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## UNA LASER April 2022 Newsletter

### From our Chair, Trisha Rogers



#### Derek Smith

Hilary Evans has written [this tribute](#) to Derek Smith, who joined UNA in 1953 and has recently died. Derek was active and inspirational in several branches, latterly Twickenham and Richmond, and a successful campaigner on UN issues. He received the LASER Long Service Award in 2020, and will be much missed.

## Campaigning

### Arms Sales to Saudi Arabia

While we continue to be horrified by events in Ukraine and must keep trying to help and [campaigning on this issue](#), we must not forget other parts of the world with avoidable suffering. Our Campaigns Officer, Valeria Minisini, reminds us of the continuing suffering in Yemen and the awful contribution being made to this by arms that the UK has sold to Saudi Arabia. See her article [on our website](#) and lobby your MP for the UK both to restore aid to the suffering people of Yemen and to cease the terrible trade in arms to Saudi Arabia (by far our biggest arms customer)

### COP26 Follow-Up

According to the Climate Coalition (of which LASER is a member) the impacts of climate change are getting worse and hitting those least responsible the hardest. Do [write to your MP](#) to stress that it is important that we keep up the momentum, following COP26.

## Committee and Branch Support

In these zooming times, many branches have found it helpful to run joint virtual events with other branches. But it is easier at in-person events to make useful contacts and pick up ideas. We therefore very much look forward to seeing many of you at our Spring Council (our Policy Conference) on 23rd April (see details below.) Do [use our website](#) to note the branches close to you and ask to be put in touch with them on that day. You might find it helpful first to look at the ideas we have collected from branches of their wide range of activities and structures; these are [on our website](#). If you would like further support for your branch, please [contact us](#).

Some branches are having difficulty finding suitable banking arrangements. Banks that we hear might be helpful are Virgin Money and TSB. Do [contact us](#) with any other suggestions.

I shall be having surgery later this year, so would very much like to have a Vice Chair to work with me. The exact responsibilities of this post can be adapted to the postholder. If you might be interested in being co-opted onto the Executive Committee and taking on this role, please [contact me](#).

## Newsletters

Many thanks to Peter and Sarah Webster for mailing out this Newsletter. If you might like to help with future mailing (including being given useful training in Mailchimp), or with editing the Newsletter, please [let me know](#). The deadline for announcements for the next Newsletter to [reach me](#) is 11th May.

## Forthcoming Events

### Policy Conference

Our **Spring Council** will be our **2022 Policy Conference**. This will be held at [Bermondsey Village Hall](#) (very close to London Bridge station and Jubilee tube) [SE1 3TD](#) and by zoom on **Saturday 23rd April, at 14:00**. If you plan to come in person, please register [here](#) to help us judge numbers for refreshments, though last minute attendees are very welcome too! If you plan to join us by Zoom, please register [here](#); In order to run a hybrid event, we may need an additional digital projector. If you can lend us one, [please let me know](#). There are a couple of free parking spaces linked to the hall. Please [let me know](#) if you would like one, and why.

It's your chance to be part of making the Region's policy on topics as diverse as Ukraine, Climate Change, Nuclear Weapons, and the UK Aid Budget (amongst many other topics) that we can then take to the government and our M.P.s. Full details here: [link](#)

### Luton UNA

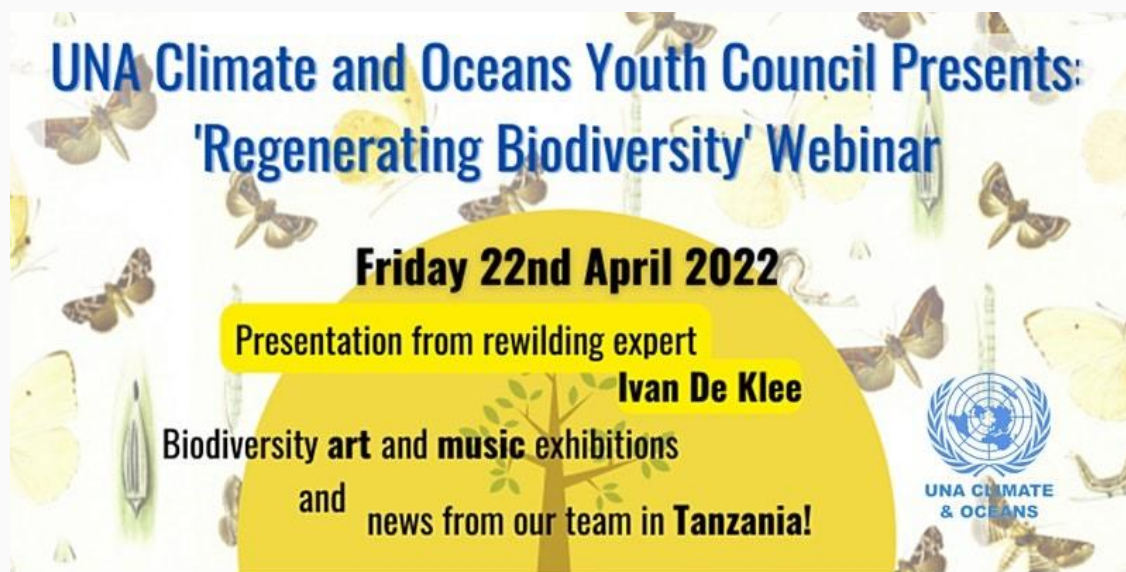
On **Monday 18th April, 18:30 - 21:00**, Luton UNA is holding an *Iftar Party* on *Teachings of Ramadan for Life and Society*.

On **Thursday 19th May, 9:30 - 12:30**, they are holding a virtual workshop on *Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage and Honour-based Violence*.

On **Saturday 14th May, 17:00 - 18:00**, they are holding a virtual workshop on *The Adoption of Children and Equal Opportunities*, with **Councillor Tahmina Saleem**, Chair of Luton Council Adoption Committee. [Here](#) is the zoom link.

All the events will be chaired by **Dr Nazia Khanum**, whom you should [contact](#) in order to register and for further details.

### Climate and Oceans UNA



On **Friday 22nd April, 17:00 - 19:00**, in the context of the UN Biodiversity Conference, UNA Climate and Oceans will run a youth webinar on *Regenerating Biodiversity*, with speaker **Ivan De Klee** of Knepp Castle Estate, an artistic presentation by **Cosmo Sheldrake**, local project presentation by **Benson Daud**, from Tanzania and a presentation of **Anya Kennedy's** Digital Art Exhibition Biodiversity Tour by **Lara Hauge**. The event will be cohosted by **Natasha Barnes** (UK) and **Kian Birkholtz** (South Africa). For further details and to register please see [here](#).

### Bexhill and Hastings UNA

On **Friday 22nd April at 11:30**, UNA Bexhill and Hastings will hold a Peace Pole gathering to at the Bexhill Peace Pole, Galley Hill.

On **Saturday 28th May, 10:00-12:00 and 14:00 - 16:00**, they will hold a coffee morning and **Open Organic Fruit and Vegetable Garden** at 13 Thornbank Crescent, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN39 3ND. Entrance costs £2, to include coffee or tea and home-made biscuits to raise funds for local UNA branch.

For more information on this branch see [their Facebook page](#).

### Canterbury UNA

On **Friday 22nd April at 18:00**, Canterbury UNA are hosting an Earth Day 2022 event with **Michael Vince** reviewing how the 76th General Assembly is tackling the **Our Common Agenda** challenges followed by **Professor Richard Norman** examining how local groups are **Addressing Biodiversity within the SDG framework**. The link to join is [here](#).

### Warwick District UNA

On **Monday 25th April at 19:00**, Warwick District UNA will be hosting **Dr Maria Varaki** to discuss **How the International Criminal law is administered when atrocities and genocide are committed** and relating this to the current situation in Ukraine. This [link](#) will be open from 18.45

### Greater Lincolnshire UNA

On **Tuesday 26th April at 19:00**, Greater Lincolnshire UNA are hosting an online discussion on **SDG 6 Clean Water and Sanitation** with **Dr Fabio Pulizzi**, Chief Editor of Nature Water. Please register [here](#) to join.

### Harpenden UNA

On **Saturday 7th May at 10:30**, Harpenden UNA is hosting an in-person event on **The fate of the World's Refugees in 2022** at the Salvation Army Hostel, Leyton Green, AL5 2TG. The speaker will be **James Bullman, UNHCR**. Please register [here](#). If you have any queries, please contact [UNA Harpenden Chair](#).

### Westminster UNA

On **26th May**, Westminster will host their **18<sup>th</sup> Conference and Ceremony to mark the International Day of UN Peacekeepers**. The conference will be online only. The ceremony at the Cenotaph will follow its traditional format. Military units returned from UN duties will participate together with the Band of Grenadier Guards.

For more information on the events of this branch, see [their website](#).


### Streatham & Clapham UNA


On **Saturday 25th June at 14:00**, as part of the **International Year of Sustainable Mountain Development** Streatham & Clapham UNA will be showing some short videos about lives and livelihoods in the Western Ghats mountain range in South India. This will be followed by an opportunity over Zoom to discuss related issues with people from the area. Contact [Sarah Webster](#) for more details and joining link.


### LASER Summer Council

**Climate Change – Impact, Reports & Solutions**

**Summer Council**  
**July 9, 2022**  
**10:30 – 17:00**  
**Salvation Army Hall**  
**Leyton Green**  
**Harpenden AL5 2TG**  
**Entry: Free**  
**Please register:**  
<https://una-laser-climate-change.eventbrite.co.uk>

  
**UNA LONDON & SOUTHEAST REGION**



  
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**Session 1: Impact of climate change in Bangladesh and the Pacific islands**  
**Session 2: Reports on climate action for the United Kingdom**  
**Session 3: Sustainable and green growth for the United Kingdom**

**United Nations Association London & South East Region (UNA LASER)**

The LASER Summer Council - ***Climate Change: Impact, Reports, Solutions*** - will be hosted by UNA Harpenden on **9th July, 10:30 - 17:00** at the Salvation Army, Leyton Green, Harpenden AL5 2TG. Entry will be free. Please register [here](#) to join us in meeting together as a region again.

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