklets

14. **Pre-course information pack**

The Environment & Climate Change: a guide for reps (Unite / LRD)

First Steps to a Greener Workplace: a TUC guide (TUC / Carbon Trust)

How to Green Your Workplace: a TUC guide (TUC / Carbon Trust)

Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability Course Exercise Pack

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Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability Course Guidelines

Working Together

A key feature of all T&G courses is the value they place on the knowledge, experience and skills every member brings to them - both in terms of work and everyday life. So it's important everyone feels equal and able to make a positive contribution.

As a valued course member yourself, you can help by:

- giving everyone who wants to speak the opportunity to do so;
- listening to what others have to say and not being dismissive of their contribution;
- waiting until a speaker has finished and not interrupting their train of thought;
- keeping any criticism constructive and helping fellow course members to develop their own confidence, skills and knowledge;
- making your own contribution as clear and concise as possible and not hogging the discussion;
- aiming to have a reasoned discussion rather than a dogmatic argument.

Language and Behaviour

The Union supports the principle of equal opportunities. This means that everyone is welcome, regardless of colour, sex, sexuality or ability. Behaviour including language that is racist, sexist, anti-gay, anti-lesbian, anti-disability or otherwise discriminatory, is not acceptable on a T&G course - or anywhere else in the Union. It goes against the principle of equality for all and will offend other course members.

Timekeeping and Attendance

For the course to put the limited time and Union resources available to best use, good timekeeping and attendance are essential. Unjustified and/or excessive lateness or absence that disrupts the education process may lead to a student being removed from the course. If there's a good reason why you can't attend a particular session, always let your tutor - and your employer - know.

Jargon

Jargon can be a barrier to communication. The more we become involved in a subject - and trade unionism is no exception - the more likely we are to use it. Take care to explain any jargon, abbreviations or initials you use which other members of the course may not be familiar with, so that everyone understands what you're talking about. Equally, don't be afraid to ask what another course member means, if he or she uses jargon you don't understand.

Conclusion

These guidelines are intended to help you through the course and to prevent problems arising. We hope they'll ensure that no-one feels excluded as a result of the language, attitudes or actions of other course members. They are also part of our wider aim of promoting equal opportunities in all walks of life.

We hope you enjoy the course - and make a positive contribution to it.

Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability Course Programme

Monday

Session 1 **2.00pm - 3.45pm**
Course objectives and learning outcomes
How does your workplace impact on the environment?
Where do you and your employer stand on sustainability?
Introductory Exercise 1

Session 2 **4.00pm - 5.45pm**
How does your workplace impact on the environment?
Where do you and your employer stand on sustainability?
Introductory Exercise 1 (cont.)

Tuesday

Session 3 **9.00am - 10.45am**
Environmental problems - are they trade union issues?
Exercise 2

Session 4 **11.00am - 12.45pm**
Environmental problems - are they trade union issues?
Exercise 2 (cont.)

Session 5 **2.00pm - 3.45pm**
Saving your energy -
moving to a *low carbon economy*
Exercise 3

Session 6 **4.00pm - 5.45pm**
Moving to a low carbon economy
Exercise 3 (cont.)

Wednesday

Session 7 **9.00am - 10.45am**
Keeping you going -
addressing environmental issues in the transport sector
Exercise 4

Session 8 **11.00am - 12.45pm**
Addressing environmental issues in the transport sector
Exercise 4 (cont.)

Session 9 **2.00pm - 3.45pm**
You are what you eat -
addressing environmental issues in the food & agriculture sector
Exercise 5

Session 10 **4.00pm - 5.45pm**
Addressing environmental issues in the food & agriculture sector
Exercise 5 (cont.)

Thursday

Session 11 **9.00am - 10.45am**
Getting things done
Making more with less
Exercise 6

Session 12 **11.00am - 12.45pm**
Getting things done & making more with less
Exercise 6 (cont.)

Session 13 **2.00pm - 3.45pm**
Making a difference -
from good housekeeping to sustainable development
Exercise 7

Session 14 **4.00pm - 5.45pm**
From good housekeeping to sustainable development
Exercise 7 (cont.)

Friday

Session 15 **9.00am - 10.30am**
Green futures -
Preparing an environmental / organising action plan
Exercise 8

Session 16 **10.40am - 11.40am**
Preparing an environmental / organising action plan
Exercise 8 (cont.)

Course review and assessment of learning outcomes

Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability Pre-course Questionnaire

Before you come to the course, **please take a look at and respond to this questionnaire.** Complete as much of it as you can, including the student information box at the back, and **bring it with you** to the course. Leave any details you are unsure about until the course begins.

1. Who do you work for, where do you work and what do you do there?

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2. What is your union role and what are your responsibilities in relation to the environment and sustainability?

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3. What do you believe to be the most important environmental and sustainable development issues from a trade union point of view?

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4. Describe an environmental problem to which your employment and the work processes at your workplace contribute and possible solutions to it.

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5. How does your employer organise to reduce the environmental impact of his business and how is the Union involved?

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6. What arrangements or plans does your employer have to make his business operations more sustainable and how is the Union involved?

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7. What do you know about T&G involvement in and action taken on environmental and sustainability issues?

8. What do you know about T&G policy on environmental and sustainability issues and what the Union is doing to put that policy into effect?

9. What organising potential is there in environmental and sustainability issues - within your workplace, in particular? Is there a relationship between strong trade union organisation and a more sustainable workplace?

Student Information Box

Name.....

Home Address.....

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Post Code.....

Region, Branch & Membership No.....

Employer.....

Lay Offices Held.....

.....

Gender..... **Ethnic Origin**..... **Date of Birth**.....

Disability / Medical Condition / Learning Difficulty Yes / No **Code**.....

Previous Achievement of 60+ Credit HE/FE Award.....

.....

From Which Educational Establishment?.....

Highest Educational Qualification to Date.....

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Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability Exercise 1: First Thoughts

Learning Outcomes

A better understanding of how diverse the course members and their workplaces are

A greater appreciation of environmental and sustainability issues as they are impacting on our members at work and of action being taken to address them

A heightened awareness of the organising potential of trade union involvement and action

Exercise

1. **Introduce yourself** to and **exchange information** about yourself, your arrangements at work and your views and thoughts with the colleague next to you, using the questionnaire you were sent and completed before the course.

2. At the end of the exchange, **be ready to pass on** to the course group as a whole what you have learned about your colleague.

Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability Exercise 2: Getting Involved

Learning Outcomes

A greater awareness of environmental and sustainability issues in general

A broader appreciation of their impact on the planet and our members' lives

A better understanding of possible ways forward and to what degree the trade union movement might play a part

Exercise

Consider the following statements in small study groups. **Discuss** each statement fully and **agree on a reaction** to it, given the arguments for and against, **making a note** of the pros and cons.

Elect a spokesperson to report back the group's findings to the course group as a whole for further discussion.

Statements

1. "Think global, act local" makes a great sound-bite, but it overstates the ability of individuals to make a real difference in a world increasingly dominated and run by global institutions and forces.
2. Much of the damage done to the environment arises from the things we do every day - some of the conveniences we, in the developed world, have come to rely on. It's unrealistic to expect people to change their ways, just to benefit others – whether elsewhere in the world or generations to come. Let's face it; the majority of people are only in it for themselves.
3. Global warming is the key environmental issue. If we could stop global warming in its tracks, we'd be halfway there. Of course, it doesn't help that experts and Governments can't agree that there is such a thing, let alone how best to deal with it.
4. One of biggest problems in tackling environmental problems is that there are no easy fixes.
5. For industry and big business generally profitability is – and will always be – the key driver. Going green and becoming more sustainable will never have the same impact.
6. You can't expect the trade union movement to prioritise environmental issues, let alone sustainability. Most of our activists have too much on their plate already and, all too often, our members are the problem rather than the solution.
7. Any radical change for the better will require active Government intervention. Our present Government's cosy, hands-off approach to big business doesn't hold out much hope of progress.
8. When it comes to addressing environmental and developmental issues, the only effective action is direct action – the kind of action organisations like Greenpeace and Friend of the Earth can take, but trade unions can't.

Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability Exercise 3: Saving Your Energy

Learning Outcomes

A greater awareness of the pressures our energy requirements place upon the environment

A better understanding of the many issues surrounding energy generation, supply and use

An appreciation of the need for action to make the transition to a low carbon economy, why trade unionists should contribute to the key decisions that need to be made and where the Union stands on the key energy issues

Exercise

The world's increasing energy demands, coupled with the continuing use and depletion of fossil fuels, have already led to and will result in further harmful climate change through global warming. To limit that change, the UK and other Governments have agreed to regulate and reduce their carbon emissions and to bring about a steady transition to low carbon economies.

Against this background, the Government is conducting a review of energy production, supply and consumption in the UK and has consulted various interested parties, including the Union.

Within the framework of a future UK energy strategy, **how important** is each of the following issues and why? And **where do you think the Union should stand** on each of the issues?

- the resource mix - the role of fossil fuels (including clean coal, carbon capture and storage), renewables, bio fuels, micro generation, etc.
- sourcing and security of supply
- affordability and price stability
- investment in infrastructure, technology and skills
- employment opportunities
- efficient and effective provision
- energy efficiency and reduced consumption

In small study groups, **discuss** each of these issues and **come to an agreement** about the way forward.

Elect a spokesperson to report back the group's findings to the course group as a whole.

Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability Exercise 4: Keeping Going

Learning Outcomes

A greater awareness of the range of environmental problems posed by the ways we transport goods and get about ourselves

A better appreciation of workable solutions to those problems and a better idea generally of what sustainable mobility might look like

A greater understanding of the implications of change for your members and T&G organisation more generally

Exercise

Much is rightly made of the contribution transport emissions make to climate change. Transport emissions continue to soar in the UK, as those from other sources reduce to meet our Kyoto commitments. Our love affair with the car and, increasingly, with the plane, continues unabated.

Climate change, however, is by no means the only environmental issue associated with our unsustainable behaviour when it comes to getting around. The problems are legion:

- **poor air quality** – leading to bronchial and pulmonary disorders and to a marked increase in allergies and intolerances, particularly amongst the young
- **noise pollution** – contributing to stress and community blight
- **inadequate road safety** – the "unacceptable" toll of accidents and casualties
- **increased traffic congestion** – wasting our time and money in getting rather than being there and costing the economy dear
- **reduced opportunities for exercise** – contributing to obesity and to heart disease
- **the sacrifice of community space** - to the car rather than to people
- **social exclusion** – for the disadvantaged and isolated
- **the continuing consumption of finite resources** – the "never-ending" oil supply.

Yet the UK, Europe and the world are committed to action - to a transition to a low carbon economy.

In small study groups, **read the pack** provided for you on transport, **discuss the problems** our unsustainable actions currently pose – those above amongst them – and, drawing on your own experience as well as the information provided, **formulate workable and acceptable solutions** that could help to deliver sustainable mobility at your workplace and within your community.

Consider also **the implications** of your conclusions **for your members** and **for T&G membership and organisation** more generally.

Appoint a spokesperson to report back your findings to the course group as a whole for further discussion.

Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability Exercise 5: You Are What You Eat

Learning Outcomes

A wider appreciation of the environmental impact and unsustainable practices of the food industry - from plough to plate

A better understanding of sustainability issues more generally in the context of rural areas and the countryside

A greater awareness of how more sustainable and environmentally responsible practice might impact on you and your family, your industry and workplace, and the Union and its members

Exercise

In small study groups, **consider two out of the three subjects** below - **food, farming** and **rural areas** - allocated to you by the course tutor.

Discuss both subjects under the ten separate headings listed beneath them and **make notes** on what the group considers the environmental / sustainability issues to be under each. **Take a view, too, on:**

- the degree to which, in the UK, we deliver on each count;
- what the implications would be for rural areas, farming, food production, processing and retail, if we were to move towards better practice;
- how the change would affect your lifestyle and your work;
- how it might affect T&G membership and organisation more generally.

Be prepared to report back your findings to the course group as a whole for further discussion.

Subjects

Food	Farming	Rural Areas
a balanced, healthy diet*	intensive	sense of community
good food*	economically viable	local jobs
variety & choice	grant supported	local facilities
local & seasonal produce	efficient	affordable housing
affordable food	secure and well-paid	mobility for all
regular meal times*	organic	protected / listed status
food safety & hygiene*	environmentally responsible	traditional crafts & skills
allergies & intolerances	sustainable	variety of landscape
labelling	diverse in habitat & wildlife	leisure access & tourism
packaging	delivering self-sufficiency	second homes / retreats

* see over the page for further discussion points within these headings

good food
nutritious
tasty
fresh
local
seasonal
fair trade
organic
additive-free
fast
visually appealing
felt to be good
long life
processed
genetically modified

a balanced, healthy diet
fibre
carbohydrate
protein
vitamins & minerals
saturated, hydrogenated and trans fats
unsaturated fats & omega 3 fatty acids
starch
sugar
salt
additives - preservatives, antioxidants, colouring, flavouring, emulsifiers, etc.

regular meal times
a hearty breakfast
elevenses
lunch on the go
afternoon tea
a three-course evening meal
a light supper
a snack between meals

food safety & hygiene
bacteria - campylobacter, clostridium, salmonella, listeria, escherichia coli
disease - bse, foot and mouth, swine fever

Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability Exercise 6: Getting Things Done

Learning Outcomes

A greater awareness of the environmental impact of your work and workplace

An improved understanding of what has been done and what more needs to be done to make your workplace and other workplaces greener and more sustainable

A better appreciation of the extent to which the Union could and should be involved

Exercise

In small study groups, **think about** and **discuss** what has already been done in your workplace to reduce its environmental impact and make it more sustainable, but, more particularly, **identify what else might be done** and **how the Union could best be involved**.

List your findings under the following subject headings:

- producing a greener product or service
- reducing your energy requirements
- using less water
- producing less solid waste
- reducing, re-using and recycling
- cutting out effluent and emissions
- improving maintenance and housekeeping
- greening the purchasing and supply chain
- making transport and travel to work more sustainable
- getting the organisation to be more socially responsible

Appoint a spokesperson to report back your findings to the course group as a whole for further discussion.

Trade Unionists & the Environment - Greening the Workplace & Organising for Sustainability Exercise 7: Making a Difference

Learning Outcomes

A greater awareness of action being taken or planned to address environmental problems and to make the transition to sustainable development

A broader appreciation of the impact of those actions both globally and at home in the UK in particular, as well as on your union, the organisation you work for and your members' lives

A better understanding of the options open and the degree to which unions and their members can help to set the agenda and play their part

Exercise

Break into five small study groups (A to E) in the T&G Centre's second floor computer suite. Using the five separate work stations available, log on to the internet and **examine the websites** allocated or appropriate to your group - from the standpoint of environmental action and sustainable development.

You have only an hour available, so make sure that you don't go chasing too many red herrings or visiting useless or inappropriate websites. As you will be aware, the technology records each website visit.

Draw up a report of your findings and **elect a spokesperson to report them back** to the course group as a whole for further discussion. The report will need to document not just what the group has found, but its implications for the Union and its members.

Group A

Find out what the UK Government is doing for the environment and for sustainable development by examining the websites of

- the Government's sustainable development & corporate social responsibility strategies (sustainable-development.gov.uk & csr.gov.uk)
- DEFRA (defra.gov.uk)
- the Environment Agency (environment-agency.gov.uk)
- the Carbon Trust (carbontrust.co.uk)
- the Sustainable Development Commission (sd-commission.org.uk)

Group B

Find out what your group members' employers are doing by exploring their websites.

Group C

Find out what the trade union movement is doing by trawling the websites of

- the T&G, the TUC and TUSDAC (tgwu.org.uk; tuc.org.uk & defra.gov.uk/environment/tusdac)
- the European Trade Union Confederation (etuc.org)
- the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (icftu.org)
- the International Labour Foundation for Sustainable Development (sustainlabour.org)
- the Global Union Research Network (gurn.info)
- the Global Union Federations relevant to members of your group (e.g. itfglobal.org, icem.org, iuf.org, etc.)

Group D

Find out what's happening globally by viewing the websites of

- the European Union (europa.eu) - in particular, look for the
  - 6th environmental action programme, the Lisbon & sustainable development strategies & EMAS
- the United Nations (un.org) - in particular, look for UNEP,
  - the Division for & Commission on Sustainable Development, Agenda 21 & the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation & the Millennium Development Goals
- the International Labour Organisation (ilo.org) – in particular, look for
  - international (core) labour standards &
  - International Occupational Safety & Health Information Centre (CIS)
- the International Organisation for Standardisation (iso.org) – in particular,
  - look for ISO9000 & 14000
- the International Institute for Sustainable Development (iisd.org)

Group E

Find out what's going on in the UK by finding out more about

- the landfill tax (hmrc.gov.uk) & recycling (recycle-more.co.uk)
- the climate change levy (defra.gov.uk/environment/ccl) &
  - Action Energy (carbontrust.co.uk/energy)
- the packaging & the WEEE regulations
  - (dti.gov.uk/innovation/sustainability/weee & packaging)
- integrated pollution prevention and control & the environmental permitting
  - programme (defra.gov.uk/environment/ppc & epp & environment-agency.gov.uk)