Business & Environment

UNISON Energy

BRANCH SEMINAR 2024

WORKBOOK AND GUIDE

15-17 November 2024

CONFERENCE ASTON

ASTON UNIVERSITY

ASTON STREET

BIRMINGHAM

B4 7ET

UNISON Energy Service Group Seminar 2024
15-17 November, Conference Aston, Birmingham

Dear delegate,

On behalf of the Service Group Executive, we would like to thank you for registering to attend this year's seminar, which will take place in Birmingham at Conference Aston. Your time commitment and participation are appreciated.

The energy sector continues be the focus of significant change and significant attention. Commitments by the UK Government to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 continues to be a major political issue with significant impacts on the sector, especially with the new government in Westminster making clean energy a major aspect of its industrial strategy.

At the same time, newly emerging issues and longstanding concerns across the sector continue to redefine the working environment for our members and for the union. The expansion of new technologies into the world of work, the continuing challenges to union recruitment and organising of contemporary working practices and arrangements, and the impacts on workers and customers of a loose corporate regulatory environment continue to represent major concerns that demand robust and adaptive responses from trade unions.

The programme for this seminar includes sessions covering the UK's clean energy drive and the wider industrial strategy that underpins it, including insights from fellow unions Alongside this there will be sessions on how the UK's energy generation mix, and associated skills planning, may develop.

We will also look at the emergence of artificial intelligence, its potential impact on working practices in the UK and why AI is a trade union issue, and we will also hear about work that has been done on tools to support unions and others in campaigning to hold employers to account for regulatory infringements and wider misconduct. We will also explore UNISON's Organising to Win strategy and how this can be used to maximise recruitment and organising outcomes in Energy branches, to ensure our union remains strong now and into the future.

Finally, we will use this opportunity as a chance to develop the skills required to draft motions to the UNISON conferences which inform the union's work and policy formation. This ensures that the policies of the union and the allocation of its resources are reflective of the interests and priorities of members.

Whether you have attended this event before or are here for the first time, you are very welcome, and we hope you have an enjoyable and productive seminar.

Yours,

Lindsay McNaught,
Energy Service Group Executive Chair

Dawn Wainwright,
Energy Service Group Executive Vice-Chair

ENERGY SERVICE GROUP BRANCH SEMINAR 2024

15-17 November 2024
Conference Aston Events Centre, Birmingham

Friday 15 November 2024

From 3.00pm **Seminar registration (UNISON registration desk)**

5.30pm **Opening Remarks and Welcomes:**

- UNISON Energy Service Group Executive Chairs
- Donna Rowe-Merriman – UNISON BCE National Secretary

6.00pm **The Energy Sector in the UK – A Current Industrial and Political Overview**

- Mika Minio-Paluello – TUC Energy Industry and Climate Policy Lead

From 7.30pm **Dinner (venue buffet restaurant)**

Saturday 16 November 2024 (Morning)

9.30am **Artificial Intelligence (AI) – Impacts on UK Working Practices and AI as a Trade Union Issue**

- Kate Jones – UNISON Policy Officer and AI Lead

10.30am **Tea/Coffee Break**

10.45am **Organising to Win: Maximising Engagement and the Effectiveness of the OtW Strategy Across the Energy Service Group**

- Sabrina McDonnell – UNISON Organising to Win Project Officer

11.45am **Tea/Coffee Break**

12.00pm **Pursuing Clean Energy Generation and a Just Transition for Workers – the Example of Norway**

- Bjørn Fornes – El and IT Union Norway, Head of Negotiations
- Ole Hagen – El and IT Union Norway, Head of Policy

1.15pm **Lunch Break**

Saturday 16 November 2024 (Afternoon)

2.15pm **The Future of UK Energy: Generation, Skills, and Workforce Planning**

- Matthew Lay – EDF Energy Nuclear Skills Taskforce Lead

3.15pm **Tea and coffee break**

3.30pm **Seminar Workshop: Writing Motions for UNISON Conferences**

- Andrew Dobbie – UNISON National Officer and Standing Orders Secretary
- Sharon Maguire – UNISON Regional Organiser

4.30pm **Close**

7.30pm **Seminar Dinner (restaurant) – Fundraising Raffle / Mike Jeram Trophy Award**

Sunday 17 November 2024

9.30am **Violation Tracker UK: Tracking Corporate Regulatory Infringements and Misconduct – An Introduction**

- Eleanor Godwin – Violation Tracker UK Outreach Coordinator

10.45am **Motions Writing Workshop Follow-Up and Feedback**

- Andrew Dobbie – UNISON National Officer and Standing Orders Secretary

11.15am **Open Forum and Seminar Feedback**

11.30pm **Seminar Close (packed lunch available on departure)**

Travel to the 2024 Energy Branch Seminar – Train Travel Info and Car Parking

The seminar itself, as well as all accommodation and all provided meals will take place at Conference Aston, Birmingham Aston University, Aston Street, Birmingham, B4 7ET.

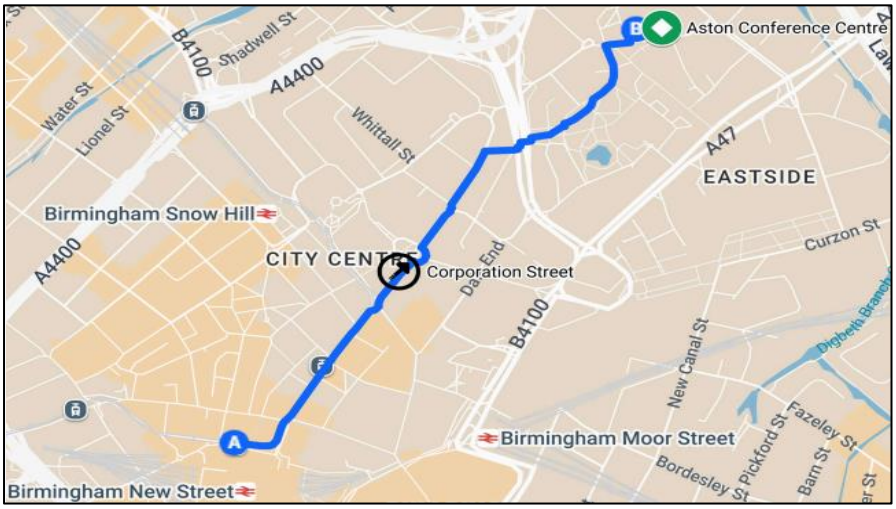
Travelling by train

If travelling to Birmingham by train, in most cases Birmingham New Street station (BHM) will be the best destination station to book tickets for from most parts of the country.

When booking train tickets please note that the registration desk, where delegates can sign-in for the seminar and check in to the on-site hotel, will be open from 3.00pm on Friday 15 November, with the seminar itself starting at 5.30pm. The seminar is expected to close by 12.00pm midday on Sunday 17 November.

Onward travel from Birmingham New Street station to Aston Conference Centre can be undertaken either by a 15-minute walk up the high street from New Street station to the Aston University site (see map below), or by taking a taxi from the ranks at the station.

Walking/other route (map and directions)



Walking/other directions from Birmingham New Street Station:

1. Leave the station at the Stevenson Street exit.
2. Turn right when you emerge on to Stevenson Street.
3. Follow Stevenson Street around to the left as it becomes Stevenson Place.
4. Continue along Stevenson Place until it becomes Corporation Street.
5. Continue up Corporation Street, then across Old Square roundabout to continue on Corporation Street, carry on until the right turn on to Ryder Street, that connects to James Watt Queensway.
6. Cross the James Watt Queensway at the lights, enter the Birmingham/Aston University campus area.
7. Follow the on-site directions for Conference Aston.

Travelling by car and pre-booking of car parking (required)

If travelling to the seminar by car, please navigate to the following address to arrive at the Conference Aston site:

Conference Aston, Aston St, Birmingham, B4 7ET

Car parking on the site must be pre-booked in advance via the Aston parking site: www.ConferenceAston/VisitorBooking.

Please note: not all on-site car parks are fully accessible due to a small number of steps – fully accessible parking can be requested by emailing info@conferenceaston.co.uk

UNISON

Energy

Housekeeping details for all seminar attendees

We hope you have a comfortable, interesting, safe, and enjoyable stay at the Conference Aston in Birmingham, while you take part in the 2024 UNISON Energy Service Group Branch Seminar. Below are some key pieces of information and guidance that may come in useful over the course of the weekend of your stay.

Location:

You are attending the UNISON 2024 Energy Service Group Branch Seminar, which this year is taking place at Conference Aston, Birmingham.

Directions for travelling to Conference Aston from Birmingham New Street train station (which will be the most convenient station for most delegates) or alternatively travelling by car to Birmingham and parking in the on-site car park were emailed to delegates previously and can be found elsewhere in this guide. If driving, please retain all parking receipts for expenses claims.

Accommodation and seminar spaces

All overnight accommodation, as well as and the meeting spaces where the seminar will take place are in the Conference Aston site.

Check in at the on-site hotel at Conference Aston can be made from **3pm on Friday 15 November.** This can be done at the UNISON seminar registration desk in the building between 3pm and 6pm, or at the main building reception outside of this. You must **check out by 11am on Sunday 17 November**. The hotel reception will be able to store any luggage until you depart the hotel, if this is required.

Health and Safety:

If you have requested a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP), the hotel have been instructed to go through this with you when you arrive check-in, if this does not happen, raise this either with the hotel directly or with any UNISON staff member, who will be able to arrange this.

UNISON staff contact details:
Sandra Jean-Baptiste – 07882 179 995 or s.jean-baptiste@unison.co.uk
Luke Ruby – 07816 539 227 or l.ruby@unison.co.uk

UNISON

Energy

Guidance for delegates, visitors, and staff

Welcome to the 2024 Energy Service Group Branch Seminar. The seminar weekend is based around a blend of information/education and practical engagement, through a combination of presentations and workshop sessions. The aim is for delegates go back to branches and workplaces equipped with more knowledge and shared expertise to progress the aims of the union and the Service Group, in the interests of members.

We try to maintain a relaxed and friendly atmosphere at the seminar. However, to establish and maintain a productive and collaborative working environment, delegates, staff, and workshop facilitators are asked and required to behave in accordance with UNISON's core value of respect for other people, including the hotel staff and service providers.

Working Together Guidelines

A key feature of trade union education is the value it places upon the knowledge, experience, and skills that each member brings with them to the seminar. It is important that participants feel they are equal to all others, and able to contribute. With this in mind, please:

- Listen to what others have to say and avoid being dismissive of any contribution.
- Wait until a speaker has finished their contribution and do not interrupt their train of thought.
- Always aim to have reasoned discussion, not an argument.
- Any criticism should be constructive, to help members develop confidence and knowledge.
- Contribute as clearly and concisely as possible, while trying not to dominate the discussion.
- Ensure that everyone wishing to speak is given the encouragement and opportunity to do so.
- It is important that members attending the seminar can speak openly problems they or their members have experienced in the knowledge that personal or sensitive information disclosed during the seminar is not repeated elsewhere. This must be respected.

As with all UNISON events, behaviour that is disrespectful or discriminatory of anyone's age, disability, gender, sexuality, race or ethnic origin, religion or creed, or similar personal characteristic is not tolerated.

We hope that everyone attending the seminar will enjoy networking and mixing with other delegates. However, as this event is funded from UNISON members' money, it is expected that delegates and staff will attend all the seminar sessions as appropriate.

Energy

Energy Service Group Branch Seminar 2024
15-17 November – Birmingham

Guidance Notes for Workshop Facilitators

The job of a Workshop Facilitator at a UNISON seminar is to ensure that the sessions run efficiently and effectively, and that delegates engage with the session in an appropriate and productive way.

Please remind delegates about UNISON's expected standards of behaviour as appropriate (included in this guide) and encourage delegates to make contributions to maximise participation through seeking to create an environment that is friendly and welcoming for them to do so.

Please conduct your session or workshop as you would like and in keeping with the manner expected of a UNISON event, but please consider asking delegates to introduce themselves when appropriate, which can include a mention their branch, their branch role, and the name of their employer.

When giving a presentation that includes slides or other visual aids, where possible please try to verbally contextualise the content of the slides, to assist those with hearing impairments.

The workshops that are hosted at this event are aimed to enable delegates to discuss the workshop exercise as listed in the programme.

When dividing the wider group of seminar attendees into sub-groups for exercises, please remember to ask each group to nominate a spokesperson who can feed back their findings to you at the end of the session as required.

Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes