



Photo by Gonz DDL on Unsplash

Editorial: Meet the New Plan - Same as the Old Plan

The Government's **Powering Up Britain Report** doubles down on all the structural problems that led to their High Court defeat in September.

Shapps's update is still based primarily on techno fixes; **Great British Nuclear**, **Carbon Capture, Usage and Storage** and a **Net Zero Hydrogen Fund**. All three of these are based on untested and hopeful technological punts instead of going hell for leather for renewables.

On this, they simply restate existing targets, and there is no mention of onshore wind at all; the cheapest form of energy generation, the quickest to build and connect to the grid and overwhelmingly popular too. Perhaps they have a death wish.

On insulation, they aim just to tweak market incentives at a micro level in the hope that consumers will lead by demand (with those that can afford it going first) so there can be a scattering of penny packet conversions to generate business for half trained white van men. What could possibly go wrong?

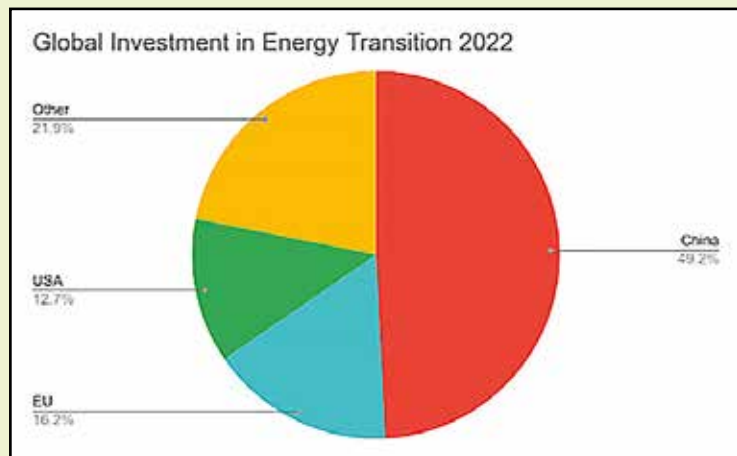
On transport, 26% of UK CO2 emissions and plateaued for a decade, there is nothing about switching from private cars to public transport, from individual to social forms of travel, nothing about redesigning cities or new developments around walkability and community facilities to reduce car dependence, nothing about investment in upgrading rail and urban tramways; just a presumption that we just need to switch from petrol/diesel cars to electric vehicles (EVs).

Although Labour has also bought into CCUS, "new nuclear" and hydrogen, current plans would at least call time on new oil and gas exploration in the North Sea, unblock onshore wind, invest ten times as much into Port infrastructure for floating offshore wind as the Tories have earmarked, ensure a zero emissions standard for new build homes and put serious money into insulation; which would make more of a dent in carbon emissions and fuel poverty. They would also seek to match the state subsidy given to investors by the US and EU to prevent deindustrialisation in sectors like automotive and steel manufacture.

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Labour's proposed £28 billion a year into the transition would bring the UK up to about the average level in the EU.



Figures from Bloomberg cited in [Tooze](#).

This would be a step forward, but not enough.

As [Adam Tooze has noted](#), to make the energy transition the world needs to be investing \$4 trillion annually. At present we are investing just above a quarter of that and, as Tooze points out, *"the only country that over the last decade has come anywhere close to spending, lending and investing on the required scale is China"*, which last year accounted for almost half the global effort.

A reallocation of the sums currently allocated to war preparation in the West/Global North is probably the only way to match this, which would be *"win, win"* all round.

As Fatih Birol of the [International Energy Agency](#) has pointed out *"no country is an energy island and energy transitions will be more costly and slow if countries do not work together."*

Paul Atkin (Editor)

Our Power

GJA is pleased to host an open meeting on the important [Our Power report on a just transition for North Sea Oil workers](#).

Platform will be presenting the report at an online meeting on 19 April at 1pm

There will be plenty of scope for discussion and debate.

Register to attend by emailing tahirlatif51@icloud.com



Photo Creative Commons

TUC report launch - Public transport fit for the climate emergency



Rush hour in Copenhagen. Photo Colville-Andersen

As we went to press this new report by the TUC, RMT, ASLEF, TSSA and Unite with Transport for Quality of Life was being launched at the Mechanics Institute in Manchester with Andy Burnham, Mick Lynch, Mick Whelan (ASLEF General Secretary), Bobby Morton (Unite national officer), the report author Lisa Hopkinson and TUC policy officer Kam Gill and other speakers.

The report sets out that the investment required could generate 140,000 direct jobs in public transport and hundreds of thousands more in construction and manufacture.

We will have a full report in the next edition Ed.

Reducing car mileage by 4% would reduce emissions more than from electrifying the entire bus fleet

XR THE BIG ONE

Demo Events

Friday 21 April

“People’s Pickets” outside government departments.

CACCTU, Fuel Poverty Action, Stop Rosebank, Just Stop Oil and Biofuelwatch and more will be at the *“Department for Energy Security and Net Zero”* (DESNZ).

Activists will be there from 7am to allow engagement with workers as they arrive. The “pickets” will continue throughout the day until 6pm, though key times are likely to be 12 noon to 2pm when workers are coming and going, and activists coming for the day are most likely to be around. At 3pm there will also be an ‘opening ceremony’ in Parliament Square.

PCS Union are supporting the action but will not be asking members to come out during core hours, only at lunchtime. “People’s Pickets” are to be inclusive and accessible, and won’t block access to the buildings.

Some trade unionists will be planning to attend other picket sites with their local groups or specific campaigns. There is a map [here](#) showing the locations of the different government departments.

On Saturday 22

The **trade union hub** will be opposite the south end of the Houses of Parliament, just past ‘Old Palace Yard’. GJA and CACCTU will be there along with XR TU and other trade union climate groups. We’ll have speakers and discussion from 11-1pm, about how trade unions and climate activists can and must work together, the solutions we need, and those we don’t. Please come and join us if you can!

From 1pm there will be a **Trade Union bloc** on the march for biodiversity – please bring your union flags and banners.

Sunday 23

will be busy as the London marathon goes past Parliament Square. The **trade union hub** will be a meeting point for leafleting about the importance of trade union organising and the connections between the different issues and crises facing us.

Monday 24

“People’s Pickets” again, so a range of activities are happening outside government departments as on Friday, as well as Parliament, with MPs returning.

For updates and general information about the four days, see the main [XR website](#).



Photo: Mick Holder

Gigafactories Update

It has been identified by the Unite Automotive sector that a major problem in the transition from producing Internal Combustion Engine Vehicles to producing Electric Vehicles (EVs) is the supply chain of batteries for the EV production. In January 2023, Britishvolt went into administration. It was planning to build a giga-battery factory in Northumberland to deliver low-carbon batteries on the roadmap to decarbonising the industry sector. At the time, Unite national officers in the Automotive sector raised concerns that there were no stand-alone factories in the UK making batteries for EVs to assist the transition into producing EVs. They highlighted the lack of competent industrial strategy by the government to protect jobs in the UK automotive sector.

Britishvolt has been bought out of administration by Recharge Industries, an Australian battery start up that is backed by Scale Facilitation, a New York based investment vehicle. The fact that Recharge Industries is a start-up rather than an established player has raised concerns given the problems encountered by Britishvolt, and the difficulties it faced accessing funding.

The US, EU and China are investing heavily in domestic battery production for their Automotive companies that are transitioning to producing EVs. However, the UK Government is adopting the approach of leaving it to the market.

The UK Battery Industrialisation Centre (UKBIC) is based in Coventry. It is a publicly funded battery product development facility. It states that 'it can be accessed by any organisation with existing or new battery technology, if that technology can bring green jobs and prosperity to the UK'. The UKBIC site is part of the Faraday Battery Challenge (FBC), a Government programme to fast track the development of cost-effective, high-

performance, durable, safe, low-weight and recyclable batteries, according to its promotion literature.

Reports earlier this month in the Financial Times, suggested that the owners of Jaguar Land Rover, Tata Motors, will build a giga-battery factory in either Spain or Somerset. They have asked UK ministers to support the proposed investment in Somerset with government funding of upwards of £500 million, giving the government 'weeks' to respond. These talks are said to be ongoing.

Any new companies allowed to follow the viciously anti-union Tesla model would undercut pay and conditions across the sector. Tesla opposes workers joining a union. The UAW reports that wages are lower in Tesla sites, and working conditions are significantly more dangerous. Attempts by Tesla workers to form a union, driven by cases of racism, sexism and workplace misconduct are being resisted by CEO Elon Musk. In Europe, the new Tesla 'gigafactory' battery plant in Berlin pays 20% less than the industry norm.

Carl Jerromes UNITE



Battery Recycling

New jobs created in emerging parts of the automotive sector are not like-for-like replacements for those lost in traditional manufacturing, and the components supply chain. Specialist technicians will outnumber manufacturing roles; reversing traditional occupation ratios in car plants and component sites. Consequently, significant re-skilling and upskilling training will be needed for the maximum number of the existing workforce to fit these roles. Unite's research shows that 42% of its members in the automotive sector plan to still be working in it beyond 2030.

The first wave of lithium ion batteries are approaching the end of their 'first life' use, but currently, only 5% of EV batteries are recycled.



Solar Parking Lot. Photo: Dennis Schroeder

This has a negative impact on the environment; accelerating the extraction of core component raw materials.

Lithium ion batteries are made of lithium, nickel, cobalt, copper, and graphite. It will become more economical to extract raw materials from first-use EV batteries when it can be done at scale. This will be possible from the mid 2020's onwards, as more first use EV batteries become available. The Faraday Institute forecasts that recycling could provide up to 12% of the demand for lithium for EVs. This is significant, as UK demand alone will exceed 80,000 kilotons of lithium by 2035.

Manufacturers like Volkswagen and Renault are seeking a competitive advantage in sourcing battery raw materials, to increase their market share.

- In Germany, Volkswagen has opened its first EV battery recycling plant, in Salzgitter; to recycle up to 3,600 battery systems, around 1,500 tonnes worth, each year during the pilot phase. VW is looking towards the end of the 2020's, when first-use EV battery numbers returning from the market will be even higher and scale economies will be even greater. By then, they aim to increase the proportion of raw material reclaimed from first-use EV batteries from 53% to 97%.
- In France, Renault is working in a consortium with Veolia and Belgian chemical firm Solvay. Renault is

currently recycling hundreds of EV batteries each year, but aims to capture 25% of the European EV battery recycling market. This is far in excess of Renault's own current EV production; so it will be able to use recycling to source materials from the vehicles of their competitors. Any UK company doing the same could source materials from a growing domestic battery supply beyond its own production.

- Renault's 're-factory' at Flins (Paris), Europe's first circular economy plant could also be a model for the UK. With a target of reaching negative carbon emissions by 2030, the site is being repurposed from manufacturing towards four new growth areas by 2024: Retro-fit, Re-Energy, Re-Cycle and Re-Start. The Flins 're-factory' has increased employment opportunities, and is set to sustain 3,000 jobs by 2030.

The supply of lithium is the main roadblock for further growing the EV industry, so any contribution that EV battery recycling can make towards a sustainable lithium supply is invaluable to a green transition in the UK automotive sector.

A study in 2014 considered that 28 tons of used lithium-ion batteries, equivalent to 256 used Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs), is needed to produce one tonne of lithium.

For lithium demand from one major producer, we can look at Ford. For Ford to maintain its current market position in the UK, producing only EVs, its demand for lithium to produce 300,000 of them is as follows

- In 2021, a tonne of lithium sold at auction for £1,755. It would cost £4.2 million (£1,755 x 2,400 tonnes) for lithium to produce 300,000 EVs. Methods of disassembling and then extracting materials for recycling differ, but each of the three main processes require scale to achieve profitability. The break even points for the three processes lies at 17,000 tonnes per year for pyrometallurgical, 7,000 tonnes per year for hydrometallurgical and 3,000 tonnes per year for direct recycling.
- The growing UK EV market from 2026 onwards, provides a growing source of end-of-life batteries, far in excess of this.
- The processing cost of extracting lithium from EV batteries is estimated at £67. So, the cost of processing the required 2,400 tonnes of lithium for 300,000 EVs in 2030 is 96% cheaper than purchasing new lithium.

EV batteries are notoriously heavy which leads car makers to use lighter metals to compensate, and to ensure their supply of batteries is as close to final assembly as possible. It's significantly cheaper to keep EV batteries currently in the UK for recycling and reclamation than to export them to recycling facilities

in France, Belgium, or Germany and then have to re-import materials or new batteries. Employers cite transportation costs as being akin to labour costs when investment decisions are being calculated, so developing a circular supply chain in the UK is both more environmentally sustainable and a negotiating tool to defend wages and conditions.

Edited by Carl Jerromes from an original article by Des Quinn, Steve Bush (Unite National Officers for the Automotive sector) and Ben Norman (Unite Researcher for the Automotive sector) in UNITE Environment Quarterly 6 (organised by Jim Mowatt)

Greener Jobs Alliance AGM



GJA held its first ever hybrid AGM on 14th March, at UCU Headquarters and via Teams, with about 50 people attending either in person or online. We were pleased to host a range of guest speakers on a diverse set of subjects:

- Clive Lewis MP on Labour party plans and policies to deal with climate change,
- Hannah David, Vice President of PCS, on plans for a National Climate Service,
- TUC and GJA's Anna Markova on Just Transition Officers,
- Niall Toru, senior lawyer at Friends of the Earth, on the Net Zero court decision.

These contributions, summarised below, set off some lively debate and gave supporters the opportunity to air their views. With two hours easily filled, one thing we learned for the coming year is the value of having more open meetings, as there is a lot to discuss, and differing perspectives that are well worth hearing and negotiating.

We heard these differences in particular around the issues of energy (including the sensitive 'nuclear question') and transport, especially the future role of cars in a decarbonised transport sector. Our ambition will be to host dedicated meetings to work through these and other subjects in the coming months.

Tahir Latif
Secretary, Greener Jobs Alliance

The Climate Crisis is a Class Issue

The moves we are making now to deal with the climate crisis are five years behind its impact so we have to accelerate them regardless of any other factors. Our current cost of living problems are blowback from the climate crisis on costs for food and energy; so we can't afford to think that dealing with it is just a bolt on that you do when times are good. This is particularly important because there will be no honeymoon period for the next government. The economic crisis will be worse than 1945 with no Marshall Plan.

Inequality of wealth and power – globally and within countries – is key. This is a class issue. The Government is aware of the impact of climate breakdown, but documents that have been leaked reveal that their overriding concern is to protect profits above all other considerations and are reinforcing the democratic deficit by trying to shut people up and close down protest.

By contrast the Climate Emergency Education Bill introduced into Parliament by Nadia Whittome on behalf of Teach the Future, and endorsed by Ed Milliband and his team, aims to educate and empower all our students to be active citizens in making the transition to sustainability and simply equalising the rates of income and wealth taxes would bring in £37 billion a year to spend on transition. The Universal Energy Bill, that I have introduced into Parliament, would promote renewables and provide everyone with a free block of energy. Those who use most would pay more, enabling us to put £3 - 6 billion a year into retrofitting.

The Labour Party is making progress but – with nine planetary boundaries being broken - needs to move away from the language of blanket growth. We should campaign for a sustainable economy geared to wellbeing, concern for mental health and decent social care, and for well paid jobs with a social mission. Socialism can't be something we do to people, it's something we have to mobilise people to do.

The Labour skeleton manifesto will appear in the next few months. Manifestos are important because the Civil Service policies Ministers on what the limit of their mandate is. So, we will need to mobilise for people to have a say in those policies.

This is an edited summary of the speech given by Clive Lewis MP

A Department for Business and Trade spokesperson said: "There are various think tanks in Westminster that have sceptical views about climate change and ministers meet these people all the time". From Open Democracy

Making the case for a National Climate Service

PCS is developing the idea that originates from the climate jobs campaign for the creation of a National Climate Service (NCS), akin to how the NHS was set up in 1948.

Ideas for how such a body could be set up to allow us to be forward thinking, not reactive, to ensure national standards but with local delivery. It can act as a catalyst across all sectors rather than working in silos.

A working group of PCS lay activists, with the support of the Public Services International Research Unit (PSIRU) at the University of Greenwich is currently formulating a proposal based on the excellent work some of our members are already doing in their separate workplaces and the expertise they hold.

This will go forward to the union's conference in May with the launch of an initial report. After that it will be opened up to contributions from the wider PCS membership and the rest of the movement.

Hannah David PCS

Full Report in May Newsletter Ed



Photo by flickr.com/photos/staticgirl/

Worker-led Transition Project Officers

The TUC will have appointed 2 Worker-led Transition Project Officers by the end of the Spring. The aim is to get ahead of transition crises in the automotive, automotive components and steel sectors, by supporting Reps with

- developing worker-led transition plans for their high-carbon workplaces
- forming networks and coalitions
- communications and campaigning.

Anna Markova TUC

Discussion raised a number of points including the need to see Green Bargaining as an issue for all sectors and noting the almost complete lack of action from the government's Green Jobs Delivery Task Force. Since the AGM, the government has unceremoniously kicked the TUC representatives off this body, possibly because they were trying to get it to do something - which shows that their notion of transition is something that will be done to us without us having a say. Ed

Carbon Budget Shortfall

FOE and Client Earth won a case in September that the current Government's Net Zero Plan is incompatible with the requirements of the Climate Change Act because the plans set out in it fall short of the targets it has set. The Government did not appeal the ruling and has until 31 March to publish an updated plan that does.

Carbon Budgets are set 12 years in advance and updated every 5 years.

The 6th Carbon Budget sets a reduction of 78% of UK emissions by 2035 en route for Net Zero emissions by 2050.

This requires radical changes that need long term planning, policy and funding frameworks; rather than piecemeal, short term, improvised gestures of the sort we have had for insulation and retrofitting for the last ten years (for example).

The 2021 Net Zero Strategy collated a set of policies, tied together with boosterish Johnsonian rhetoric about being “*world leading*”; but lacked detail or any serious quantification of what impact they would have to reach the 2035 target.

The Civil Service generously estimates that these plans would get 95% of the way there, with 5% unaccounted for. But the Parliamentary Climate Change Committee review found that they were only credible in 39% of cases, leaving a 61% gap.

The Court Judgement was that, to meet its legal obligations under the CC Act, the government has to;

- provide detail to make the plans more precise and specific
- provide a quantified analysis of their impact
- acknowledge any shortfalls.



Photo: Alisdare Hickson Flickr.com

Smoke signals from Westminster indicate that the upgraded plans are still way off track. Once they are published a further legal challenge may be needed to keep pushing them on.

This is an edited summary of the speech given by Niall Torru (Friends of the Earth).

FOE and Client Earth are currently studying the government's plan in detail pending probable further legal action. The elephant in the courtroom, and House of Commons, now is that these plans have been shown to be inadequate to progress towards Net Zero in 2050. The IPCC Report now says that countries like the UK will need to be Net Zero by 2040 – so, instead of having 28 years to get to Zero, we have 17. That is an alarm call for a massive strategic rethink of everything and accelerated action and sense of urgency across the board. Ed

First signs of an ecological class struggle in Germany

During the global climate strike on 3 March, climate activists and public transport workers in Germany went on strike together in around 30 cities.

This could be the first step towards ecological class struggles — and their coordination on an international scale. From Progressive International.

[Full Report here.](#)



Photo: Progressive International

Climate Perks

Thousands of people in the UK and beyond get extra paid days off work for flight-free holidays through Climate Perks network.

"This was the first time I had been abroad without flying, and I wouldn't have without Climate Perks." (Climate Perks member employee)

Despite growing public awareness about the climate impact of air travel, for certain pockets of society (particularly here in the UK), flying has become completely normalised as the go-to option for travelling abroad. If we're to keep climate chaos at bay, shifting travel habits towards slower, greener, transport modes like trains and coaches, is essential. And employers have an important role to play in making this happen.

Most UK flights are taken by professionals with disposable income, the vast majority for leisure. One of the biggest barriers to greener travel for this group is time; annual leave is precious, so choosing a slower, greener, transport option isn't always easy. **Possible** created Climate Perks to unlock clean travel for workers across the UK and beyond.

Through the Climate Perks employee benefit, organisations of all shapes and sizes can encourage and enable their staff to travel by train or coach whenever feasible. Members allow staff to claim paid 'journey days' on top of annual leave when they take the train, coach or ferry instead of flying to a holiday destination. For employees, this means the decision to travel sustainably is that bit easier (no leisure time is lost). For employers, it's a quick and inexpensive way to demonstrate climate leadership and empower their team to live their values.

At present, the Climate Perks network includes 70 employers (representing over 4,300 staff) from a range of industries, such as the legal, digital and finance industries as well as, more recently, the UK civil service. All members receive Climate Perks accreditation, PR opportunities, and access to resources to support staff in booking flight-free holidays (including 1-1 support, advice articles, and an exclusive £50 discount when booking with Byway).

More workers should be given the time for slower, greener holiday travel. As such they are looking for climate conscious individuals, networks, trade unions, and employers to get in touch and help grow the Climate Perks network. If you're interested in finding out more about the scheme, and how you can help bring it to more workplaces, email hello@climateperks.com

Hannah Bland - Possible

Next Climate Perks information event and Q&A:

Tuesday 18 April 12pm-1pm Online (Zoom)

Sign up at www.climateperks.com/events



NEU Conference Result

Commenting on the passing of the **Climate Tipping Points Motion** at the Annual Conference of the National Education Union, Joint General Secretary Kevin Courtney, said:

"We have reached the tipping point of climate crisis; our future and that of younger generations is being threatened. Extreme weather conditions ... are leading to 'an uncharted territory of destruction' according to the UN's latest climate report.

"The commitment to sustainability, net zero and a just transition, require fundamental changes to our actions, starting with the education of our youth. Sustainability education must be embedded throughout the whole curriculum to ensure that young people are equipped and empowered to bring on the change that is needed.

"We urge the Government to listen to the voices of young people and their educators, to retrofit the whole school estate by 2030, provide safety protection against extreme weather, bring on reforms through just transition and stop new oil and gas exploration to ensure a healthy future for all."



Photo Catherine Boothman

NEU Climate Change Network stall at conference.

Well attended fringe meetings looked at organising and green bargaining in schools and overhauling the schools estate to both combat climate change and cope with its impacts.

The Climate Justice Coalition Trade Union Caucus



We Make Tomorrow:
A one day conference for building workers' power on climate and crisis.

Manchester | 20 May 2023 | 10am to 5pm

The conference will dig into how rising energy prices, inflation, falling wages and the climate crisis are not only connected but actually being driven by the same systems.

The conference brings together workers in key sectors with trade union officials, climate justice activists and scientists, providing an honest and open space to discuss the urgently needed strategies and tactics to build a tomorrow that works for the majority and not the billionaires.

More info here: <https://www.wmtconference.org/>

Please note that as well as registering as an individual, the website has a volunteer form (click "get involved") for those wanting to help build/organise/help on the day. *Note in particular that the form asks if you know people in any of a list of sectors.*

This bit is important because the organisers are particularly concerned to have a good representation of workers from a range of sectors, which will depend largely on people reaching out to their own contacts beyond the "usual suspects" if possible.

Also (under "agenda") you are invited to propose ideas for the content of the conference.

Email ideas or queries to
unions@climatejustice.uk

Alliance for Finance



Join us at our next event: **Green Finance - Mortgaging our Future, April 25 2023, 11am – 1pm**

- **Anna Markova** -
TUC policy officer for Industry and Climate
- **John Keppel** -
Zurich Insurance Chief sustainability officer
- **Matt Stanley** -
Nationwide Group Staff Union Green Rep
- **Claire Trotman** -
The Marine Conservation Society
- **Caroline Taylor** -
Community Union National officer

We are talking specifically about Sustainability, what is meant by Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions, what businesses in the finance arena are doing, and what unions and you can do.

The Alliance for Finance brings together trade unions representing workers in the Financial Services Industry.

Financial Service may not seem like a priority sector when it comes to a just transition, but they can and should be doing more.

This is a free event

To register visit, **Alliance For Finance - Green Finance**

Cathedral thinking

When members of the GJA Steering group met Shadow Skills Minister Toby Perkins last month, one of the points we put to him was that

“all technical training with any connection to the climate crisis should include a module on it so that workers know why they are doing what they will be doing, not simply how to do it, and this carries with it an appropriate sense of mission and social value (in the same spirit that people built Cathedrals)”.

It's good to see that they still have this spirit at York Minster.



CGI of planned installation of 199 solar panels on the roof of York Minster. Reproduced with the kind permission of the Chapter of York. [Story from Edie.](#)

Costing the Earth

This programme makes a very good case for Direct Labour, is well worth listening to, and is available for a year.

Costing the Earth - Jobs for a Green Future - BBC Sounds

Check out the interview with Liz Price of Manchester Met university 26 minutes in for a model of what all higher education institutions should be doing.



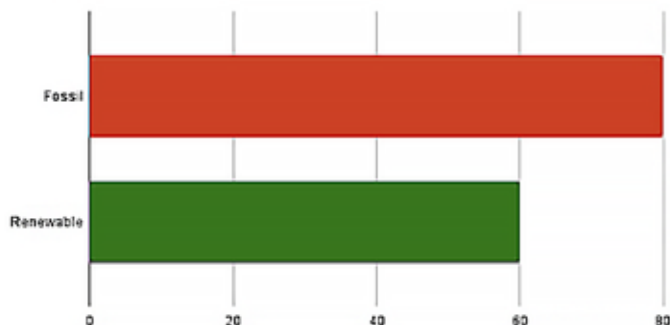
Green Bites

STATS of the Month

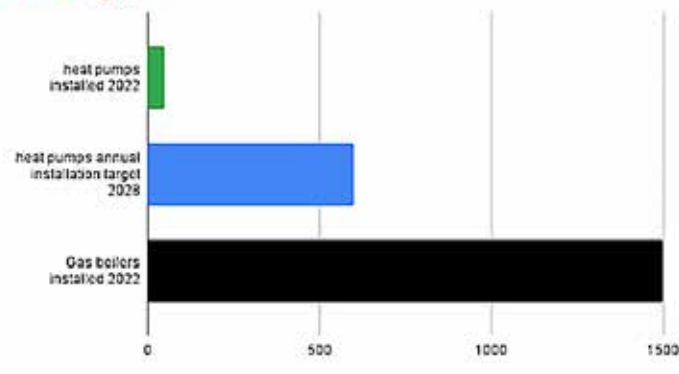
5%

of FTSE 100 companies have a “credible” Net Zero Plan by government criteria. Why we can’t leave it to “the markets”. From [EDIE](#)

UK government support to energy suppliers since 2015 in £billions



Mind the gap.



Supporting the Greener Jobs Alliance

The GJA is a loose coalition of organisations involved in climate change work.

We wish to make it clear that the views expressed in our publications and activities do not necessarily reflect the position of all the organisations whom we work with.

We will always seek to make that clear by listing the organisations that have specifically signed up to a particular initiative.

New on the Blog



A brief guide to the IPCC Synthesis Report

Part A

Part B

Part C

Quote of the Month

*“A prime minister who, in the middle of an accelerating climate crisis, is happy to have the electricity grid upgraded to heat his new **swimming pool** is one who may defend the interests of fellow members of the 1% by any means necessary. The catastrophic carbon footprints of the super-rich ought to be one of the issues of our age. But Sunak seems more interested in sending **climate activists** to jail.”*

Andy Beckett ([Guardian](#))

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