



ANNUAL REPORT 2022



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Annual Report 2022

1. Background

The Greener Jobs Alliance (GJA) was launched in 2010 to campaign around the issue of the jobs and skills needed to transition to a low carbon economy. Our work combines supporting local projects through to advocacy at regional, national, and international level. We are a loose coalition of trades unions, student organisations, environmental groups, and individual supporters. We believe that the need for worker / union engagement with the climate crisis means the GJA helps to fill a large gap between workplace environmental awareness and practice, and large-scale climate demands and policies.

[About – Greener Jobs Alliance](#)

2. 2022 AGM and work plan

GJA held its AGM on 8th February 2022. Guest speakers at the AGM included Olivia Blake, Shadow Minister for Climate Change, along with Unite national officer Des Quinn and Senior rep Frank Duffy. There were 60 attendees.

While the GJA followed through with the 2022 work plan, the year was distinguished by a series of events that have set a very different context within which our work has been carried out. Among these are:

- A sharply deepening cost of living crisis, adding an unprecedented level of inflation to the economic hardships already experienced in the decade-plus of austerity government, plunging increasing numbers into poverty, whether in work or not.
- The war in Ukraine which, even leaving aside the complexities of the situation itself, has had a huge impact on the global economy, in particular the differing responses to the unavailability of gas supplies from Russia.
- An energy crisis arising from both of the previous points, spiralling costs and scarcity, which might in any rational society precipitate and accelerate the needed transition to renewable energy but has instead been used as a pretext for doubling down on fossil fuels.
- Widespread industrial action as the only sensible response to the multiple crises facing our society, with increasing numbers of workers and their unions rediscovering the long-dormant power that collective action can wield.

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All of these factors have impacted upon GJA's objectives of progressing towards a decarbonised society, characterised by millions of new green jobs, and the training in the skills those jobs require. Worsening standards of living have only made the call for a vibrant green economy more urgent, while support for striking workers has lent a more abrasive edge to our activities.

For all that, we have in 2022 made progress on the cornerstones of our work programme:

- Green jobs and skills development, including the introduction of Green Bargaining Officers.
- Bringing more regional TUC and union branches into the framework of a green skills economy.
- Development and roll out of retrofit plans and education.
- Continuing the work of TUCAN.

These are described in more detail in the next section.

3. Main 2022 activities

This section provides a non-exhaustive description of key GJA activities during 2022; links to relevant material are provided for further information.

3.1.COP27

With Egypt as hosts, and UAE earmarked for 2023, many feel that the COP is not worthwhile, serving specific interests rather than solving the crisis, as well as by implication endorsing corrupt regimes with appalling human rights records. Progress on decarbonising proved to be somewhere between slow and non-existent, as vested interests and an army of fossil fuel overwhelmed climate common sense. Affirming natural gas as a so-called 'transition fuel' sums up the prevailing mentality.

At its December meeting, GJA was pleased to hear a report back from Jenny Cooper from NEU, who attended the COP, and spoke eloquently about the frustrations and struggles of a vast array of indigenous peoples from across the globe who come together in solidarity to take on the power of corporate interests. [Issue 43](#) of the newsletter contains more COP reports back and links to Jenny's other reports on her experience.

3.2.TUCAN

The Trade Union Clean Air Network (TUCAN) was set up by the GJA and the Hazards Campaign to provide a worker voice on air quality. We have continued to press for the inclusion of occupational air pollution as a key element of national and local air quality action plans.

13 trade unions have signed up for to the TUCAN Charter and during 2022 two newsletters were published. TUCAN is a member of the Healthy Air Coalition which campaigns for improved legal standards.

In 2021 the Environment Act finally became law. The section in the Environment Act 2021 on air pollution fails to implement the standards adopted by the World Health Organisation so we will continue to campaign for better legislation. During the year TUCAN organised and participated in several events to raise awareness of the risks. A workshop at the Hazards Conference to support workplace monitoring initiatives and projects with community groups to identify high risk locations were organised.

Further details of TUCAN activities can be found at [TUCAN | Greener Jobs Alliance](#)

3.3.Just Transition survey and Green Bargaining Officers

The TUC with the help of the Greener Jobs Alliance has published a survey of local authorities to find out whether they have consulted trade unions on climate policies. The survey has gone out to councils in the Yorkshire Region, London Region, Scotland, and Wales. It asked a total of 21 questions covering climate policies, skills, procurement, supply chains, and in-house services. The response rate was unfortunately low, with 13 out of 88 surveys returned. Less than half demonstrated TU involvement in climate and green skills policies, which could itself be a factor in the low number of returns. A detailed breakdown of the results of the survey can be found in a GJA publication calling for comprehensive plans in every local authority to address the climate and cost of living crises in the UK, titled '[Dont-wait-to-be-asked](#)'.

The appointment of Green Bargaining Officers became a prominent issue towards the end of the year. Scotland has two, and both Yorkshire & Humber and Wales are also looking at creating one. GJA held a special meeting on the subject in December, *Greener Work: the role of the Green Bargaining Officer*, that included speakers from a number of regions. TUC nationally is, at time of writing, seeking to recruit two Just Transition Project Officers.

3.4.Retrofit

GJA has published an important document providing guidance on retrofit, [Getting the union voice heard on green jobs and skills](#) : *A Trade Union Guide to action on local authority retrofit and energy*, that has been extremely well received.

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Four London hubs have been identified, organised into working groups, including the finances and jobs required. GJA's Graham Petersen is a TU rep on the Central London hub, but none of the others have union representation. Wandsworth council has £3M to retrofit eight schools, is setting up a Green Skills Academy, and has plans to retrofit 4,000 homes in the borough.

A workshop on retrofit was held at University of Westminster on 18th November, covering Camden, Islington and Wandsworth, organised and hosted by GJA/UCU's Linda Clarke. With over 80 attendees, the workshop brought together unions, employers, architects and educators to discuss the need for large scale retrofitting of social housing. Sessions included assessment of the social housing situation, the construction sector and the role of Further Education colleges in vocational education and training. A recording of the event can be seen [here](#).

UoW also hosted a delegation of 50 women from North American Tradeswomen Building Bridges between 9-19 June 2022, to learn about the lives and working conditions of tradeswomen in other parts of the world, and to share best practices for women gaining greater access to careers in the trades. Results so far show just how diverse the impetus for zero carbon construction is in different parts of the world. A report can be found in [issue 38](#) of the newsletter.

TUC is also putting a course together, which would add to the available materials. Unite has a retrofit task force in the Yorkshire & Humber regions and is seeking to establish similar task forces on a nation-wide basis.

3.5.TUC fringe meeting

Greener Jobs Alliance, in conjunction with Campaign Against Climate Change Trade Union Group, hosted a fringe meeting at the 2022 TUC Congress in Brighton. Held on 18th October and titled *Urgent Action, Long Term Solutions: Climate, Cost of Living and Industrial Action*, the meeting was aimed at meeting the objective of both hosting organisations in light of the wave of industrial action, to bring together the cost of living, energy and climate crises, and the need for solidarity across the many campaigns supporting people in these various struggles. Speakers at the meeting were Linda Clarke (GJA and UCU), Eddie Dempsey (RMT), Suzanne Jeffery (CACCTU) and Jackie Simpkins (War on Want). Tahir Latif of GJA and CACCTU chaired.

At the end of the year, GJA, CACCTU and the Climate Justice Coalition jointly wrote to the General Secretaries of the unions involved in industrial action, pledging our unequivocal solidarity and support.

3.6.TUC motions

The motion that created the most debate, and division, at the 2022 TUC was motion 4 moved by GMB which called, against the background of the war in Ukraine, for an increase in arms spending as the mechanism for protecting and increasing jobs. Leaving aside the controversy and dwelling here only on the impact its passage has on a green skills economy, it can be noted that the motion effectively overturned the 2017 policy on a Defence Diversification strategy in the spirit of the Lucas Plan, a key pillar in developing a just transition towards climate jobs. The text of the motion can be found [here](#) as Composite 2.

4. Communications and Newsletters

This year we have taken the Newsletter monthly and institutionalised our annual comment on TUC motions that do - or could - have a climate dimension, producing hard copies for Congress itself. Within our overall approach of the need for massive transformative state investment with trade union and community engagement to make the fastest possible Just transition, we are trying to cover a number of things regularly.

- Capacity: The policy positions taken by unions and Parties and how they organise around Just transition. This can include ads for jobs, courses, links to reports.
- Aspects of transition: skills agenda, retrofit and construction, transport and clean air including how local government can organise.
- Mobilisation: actions and initiatives to pull the movement together.
- Global developments that we can learn from/need to respond to.

The number of subscribers has increased steadily, to 754, up from 629 last year.

In the year up to February 16 we had 11,102 hits on the site, slightly up on last year and just under double our reach in 2017. But direct hits on regular Newsletters were just over 1800, which we should aim to increase substantially this year, partly by everyone circulating contacts and networks and using social media more adventurously. Blog posts averaged 100-200 hits each. Our greatest hit this year was the recording of Mick Lynch talking about the need for an environmentally sustainable railway, which had nearly 700.

We have developed the Debate Blog, but this hasn't turned out quite the way we'd expected. We have had a number of useful and thought-provoking contributions, but these have very rarely led to follow up discussions. At a point at which there is a vast quantity of reading anyone could do, and the tendency to get drawn into the most vituperative available argument that triggers us, combined with the time honoured habit in the movement of suppressing differences in the interests of an apparent unity, trying to hold a debate on facts with elements of nuance might be seen as either divisive or dull; so we probably need to set these up in advance, with more than one contribution on any given topic. We have significant debates inside the current edition on transport, which could all be developed on the blog.

5. GJA 2022 Financial Summary

The GJA ended the 2022 calendar year with a **balance of £9,656.90**.

Details of the accounts are available for inspection.

The total income for 2021 was £3,510. This came from 2 sources. The Glastonbury server team was able to raise money for the first time since 2019 after the festival covid break. The team raised £1,710. Unite funded our newsletter to the tune of £1,800 to cover the cost of production. We are grateful to both organisations for their contributions.

The total expenditure was £3,366.30 the bulk of which was for the newsletter and communications.

6. GJA Post Holders in 2022

Chair – Quinn Runkle (SOS-NUS)

Secretary – Tahir Latif (ex-PCS)

Treasurer – Graham Petersen (BWTUC)

Newsletter Editor – Paul Atkin (NEU)

Steering Group – Linda Clarke (UCU), Denis Fernando (Friends of the Earth), Carl Jerromes (Unite), Anna Markova (TUC), Sam Mason (PCS), Pete Murry (Green Party TU Group), Philip Pearson (Unite), Marianne Quick (UCU)

Web Designer – Wendy Mayes

Tahir Latif
GJA Secretary
February 2023

GJA Work plan for 2023

During 2023, GJA will build further on the work carried out during 2022. We will continue our traditional grassroots activity of working with many local, regional and sectoral campaigns around the UK on issues such as retrofit, future energy policy and public transport, as well as campaigning on climate issues and in support of industrial action nationally. We can identify the main contextual elements that will underpin the work plan as follows:

- *Likelihood of an election in the next two years* – 2022 proved to be a landmark year for the Conservative government, with the bar for their achievements being set ever lower: three Prime Ministers, economic disarray and abuse of asylum seekers being just some ‘highlights’. From our perspective, we have seen that their only answer to unions inevitable demands for economic justice in the face of the cost of living crisis is to legislate to restrict strikes, while their only response to the climate crisis is to try and outlaw legitimate protest. With a Labour government an inevitability, our focus needs to shift to influencing the as-yet not fully formed policies that government will implement, as well as continuing to advocate for more radical transformation that reflects the true scale of the current crises.
- *Government support for free market solutions* – this will be a key site of struggle if Labour comes to power, as there is a tendency for Labour government’s to retreat into minor ‘reforms’ that leave the basic edifice of the market untouched. Worse is the possibility that Labour might present itself as a party that can ‘run capitalism’ better than the Tories. There are promising ideas in their initial climate policies such as the billions promised for a comprehensive retrofit programme, and these need to be drawn out to their logical conclusions – a decarbonised energy system in public ownership – not made into a vehicle for money to pour into the private sector. The lessons of previous Labour government’s PFI and PPP efforts need to be learned.
- *Widespread industrial action* – the rediscovery during 2022 of the powerful impact that industrial action can have has been one of the positives to be taken from an otherwise depressing year. Similarly promising is the level of public support, for so long manipulated into anti-union fervour by the media, as the sheer scale of the economic crisis has, in the public mind, more than justified the strike action taken. As industrial action spreads into ever more areas of the economy, we need to make the case that a green economy, with thousands of good-paying climate jobs, is not just a ‘nice to have’ because of the climate crisis, but that climate justice is actually synonymous with social and economic justice. They are the same struggle and constitute a single coherent solution to our multiple crises.

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- *Trade union policies* – following two years that have been dominated by regrettably regressive motions in the climate area, we need grassroots activists – who have a far greater insight into the real needs of members than vested leadership interests often do – to become organised and coordinated so that genuinely progressive motions that advocate for climate jobs as the source of long term job security can be passed, in the interests of workers in all sectors of the economy.

Within this context, GJA activities to be actioned during 2023 must include (but not be limited to):

1. **Continue to develop existing campaigns** – this includes
 - i) *Green Bargaining Officers* – the gradual adoption of dedicated Green Bargaining Officers needs to be built upon, highlighting the best practice of those areas that have already recruited GBOs.
 - ii) *Retrofit campaign* – continue to support this key demand in regions across the country and disseminate the work already done on developing training courses.
 - iii) *TUCAN* – continue to work with other groups for better legislation than that which has emerged in recent years.
2. **Green Jobs and Skills initiatives** – further develop and campaign for the green skills required for a climate-oriented workforce, work with other groups on local, regional and sectoral initiatives, highlight the educational needs for training in the skills required, including through the use of the previously circulated survey and soliciting more responses to build a comprehensive picture.
3. **Union policy development** – work to bridge the schism in union approaches to the climate imperative. Continue to use the blog space to host civil debates on critical points of difference around issues such as oil and gas, nuclear, aviation, supply chains etc. Seek to take these debates into public meetings to inform union policies, and including Labour and Green party conferences, and the TUC.
4. **Exploit our methods of communication to greater effect** – this will include seeking more participation from our contacts and supporters, as well as greater use of social media outlets than has previously been the case.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
14TH MARCH 2023
11.00-13.00


AGENDA

1. Introduction	Chair and Secretary	11.0
2. Labour and Climate	Clive Lewis MP Q&A	11.10
3. A National Climate Service	Hannah David Q&A	11.45
4. Just Transition Officers	Anna Markova Q&A	12.0
5. Net Zero Court Decision	Niall Toru Q&A	12.15
6. Present annual report and work plan	Secretary	12.30
7. General discussion	All	12.40

Greener Jobs Alliance

Green Jobs ----- Just Transition ----- Employment Rights

Annual General Meeting, Tuesday 14th March 2023, 11.00-13.00

In person at  HQ, Carlow Street, London NW1 or online via Teams link

Guest speakers on

Labour and climate:



Clive Lewis MP
Labour MP for
Norwich South

A National Climate Service:



Hannah David
PCS Vice-President
and Chair of PCS
Climate Change &
Environment
Committee

Net Zero Court victory:



Niall Toru
Senior Lawyer
Friends of the Earth
England, Wales &
Northern Ireland

Plus Anna Markova (TUC) on Just Transition Officers, Q&A, discussion, debate, plan of action for 2023

Register for attendance at Tahirlatif51@icloud.com