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# Trade Unions Greening the Workplace

*David Arnold,  
Policy Officer UNISON / TUC*





# Climate Change— a union issue?

"It is within our gift, within this generation, to either save or destroy the planet we live on. It all boils down to the choices we make now."

Frances O Grady, TUC Deputy  
General Secretary, 2008



# Trade union solutions

- The power of collective action
- Making the environment a bargaining issue
- Training and education
- Making the link to Health and Safety
- Campaigning for policy change - TUSDAC



# Green Workplaces Project

- Delivering solutions, working with
  - the Carbon Trust
  - TUSDAC
- Six pilot workplaces – British Museum, TUC, DEFRA, Scottish Power, Corus, Friends Provident
- Unions including PCS, Unite, UNISON, Prospect, Community, FDA, GMB



# Key activities

- GWP Training – staff trained on environmental issues, energy audits, awareness raising.
- GWP Open days –
  - “Most interest we’ve ever had in a union event...” (Amicus rep, Friends Provident)
  - Quarter of staff attended British Museum event.
- GWP Surveys – under 25% of staff knew company’s sustainability or energy policy
- Establishing joint environmental committees and negotiating agreements
- Link to domestic behaviour



# Key outcomes

Site	Outcomes	Annual CO2 savings (tonnes)
British Museum	7% electricity, 11% gas saved	301
CORUS	Company wide environmental forum	1,216
TUC	Halved night time electricity, 40% cut in landfill	142
Scottish Power	4% electricity	22
Friends Provident	IT systems changed	184
DEFRA	Projected 7% electricity savings	58

Tools developed to measure & log carbon savings.

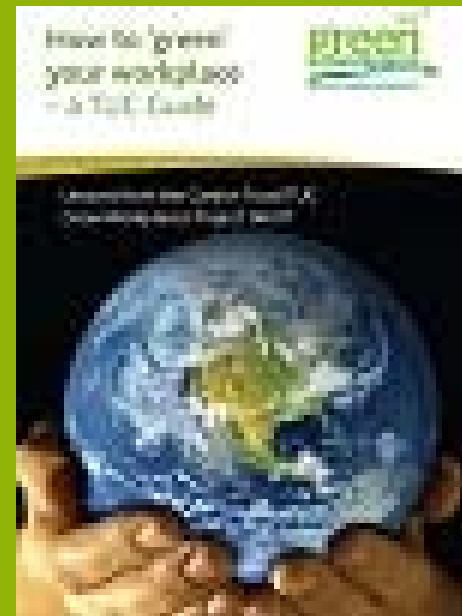
# In summary:

- In the pilot projects, unions have delivered...
  - Behavioural change as a 'trusted friend'
  - Workplace training
  - Workplace energy savings
  - Advice on home energy efficiency
  - Negotiated for –
    - capital 'green' investment
    - procedural changes & accountability
    - time off for training & facility time for reps

# Where next?

- UMF funded GreenWorkplace Project: Phase 2 (2008 – 10)
- TUC Training courses – face to face/online
- TUC's "Go Green at Work"

[www.tuc.org.uk/extras/gogreenatwork.pdf](http://www.tuc.org.uk/extras/gogreenatwork.pdf)





# TUC policy and activity

- TUSDAC – rights for green reps
- Just Transition
- Input into government research on skills
- Active industrial policy – Green New Deal
- International dimension - Copenhagen





# Any questions?

David Arnold

d.arnold@unison.co.uk

Keep in touch:

[www.unionreps.org.uk](http://www.unionreps.org.uk)

and [www.sustainableworkplace.co.uk](http://www.sustainableworkplace.co.uk)



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# Trade Unions and Climate Change Greening the Workplace

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