

SEPT
2010

UNITARIAN WOMEN'S GROUP NEWSLETTER

Delegate report from the GA Annual Meetings April 2010

Barbara, Linda and Chris
setting up the UWG stall



I shall start with the issue of social responsibility and then mention other aspects of the 2010 Annual Meetings. Your congregation delegates will have reported back so I'll miss out all the business details.

Social responsibility

As most of you know, at the GA last year Cathy Masztalerz proposed, and Jean Mason seconded, a motion from the Women's Group that a Social Justice Officer should be appointed; the motion was passed with a big majority. Before this year's GA Anne Bodman wrote to Derek McAuley, the new Chief Officer. Here is Anne's letter and the reply she received.

Dear Mr. McAuley,

I am writing on behalf of the Unitarian Women's Group. At the last GA the Group proposed a motion that a Social Justice Officer should be recruited and this motion was passed.

As yet a Social Justice Officer has not been recruited by the Executive Committee and the UWG wish to raise this subject with you and to be given an answer by email. We would like to know the plans and timescales for this appointment.

During the last GA there was considerable support for a SJO and we as a Group are surprised that to date no action has been taken even though a new Ministry post has been advertised.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts and plans on the subject of the Social Justice Officer.

Yours sincerely
Anne Bodman, Administrator to the UWG

In this issue

Report from GA
Annual Meetings -
pg 1-3

Womankind - pg. 4

Application form for
UWG weekend 31st
October-1st
November - pg 5-6

World Economic
Forum Gender Gap
Report - pg. 7

After the War on
Drugs - pg 8

Diary Dates/
Contacts/
Subscription form -
pg. 9

Here is the reply from Derek McAuley:

Anne,

Thanks for your email.

The Executive Committee will be making a presentation on Thursday at the Annual Meetings on "Difficult Choices" which includes the two motions from 2009 on staff appointments— including yours urging the Executive Committee to appoint a social justice officer. This will be followed by a one hour session on the Sunday on how the strategy for the GA is to be taken forward. There will be opportunities for the views of attendees to be expressed.



As you know I took up post as Chief Officer on 30 November 2010 but before that I was GA Treasurer. The Executive Committee as "trustees" has a responsibility under charity law to manage to effectively manage its resources. There was no funding for a social justice post within the current budget. The current year has also been very difficult financially with a deficit in the Accounts of £28701. This was partly due to fall in income and also additional expenditure following the departure of the chief executive. The interim Chief Officer from June until my arrival was instructed to manage the current staffing not undertake developments.

Since my appointment the whole issue of social justice has been high on my agenda. It is something to which I am committed and have managed to devote some of my time. It is of course early days. The big social justice issues on my agenda have been the civil partnerships in religious premises, faith schools, the Robin Hood tax and nuclear proliferation. The first one came out of the blue and meant I had to respond quickly.

This period has proved a very useful in helping me think through what the GA really required if public affairs is identified as a strategic priority. This is my current evolving thinking but I would welcome the opportunity to talk to you at the annual meetings (as I was unable to attend your meeting last year):

If the GA wants to have a national media stance this must be based on issues of substance. Simply responding to events will be unlikely to get national media coverage. These require substantial work on specific topics.

Social justice issues are those that we may be able to make an impact but we have to be selective and prioritise. There are opportunities to raise additional funding for social justice work and to work with other organizations on specific projects.

The inter-relationship between social justice and public affairs and communications in terms of staffing capacity needs to be thought through carefully, which is one of the reasons why I have not moved to implement a communications/IT post.

One person cannot do everything and the relationship with the work of individual members of the Faith and Public Issues Commission as well as the Commission itself is crucial.

The EC decided not to build the day to day responsibilities for ministry and congregational support into the Chief Officer post therefore the need for the post of Director of Ministry (being undertaken by a volunteer since last summer). This has freed me up to do some of the social justice work, particularly the relationship building with other like minded organizations. This has also enabled me to consider what support I need to fulfil the GA's needs in this area.

I hope this reassures you that social justice has been taken forward even if the post has not been progressed.

Yours
Derek McAuley

This forms the background to my report back from the GA Annual Meetings 2010. At the first business meeting we heard about the difficult choices that face the movement with its overspend of £28,000 last year no shortage of aspirations. The executive committee has a 'shopping list' with an estimated cost of £140,000 so, as part of the consultation process, we were asked to fill in a 'Difficult Choices' questionnaire and return it two days later. We had to identify our three main aims out of eight for strategic direction, our top three priorities out of eight from the shopping list plus questions about finance.

One hundred and twenty questionnaires were completed and analysis of these will help the executive committee in further discussion and decision making. Social responsibility came out second from the bottom in each list. The full results are available at www.unitarian.org.uk

In the discussion which followed it was made very clear that social justice continues to be a major concern for all those present, and that good work is happening in this area. The Faith and Public Issues Commission is liaising at the highest level with other interfaith communities to discuss social issues. The Penal Affairs Panel also engages actively with social issues such as criminalisation of young offenders and illegal drugs; members of the panel have represented Unitarians on the Churches Criminal Justice Forum. From the floor it was suggested that much can be done on a local level, such as the Human Rights Group formed in the Macclesfield congregation; this group has adopted the Dongria Kondh community in India whose religious freedom is under threat.

The low position of social responsibility in the 'Difficult Decisions' questionnaire was not a vote against continuing our tradition of commitment to social justice but indicates that, at this time of financial constraint, it is a low priority for further spending at a national level at this time. A member of the EC commented that 'people feel that we're still doing it' with the work of the Panels for Faith Issues and for Penal Affairs and also at a local

level. Certainly, Geoff McAuley's letter to the UWG, the debate at the business meetings, the examples given of Unitarian engagement at a national and local level all show that the Unitarian commitment to social responsibility continues to be strong as ever.

Worship

The variety of worship experiences was impressive starting with the uplifting



Opening Ceremony organised solely by the youth movement. It opened with a rhythmic, and exciting performance from a samba drum band as the banners were paraded through the auditorium.



The theme was Living in the Now. It was developed through drama and music from drums, guitars and voices. By coincidence the community hymn, *Come and find the quiet centre*, was the one that the choir sang at the Anniversary Service the next evening.

This was a wonderful and moving service, led by Stephen Lingwood, with thought-provoking and inspirational words from Michael Dadson who, using an analogy of an airport, reflected on travel and baggage to encourage us to live fully through really being ourselves and recognising the power this gives us. Music from Ant Howe on the piano, David Dawson leading the choir and a quartet, community singing all

enhanced the experience of worshipping together.

In addition to these treats there were several smaller sessions in the early mornings and throughout the day involving meditation, Taizé chants, hymns, readings and a particularly interesting and enjoyable celebration of 40 years of the Worship Panel.

Talks

Nearly all the talks I attended were good but the highlight for me was the Penal Affairs Panel lecture by Steve Rolles, the Research Director of Transform Drug Policy Foundation. The subject was *Enlightened Attitudes to Illicit Drugs*. He was critical of current policy which is not an evidence-based public health policy but rather a response to public opinion. He likened its failure to that of the US Prohibition against alcohol (1920-33). Currently £3-4 billion is spent on enforcement not on public health issues. He proposed making the drugs legally (easy to do, cheap and the exact composition of the drug would be known) and making them available at centres where there would also be access to support structures. There would be a scale of government control at various levels depending on the nature of the drug. Users would be safer, there would be no-one left for criminal gangs to sell to, petty crime to gain money for drugs would be unnecessary. It was very convincing. Steve Rolles has written a book which is available online for free download at www.tdpf.org.uk. An edited video of the address is available at <http://go.podia.net/?c=1673>.

Conclusion

I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of attending the 2010 GA Annual Meetings, being able to spend time with friends and to talk with people from all over the UK. I should like to thank the UWG for the opportunity of being your delegate.

- Christine Thompson

Women's Voices

WOMANKIND believes it is important to exchange knowledge and experience, with our partners and with other organisations, to strengthen the impact of our work.

In March 2005, WOMANKIND hosted a side event at the annual review of the Commission on the Status of Women. Our event, focused on 'Women and Governance in times of conflict', brought together our partners from across the world.

WOMANKIND's in-country coordinator from Afghanistan felt lucky to be one of the few fortunate Afghans who had the opportunity to have her voice heard and to learn so much at such an international forum.

"I would like to thank WOMANKIND for providing me with this opportunity to join this great gathering of women. Being at [the event] I really learned a lot, and as a young Afghan started thinking that going back to my country, I have a lot to do. We must start working on the issues of women and should soon be able to bring something to such international events."



How we work

Change comes in small, brave steps, one person at a time.

WOMANKIND Worldwide enables women in developing countries to join together as they try to change things until there are so many girls and women walking and speaking as one that they cannot be ignored. Or forced back into silence again. Which small, brave steps women want to take are decided by the women themselves.

WOMANKIND Worldwide does not impose priorities invented in the UK. We are always guided by ordinary women in a specific context and what they want to change.

The benefits of working through local groups

We don't fly in ready-made solutions either. Instead, we work with local community groups to develop a range of practical solutions around local conditions, providing funding and support, and regularly visiting to monitor and evaluate the differences being made in women's lives.

Sharing what works and what doesn't

Many problems facing women living in poverty are similar, though culture, religion, geography and history can shape those problems in different ways. A success in Nicaragua should therefore be shared so that other women in, say, India, can learn from it, adapt it, and use it to transform their own lives if possible. WOMANKIND Worldwide makes these learning exchanges between partners possible.

Strategic alliances to change the big picture

As well as working on the ground, we push for change at national and international level by joining with other groups who also have influence. In this way, we help change the big picture for women as well as improve their daily lives.

If you are interested in the work of Womankind Worldwide, please visit their website: <http://www.womankind.org.uk/>

If vegetarian or other special dietary needs are required please indicate below.

Dietary requirements:

.....

Any other special needs

Ground Floor Room:

Preferred Room-mate:.....

Is this your first time at a UWG w/e? YES/NO

Further details of the conference programme will be sent out with confirmation of registration.

Unitarian Women's Group



AUTUMN WEEKEND CONFERENCE

29th October to 31st October 2010

Times of Change In Our Lives

Times of Change In Our Lives

Invitation to Great Hucklow

You are warmly invited to participate in the annual autumn weekend conference of the Unitarian Women's Group, to be held at The Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow, near Tideswell, in the wild and wonderful Derbyshire countryside. Non-members are welcome also.

The Theme

The title of the weekend is Times of Change In our Lives. Through Workshops and discussion we look at how we cope and thrive as women.

The Conference

The Conference will begin with supper on Friday and finish with lunch on Sunday. Attendance as a day visitor is also possible.

Accommodation

Accommodation is mainly in twin-bedded rooms with wash basin, though some have en-suite facilities, for which a supplement is payable. A further supplement is payable for single occupancy of a twin room. There are facilities for those with physical disabilities.

Grants

There are a limited number of discretionary grants available for women on low incomes.

Information

For further information contact: Anne Bodman on 01753 889431 bodmana@hotmail.co.uk

REGISTRATION FORM

Name:

Address:

.....

.....

Telephone:

Email

Full-Time Attendance

(Cost per person incl meals– please tick preferred room type)

Shared room with wash basin ☐ £102.00

Shared room with en-suite ☐ £117.00

Single room with en-suite..... ☐ £132.00

Single room with wash basin ☐ £117.00

Conference fee..... £10.00

Part-Time Attendance

Rates to be agreed with Nightingale Centre

Day Visitor

	Lunch	Dinner	Conference fee	Total
Friday	-	£10.00	£5.00 day	£
Saturday	£10.00	£12.50	£5.00 day	£
Sunday	£12.50	-	£5.00 day	£
Total				£

World Economic Forum Gender Gap

Women Leaders and Gender Parity Programme

Our Mission

Through the Women Leaders and Gender Parity Programme, the World Economic Forum is committed to promoting women's leadership and closing global gender gaps. The programme strives to increase the participation of women in the Forum's activities by ensuring their involvement as members in communities and inviting women leaders to be active contributors to the global dialogue.

The programme also aims to monitor progress of countries through benchmarking tools that measure the global gender gap and to showcase best practices in the business world for increasing gender diversity. This unique content is used to promote dialogue and catalyze action through Gender Parity Groups – multi-stakeholder communities of highly influential leaders (50% women and 50% men) committed to closing gender gaps.

Community Engagement

Global Gender Parity Group: The World Economic Forum's Global Gender Parity Group is a multistakeholder community of 100 highly influential and committed leaders – 50 women and 50 men – from business, politics, academia, media and civil society who believe that companies and countries will benefit by addressing the gender gap and optimizing the flow of talent.

Regional Gender Parity Groups: The World Economic Forum's Regional Gender Parity Groups are multistakeholder communities committed to closing the gender gap, each consisting of 50 leaders (25 women and 25 men). The four Regional Gender Parity Groups are in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Asia.

Women Leaders Community: The Women Leaders Community is drawn from the female participants of the various stakeholder groups convened at the World Economic Forum, brought together to collectively engage in dialogue and address current gender and diversity issues.

Benchmarking

The Global Gender Gap Report: The flagship report produced annually by the Women Leaders Programme provides a framework for capturing the magnitude of gender disparities around the world and aims to serve as a tool for benchmarking and tracking gender inequalities based on economic, political, education and health criteria.

The Corporate Gender Gap Report: This new study covers the world's largest employers in 20 countries and benchmarks them against the gender equality policies that most companies should have in place but are in fact widely missing.

Internal Diversity Practices

The World Economic Forum has established a strong record of increasing gender equality in its activities, most notably at the Annual Meeting where women's participation has risen from 9% in 2001 to 17% in 2008. It is the Forum's goal to maximize women's participation at the Annual Meeting and regional events, drawing from the pool of the highest-level women leaders in business, politics, academia, media and civil society.

Contact Information

For further information, please contact womenleaders@weforum.org.

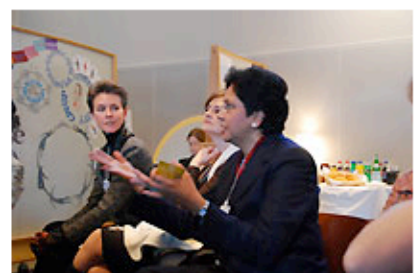
Global Gender Gap Index

Rank 2009	Country	Score*	Rank 2008
1	Iceland	0.828	4
2	Finland	0.825	2
3	Norway	0.823	1
4	Sweden	0.814	3
5	N.	0.788	5
6	Zealand	0.770	22
7	S. Africa	0.763	7
8	Denmark	0.760	8
9	Ireland	0.758	6
10	Philippines	0.750	16
	Lesotho		

*0 to 1 scale: 0=inequality, 1=equality

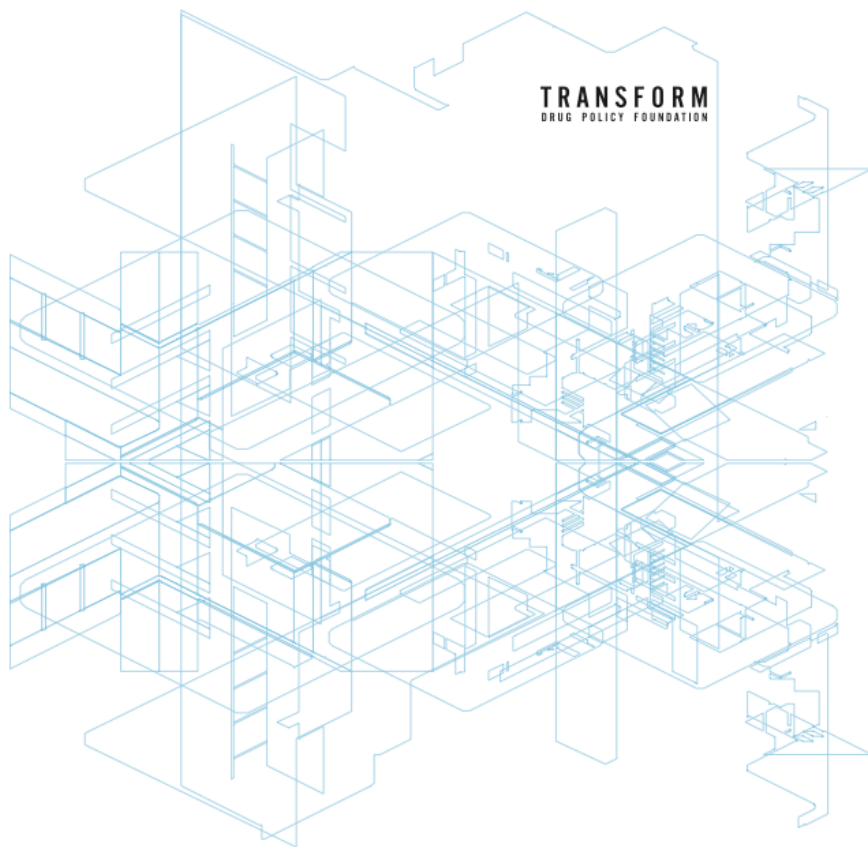
Gender Gap 2009 Downloads

- [Full Report \(PDF\)](#)
- [Rankings: PDF](#)
- [Country Profiles and Highlights](#)
- [Press release](#)



If you wish to download the full report, ranking, country profiles and highlights, please go to:

<http://www.weforum.org/en/Communities/Women%20Leaders%20and%20Gender%20Parity/index.htm>



After the War on Drugs:

Blueprint for Regulation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

After the GA April 2010 Penal Affairs Panel lecture from Steve Rolles from Transform Drug Policy Foundation, we thought you may wish to read the full report which is available at:

http://www.tdpf.org.uk/Policy_General_AftertheWaronDrugsReport.htm

DIARY DATES

**29-31 October 2010 - UWG Annual Meeting
@ Great Hucklow**

* * *

**31 March 2011 - UWG Annual Subs due for
2009/10 - Please send to Stephanie Ramage,
address in UWG Contacts box below.**

**If you require a receipt, please send SAE with
your payment.**

* * *

**15-18th April 2011 - General Assembly @
Swansea**



UWG Contacts

Production Editor:

Danielle Wilson
81 Rathcoole Gardens
London N8 9NE
Tel: 020-8348 6313
E: danielle@daniellewilson.com

Administrator:

Anne Bodman
12 Laurel Road
Chalfont St Peter
Bucks SL9 9SJ
Tel: 01753-889 431
E: bodmana@hotmail.co.uk

Membership Secretary & Treasurer:

Stephanie Ramage
122 Bond Street
Macclesfield SK11 6RE
Tel: 01625-423 417
E: stephanie.ramage@btinternet.com

with Margaret Hamer
315 Milton Road
Cambridge CB4 1XQ
Tel: 01223-420 717
E: email@mhamer.fsnet.co.uk



Please join us & help
by keeping your
membership
subscription up-to-
date

UNITARIAN WOMEN'S GROUP MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Name	
Address (Line 1)	
Address (Line 2)	
Address -City/Town	
Address - County	
Address - Post Code	
Home Telephone Number	
Mobile Telephone Number	
Email Address (Important for communications)	

Subscription Fee

£15 per annum (£10 concessions)

Cheque Payable to:
Unitarian Women's Group

Send cheque to;

Mrs. S. Ramage
122 Bond Street
Macclesfield
SK11 6RE