



Photo: John Englart flickr.com/photos/takver/

Editorial: Doublethink in Downing Street

With the impact and urgency of the climate crisis increasingly evident, we are nevertheless seeing a conscious backsliding of climate commitments on the part of the UK government.

We are no longer standing on one of Boris Johnson's delusionary pyramids of patriotic piffle about the UK "leading the world", but are told that we will "achieve net zero" in a "pragmatic" and "proportionate" way. In other words, at a pace that is comfortable for fossil fuel companies like Shell; working, as it is, on a timescale for Net Zero that's between fifty and a hundred years too late.

So, the Climate Change Committee's very clear call for no further airport expansion is ignored on the grounds that the immediate benefits outweigh the inevitable consequences.

This goes with the flow of corporate pressure (and lobby donations) and is as tawdry as that.

This is posed in all too much of our media as a brave thing to do - "Sunak defies Net Zero ban" (Daily Telegraph). An eleventh century version of the Telegraph would probably have run with "Cnut defies waves". But King Cnut knew he couldn't; that the laws of nature are stronger than the will of Kings. Or Prime Ministers. Rishi Sunak doesn't seem to.

The abusive reframing of climate imperatives as irksome irritants that no sensible person busily engaged with getting on with "normal life" should be bothered with infantilises and gaslights the public to keep a few more years of fossil fuel profits flowing.

Caroline Hickman's comment in our quote of the month is another way of putting Malcolm X's point that "If you're not careful, the newspapers will have you hating the people who are being oppressed, and loving the people who are doing the oppressing." (continued)

Contents

- Editorial: Doublethink in Downing Street
- New TUC Reports
- This Year's TUC
- ITUC Demands for COP 28
- Pulling the Plug on the Carbon Cash Machine
- Green Bargaining Conference
- London Climate Resilience Review: GJA response
- Building it Green European Report
- Green UNISON Week
- Hazards Conference 2023
- No future in Coal
- Climate Campaigning events
- Green Bites

Quote of the Month

I realised eight years ago ... that the narratives I was hearing around climate change were the same as the narratives I'd heard around child abuse. The very people who are supposed to protect you are the people who are hurting you. And not only are they hurting you, they're telling you that they love you and they're doing it for your own good.

Caroline Hickman:
University of Bath climate psychologist

Which, in a society like ours, is their job. Hegemony takes work. When the powers that be need a narrative to be felt and thought throughout society, including in the trade union movement, every agency of persuasion is mobilised, and every opposition voice demonised, so that it becomes a background common sense that can't be challenged. Full spectrum intellectual and emotional dominance.

Their problem with climate change is that it is not an idea, it is real. And that means that even the ruling class are split between those wanting to power ahead with their eyes firmly shut, and those nervous about their future.

And there's only so much flimflam people will take. As Groucho Marx put it. *"Who you gonna believe? Me, or your own eyes?"*

Paul Atkin Ed



Opposition peers have managed to block government plans to scrap nutrient neutrality rules, which only allow housebuilding where there is no risk of increased sewage discharge, after an *"eleventh hour"* change in Labour's stance, according to The Times, cited in Labour List.

Better late than never. Ed

Contracts for Difference Result

Reporting on the result of the 5th round of **contracts for difference** announced on 5th September has focussed on the absence of any offshore wind projects. This has led to odd claims like this one from the Spectator. *"The government and the renewables lobby hoped that a successful auction would show that wind power could compete with fossil fuels"*. As it does. The successful bids were all renewables.

- 24 onshore wind projects
- 1 Remote Island wind project
- 56 Solar projects
- 3 Geothermal projects
- 11 Tidal stream projects.

A successful auction for the "renewables lobby" it seems.



(UNISON) Suzanne Jeffery (CACCTU) Tahir Latif GJA and John Mahoney (PCS) at the National Climate Service fringe meeting at TUC Congress. Photo Sacha Ismail.

In Congress and on the fringes at the TUC

At 2023 Trade Union Congress in Liverpool, I was very pleased to chair a fringe meeting co-hosted by Campaign Against Climate Change Trade Union group (CACCTU), Greener Jobs Alliance (GJA) and Public and Commercial Service union (PCS). The title was *'The Case for a National Climate Service: reorganising the state for the climate emergency, people and public ownership'*.

A National Climate Service (NCS) has been a centre piece of demands for a radical transformation of our society in the face of the climate crisis since 2008, when it was proposed in the first edition of *One Million Climate Jobs*. While high profile sectors such as energy, transport and construction tend to be where the Just Transition discussion is largely focused, an NCS is seen as an essential coordinating body to make the transition happen, planning the funding, resourcing and training (and re-training) necessary for a rapid switch to a decarbonised economy, while also protecting the employment, and rights, of workers in all sectors.

What this implies is that the roles of civil servants (PCS) and local authority workers (UNISON) are every bit as critical to that transformation as UNITE, GMB, RMT and others in the more industrial sectors. Hence it was encouraging to see the NCS concept being picked up by other unions, such as [ASLEF and RMT in the carried Composite 04](#) on an integrated public transport system.

All unions hold a distinctive piece of the decarbonisation 'puzzle' and it was clear from this meeting that the crucial task of fitting those pieces together cannot be left to the private sector. That is why a National Climate Service is so central to the future organisation of society. As [UNISON's excellent motion \(Composite 05\)](#) states *'Climate justice cannot be separated from social justice. It is the most marginalised communities whose health suffers most from climate change, pollution and loss of nature.'*

However, it was acknowledged that the mainstream political parties are a long way from this position. One would expect nothing less from the Conservatives, to whom another public body would be anathema, but it's not unreasonable to hope for more from Labour, who are likely to form the next government. Just what

Labour's promised 'Green Prosperity Fund' will look like and what it will do remains an open question. Certainly, no mention has ever been made of a NCS or similar body, leading to the suspicion that some woolly public/private mix is on the cards.

At Congress itself, there was greater unity around climate issues, with a notable absence of the 'ring-fencing' tendencies that some unions had espoused in previous years.

Still, while such unity is refreshing, it is within strictly limited bounds. Members of the big industrial unions who attended our fringe bemoaned the continued support for fossil fuel industries and the lack of vision about how to decarbonise. One attendee identified the misconception, deliberate or otherwise, of some leaderships warning of a 'cliff edge' for their members, the attendee rightly asking 'what part of the word "transition" do they not understand?' One of our guest speakers astutely noted that older workers who may not wish to retrain are susceptible to such arguments, and that we need to utilise their experience in productive ways as well as guaranteeing good pensions for them upon retirement.

In all, there are two distinct, if not contradictory, strands in the union movement: a very welcome growth in the normalisation of climate policies that only a few years ago seemed 'pie-in-the-sky', on the other a retrenchment based on a false belief that conserving the status quo is protecting the jobs of their members. A typical year at the TUC!

Tahir Latif Secretary, Greener Jobs Alliance



New TUC Reports

Public Power; turning it into reality

This report calls for the UK government to set up a public energy champion to build new clean power, accelerate decarbonisation, create the high-skilled quality green jobs of the future, and share the benefits of the climate transition with the population.

Pulling all the levers - a UK clean industrial strategy

This report lays out a plan for a successful net zero industrial strategy, including a range of specific interventions by sector, targeting a rapid and just climate transition in each sector.



TUC training and guides

The TUC has many resources available to all trade unions including,

- The TUC guide to building retrofit at work
- TUC Negotiating for a Just Transition – a course for trade unionists
- TUC Too hot, too cold: How to protect workers from extreme temperatures, and fight climate change
- TUC Climate change proof your workplace: Interactive guide
- TUC Green Skills – resources and workplace case studies
- Unionlearn Green Skills for a just transition - YouTube

ITUC Demands for COP28

Trade unions are demanding a well-managed phase out of fossil fuels backed up and made possible by comprehensive just transition policies with a central focus on the labour dimension.

The items on the agenda for COP28 are crucial.

- The Global Stocktake
- Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP)
- the Mitigation Work Programme (MWP)
- the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation and climate finance issues, including the Loss and Damage fund and the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) all present vital opportunities to act to achieve Paris Agreement goals.



Pulling the Plug on the Carbon Cash Machine

Oil company dividends are rising very rapidly indeed. The quarterly cycle of corporate results seems to bring a perpetual bonanza for shareholders. The other way that company profits are channelled directly to shareholders is via share buybacks. They have also been on the rise in recent years. As one trader told Bloomberg recently, the energy industry has become “a broken ATM spewing out cash.”

As Carbon Cash Machine, a new report produced by the [Centre for Climate Crime](#) and Climate Justice and [Corporate Watch](#) reveals, cash earnings made by shareholders in the UK's two largest oil companies - BP and Shell - are around triple the amount they were when the Paris Agreement was signed in December 2015. Total cash earnings since the Agreement amounts to £131bn.

According to the conventional logic of the markets, it isn't supposed to be like this. That logic claims that oil company dividends should be influenced by several factors, including the shifting energy balance towards renewables, increasing regulatory pressure to reduce emissions, and the rise of divestment campaigns. As the climate crisis accelerated investors were supposed to become increasingly concerned about the long-term sustainability of oil companies. Yet oil companies are making record cash payouts to their shareholders. The market is not pushing shareholders away from Big Oil.

A follow up report due to be published (which will be reported in the next issue of Greener Jobs Alliance Newsletter) will show that the number of 'divested' shares in BP and Shell are simply being bought up by

the top 20 shareholders in each company, expanding their power and influence.

The planet is on fire, and there's absolutely no time to get caught up by gimmicks and distractions like ESG or “impact investing”. We cannot leave our future in the hands of the shareholding class. They will not do what is needed. This is why the Centre for Climate Crime and Climate Justice also argues that we need to empower workers and their communities to take action to deal with climate change. This is why our next project is Working for Climate Justice: trade unions on the front line of climate change.

David Whyte, Director, Centre for Climate Crime and Climate Justice. Queen Mary University of London

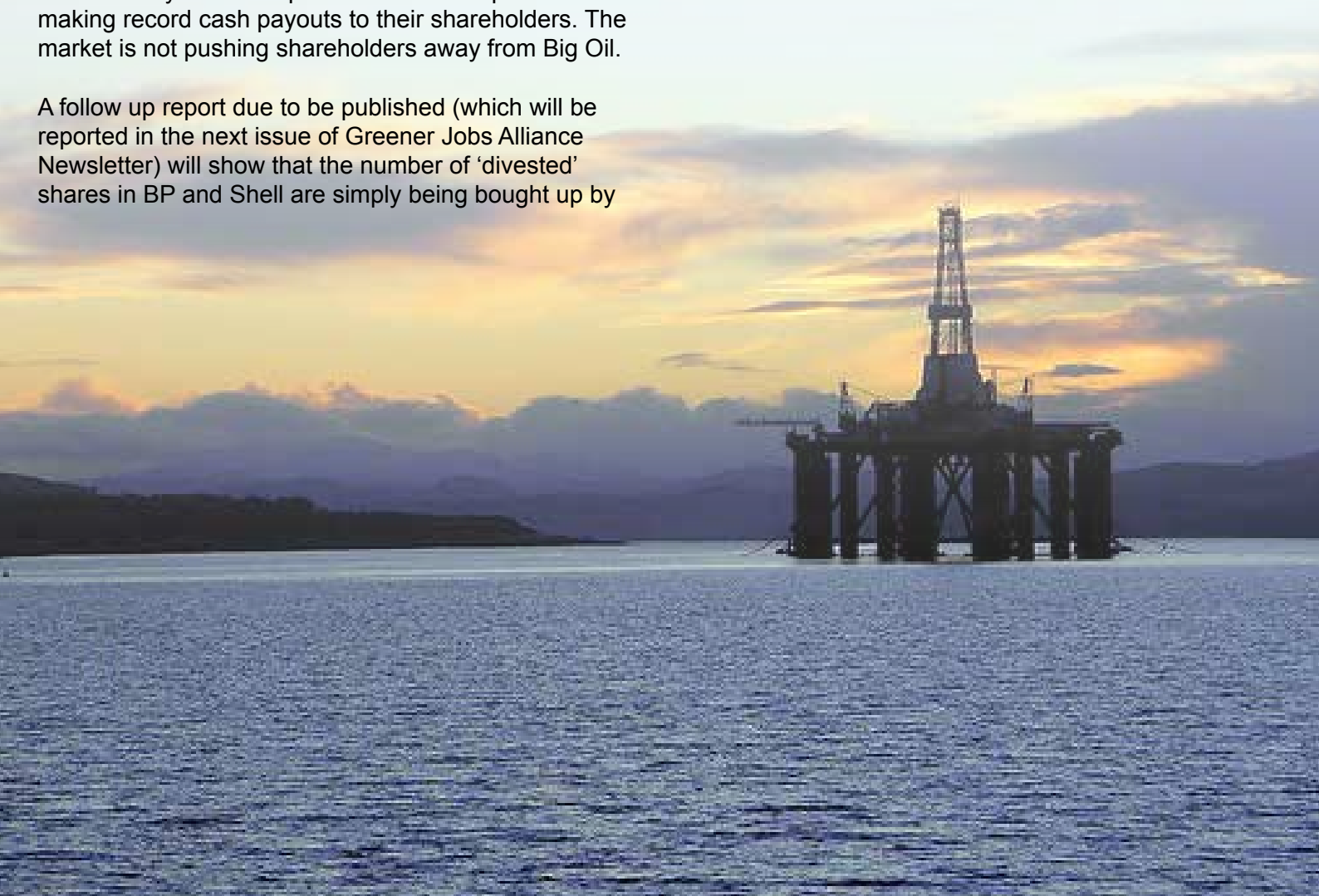




Photo: Mick Holder

Green Bargaining Conference

Friday 27 October, 2023

This conference on 'green bargaining' strategies will bring together trade union organisers, academics and campaigners.

Industrial production systems have created climate change. Employers and their organisations continue to delay and put obstacles in the way of taking the necessary action. Our starting point is that workers and their trade unions must develop a collective bargaining approach to climate change and environmental degradation. A collective response from trade unions will be decisive in taking the action necessary to mitigate climate change.

Speakers include:

Linda Clarke, University of Westminster,
Zak Coleman, SOS-UK,
Ben Crawford, London School of Economics,
Rosemary Harris, Platform,
Wolfgang Kuchler, Campaign Against Climate Change,
Sam Mason, PCS,
Chris McLachlan, QMUL,
Jake Molloy, RMT,
John Moloney, PCS,
Georgia Montague-Nelson, Global Labour Institute,

Janet Newsham, Hazards and TUCAN,
Tonia Novitz, University of Bristol,
Declan Owens, Greener Jobs Alliance,
Marie Petersmann, London School of Economics,
Marianne Quick, UCU,
Chris Saltmarsh, Labour for a Green New Deal,
Hilary Wainwright, Red Pepper,
Andrew Watterson, University of Stirling,
David Whyte, QMUL
Sarah Wooley, BFAWU.

Join us at this free one-day conference (supported by PCS, BFAWU, UCU and organised in collaboration with the [Institute of Employment Rights](#) to discuss how workers can organise to challenge our employers on climate change. [Register here.](#)

David Whyte: Director, Centre for Climate Crime and Climate Justice. Queen Mary University of London

GJA response to the consultation on the London Climate Resilience Review

The Greener Jobs Alliance (GJA) - a coalition of trade unions, environmental NGOs and student organisations - has been campaigning for a more integrated approach to climate mitigation and adaptation since we were formed in 2010.

What more could local and/or national government, or the Mayor, do to support efforts to prepare for more extreme weather in London?

There needs to be a recognition across the political spectrum that to quote Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary General, “*our planet is fast approaching tipping points that will make climate chaos irreversible. We are on a highway to climate hell with our foot on the accelerator.*” This is not scare mongering but a stark reflection of the science. This sense of urgency is not matched by the national government and the main political parties. It is also not reflected in the policies of employers in the capital and other key stakeholders who will be central to delivering scaled-up climate adaptation and mitigation measures.

At local authority level, there is a similar lack of prioritisation. Despite most councils declaring climate emergencies these are not matched by delivery plans capable of achieving net-zero targets. This view was borne out by the [Climate Emergency Audit conducted in 2022](#). It contains 8 areas where councils need to take action for changes in climate and extreme weather. One area is the plan should set ‘*adaptation actions for business and industry.*’

To deliver many of these commitments will require significant funding. The reality is that most local authorities, whatever their intentions, do not have the capacity to deliver at scale the actions in their climate emergency plans.

At Greater London Authority level, the Mayor has similar financial constraints. This is reflected in the lack of funding to ensure that the extension of the ULEZ scheme in August 2023 does not penalise low-income households. A properly funded scheme requires central government funding. We know that air pollution from burning fossil fuels in vehicles contributes to climate change which in turn exacerbates extreme weather. Equally extreme weather like heat waves magnify the impact of air pollution. For example, the creation of heat canyons, particularly in high rise areas that trap hot air.

At national government level the failures to implement climate adaptation policies are exposed in the [2023 Climate Change Committee report](#). “*The second National Adaptation Programme has not adequately*

prepared the UK for climate change. Our assessment has found very limited evidence of the implementation of adaptation at the scale needed to fully prepare for climate risks facing the UK across cities, communities, infrastructure, economy and ecosystems”.

Is there a policy idea, and/or infrastructure investment(s), that will help us prepare for climate impacts in London that you think we should consider as part of the review?

The Mayor, local authorities and employers must intensify the commitment to retrofit buildings in line with extreme weather and net-zero standards. Taskforces should be established in each local authority to bring together key stakeholders. This should include employers, training providers, unions and community representatives. One element of the strategy will be to ensure that the housing stock and other buildings are adapted to deal with temperature extremes and other weather events like flooding.

A key component will be the development of a local skills policy that trains apprentices and upskills the existing workforce to understand the requirements of climate impacts and construction.

Are there any other implications of the physical impacts of climate change that the Review should consider?

As an organisation focused on the world of work it is our view that all employers should carry out climate risk assessments. Very few do, and those that do are often guilty of greenwashing. For assessments to meet the criteria of social justice there should be a requirement to engage with employees and unions recognised by the employer. This is an extension of the current health and safety duty to carry out risk assessments which must involve recognised unions.

Extreme temperatures at work represent a serious health and safety concern. For example, employers exposing their workforce to hot working conditions should consult before deciding on control measures. This is a basic just transition demand. Changes that impact workers health, earnings, job specifications or job security must not be imposed.

Summary

Action on extreme weather and other adaptation issues will require considerable funding and statutory regulation and enforcement. That is why most of the recommendations in this submission are directed to central government. There is an opportunity for central and regional governments to implement the just transition principle signed off by the UK government in the Paris Agreement 2015. Some of the main policies to achieve this include:

1. National government must increase their commitment to achieve net-zero rather than dilute it. The link between mitigation and adaptation is clear, it is not a question of one or the other.
2. National government should adopt legislation that recognises the right of trade unions to appoint green reps.
3. National government should establish a National Climate Service that will oversee the adoption of mitigation and adaptation measures consistent with the increased risks.
4. National government should adopt legislation that sets maximum temperatures in the workplace.
5. National government should establish a Just Transition Commission which includes key stakeholders like trade unions.
6. National Government should recognise air pollution as an occupational health issue that requires clear standards for workplace exposure.
7. National government should ensure adequate funding for regional and local authorities to implement adaptation measures to deal with excessive temperatures and linked factors like improving energy efficiency of buildings.
8. The Mayor should establish a Just Transition Commission for London with a workstream dealing adaptation and extreme temperatures
9. Local authorities should establish retrofit taskforces that tackle the energy efficiency of buildings.
10. Employers should adopt climate mitigation and adaptation policies that are consistent with climate risks and that form part of the bargaining framework with recognised unions.

Graham Petersen

Building it Green European Report

This Report assesses how far climate and energy literacy are embedded in Vocational Education and Training (VET) systems in different European countries. Climate literacy is awareness of why zero energy and zero carbon standards are required, and what role each worker has in fulfilling these.

In Europe

- The building sector accounts for approximately 40% of energy use and 36% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- The Energy Performance of the Buildings Directive (EPBD) has required nearly zero energy buildings (NZEB) across the European Union (EU) since 2020.
- The Renewable Energy Directive requires that 49% of building energy use be from renewables.

To develop NZEB competencies the EU launched the Build UP skills initiative, which was followed by the **VET4LEC report** of the construction social partners, revealing varied approaches to preparing the construction workforce, from long-term efforts to mainstream climate and energy literacy within VET programmes, to add-on modules.

The **Building it Green** report gives examples from six European countries,

- the 'occupational' approaches of the coordinated market economies (CMEs), heavily dependent on the state and educational institutions (Belgium, Sweden)
- or more reliant on social partnership (Denmark, Germany),
- to the 'skills based' approaches of liberal market economies (LMEs), whether involving employers and unions (Ireland) or entirely employer-based (Britain).

The EU construction workforce is 22m strong. Germany (3m), UK (2.2m), Belgium (500,000), Sweden (465,000), Denmark (168,000) and Ireland (128,000). Unionisation is highest in Sweden (68%) and Denmark (67%), followed by Belgium (50%), Ireland (26%), UK (25%), and Germany (16.3%).

Each country reports serious labour shortages.

Where the sector is composed of a myriad of micro firms and self-employed, as in Britain and Ireland, the training infrastructure is weaker as firms have difficulty providing and monitoring trainees' work experience and covering a range of activities.

The converse holds in Denmark, Sweden, Belgium and Germany, where proportions of self-employed and small firms are lower.

Swedish VET is a state-funded, school/college-based

system, providing students with three years education, initially in a public, private, or industry-run school/college, followed by one to two years' work-based experience in a firm. Curricula relating to particular construction occupations contain little enhanced climate and energy literacy, though employers seek more detailed technical knowledge. Barriers include training the trainers and the time taken to update curricula.

Danish construction VET is governed by social partners, and leads the EU in embedding energy literacy in the curriculum. Trainees generally have the status of apprentice. The system is well-equipped, high quality and comprehensive; combining work and college-based learning on an alternating basis in blocks of about six months. For the main trades (e.g. carpentry and bricklaying), the total duration is 3.5 years, and for electricians 4.5. There is a growing problem to obtain work placements.

Belgian construction VET is a hybrid of a college and social partner based system, with responsibility assigned to *Constructiv*, financed through social security and employer contributions. *Constructiv* develops detailed occupational profiles, indicating the underpinning knowledge required for each training pathway. This provides overlap between different but related occupations. Curricula are drawn up by schools/training organisations to meet learning objectives. There is as yet no specific climate literacy module, but the detailed modules for each occupation incorporate NZEB elements and refer to climate change.

The dual VET system for construction in Germany is regulated by the social partners, with the state setting the legislative framework and supervision, and unions and employers associations involved formally in training and education bodies at all levels, though low unionisation means unions have limited capacity to intervene. The broad structure of VET provides scope for updating and overseeing curricula to include climate and energy literacy, whilst social partnership ensures relevant perspectives are represented and detailed pedagogic materials cover both practical and theoretical elements of VET for NZEB. The system encompasses over 20 construction occupations, with trainees applying to a company and levy-funded training, divided between the company, training centre, and vocational school. This lasts at least three years and is stepped, so trainees begin the first year with a broad introduction to different construction occupations, then specialise in the second into finishing, building or civil engineering, and in the final year in an occupation.

VET for NZEB in Ireland has the benefit of state and EU support. As a result of the EU's Build-up Skills initiative, the Foundation Energy Skills (FES) programme is being rolled out nationally. There is increasing participation in the varied NZEB VET courses for construction workers, including through well-equipped NZEB training centres for new build and retrofit. Ireland is a good example of how VET for NZEB, particularly upskilling for the existing workforce, can be put in place through the involvement of a range of stakeholders.

Besides the UK government, key stakeholders in developing, providing, and monitoring VET for NZEB are the unions, employers, clients, Further Education (FE) colleges, regional and local authorities, environmental partnerships, and training, qualification and awarding bodies. In the absence of a coordinated government policy and extensive FE funding, VET for NZEB initiatives are piecemeal; and more effective in Scotland and Wales than England. The employer-market basis of the VET system marginalises unions and employer associations and hampers planning for the VET required to create a workforce with the knowledge, skills, and competences to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions. The weakness of the work-based training infrastructure also means that most construction trainees are full-time in FE colleges rather than apprentices, and struggle to obtain the work experience needed to qualify. The VET system, though better for the building services, is at a low level of incorporating climate and energy literacy into the curricula of the

different construction occupations due to lack of government regulation and occupational standards.

Overall, NZEB requires transforming VET systems to encompass

- deeper knowledge of energy efficiency,
- higher technical and precision skills,
- a holistic approach, conceiving the building envelope as a single thermal unit involving social interaction between different occupations.

The high-quality construction process required involves teamwork and cross-occupational coordination, implying interdisciplinarity and transversal abilities. Above all, climate and energy literacy are needed to give meaning to the knowledge, skills and competences acquired, so that trainees and workers are empowered and can appreciate why they are doing what they are doing and recognize their contribution to creating a safer, more equitable society.

Climate literacy is thus tied to social equity and climate justice, comprising affirmation of the social contribution and responsibility construction workers, their unions, and the industry must have to reduce emissions.

The Report was compiled by Melahat Sahin-Dikmen, Christopher Winch and Linda Clarke of the [University of Westminster PROBE](#) team



NZEB Retrofit training centre in Enniscorthy, Ireland. Photo Courtesy [WWETB Enniscorthy NZEB centre](#)

Green UNISON Week - Friday 15 to Friday 22 September

GREEN UNISON



**Doing our bit to make
public services greener**

Green UNISON week is our chance to raise awareness of green issues nationally and locally, plan green activities to encourage and enable members to get more active and to celebrate all the things our members are already doing in support of the green agenda – not just in work but anywhere.

What are we planning nationally for Green UNISON Week?

We are still drawing the programme together, but confirmed so far is some social media engagement that everyone can join in and two webinars this year – both are excellent so try and get to both if you can!

1. How to have conversations about Climate Change that matter - Larger Us

In a world where most people now accept that Climate change is real, what stops people engaging in this vital issue?

Unison has teamed up with Larger Us - which works to build broader coalitions for change - to deliver free online training to anyone who wants to up their game when it comes to climate conversations. This webinar explains the project in detail and explores what the training will look like and what this pilot project will involve.

One of the key objectives is to have conversations that explore people's views on climate change and get to the bottom of what people really think. [Larger Us](#) provide guidance and training on how to have climate conversations that can take people from inaction to engagement and action.

This is a brand new programme and it's only on offer to a handful of organisations in the UK.

Thursday 21 September 12:30-1:30

[You can find out more and register here.](#)

2. Sustainable Healthcare – Why Greening the NHS matters for all of us.

Haley Pinto from the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare gave a fantastic talk a few weeks ago for some Health group members interested in this area. It was a very clear and comprehensive round up of the impact of the climate crisis on our health and on our NHS including some of the initiatives that are already happening and many that need to happen urgently. We think all our members would benefit from this engaging presentation and have persuaded her to do it all again for us as part of the Green UNISON week offer.

Monday 25 September 12:30 - 1:30

[You can register here.](#)

To mark Green UNISON Week you could:

1. **Hold a UNISON green event.** You could run a lunchtime stall in the canteen, a film show, or a talk. Why not invite a speaker from a nearby environmental campaigning organisation to come along? You can get people to make personal, or team, green pledges like committing to less waste (turning things off when not in use), recycling targets, committing to green office practices (less printing, switching from plastic to cardboard folders etc) - anything green.
2. **Promote** our Green UNISON Week webinars to your colleagues.
3. **Run a green workplace training activity.** Talk to your UNISON learning rep and look into running a lunchtime activity session for green reps and members who'd like to learn more.
4. **Run a green survey.** Ask your friends and colleagues for ideas on how to 'green up' your workplace. Get people involved and offer a prize or raffle.
5. **Find out what your employer is doing** to reduce their environmental impact. Ask your employer to share this information with UNISON and consider how you might bring climate change commitments onto the bargaining agenda.
6. **Find out if your UNISON branch has an environment rep.** If not, encourage your branch and any interested members to get involved and become green reps! A branch Poster and a basic guide to being a rep are available – see below.
7. **Set up a local green network?** You can find other colleagues who share your concerns about climate change and let UNISON Green Week be your springboard into starting a new green UNISON network where you work that can link to the regional and national networks for support and to share ideas.

Training

UNISON Training – UNISON College have produced several new climate change training modules for activists - speak to your local or regional training rep for more information.

From the Green UNISON Newsletter. For more info contact
m.singleton@unison.co.uk

Report of the 2023 Hazards Conference

The GJA was represented at the 2023 Hazards Conference which took place between Sept. 1st -3rd.

Over 200 delegates participated in a range of plenaries, fringe meetings and workshops. The first plenary was titled How we can make clean air as important as clean water? It was chaired by Shelly Asquith TUC with speakers Sarah Woolley BFAWU General Secretary, Riccardo La Torre FBU National Health and Safety and Georgia Montague-Nelson Global Labour Institute Co-director. Georgia drew out the link between climate change and clean air. A staggering 99% of the world's population breathe unhealthy air. In some cities and countries, the level of air pollution consistently ranges from bad to hazardous. However, there is no safe level of air pollution exposure as dirty air can lead to a wide range of diseases, including lung disease, heart disease, strokes and cancer.

Despite the warnings and the health risks to millions, governments and the companies that fuel the air pollution crisis are not doing enough to tackle it. This has led to a growing global people's movement standing up for clean air and demanding for local solutions such as monitoring air quality, developing sustainable public transportation, and greening our energy sector. Greenpeace has published international case studies of clean air action. Champions of clean air: People power in the fight against air pollution - Greenpeace International.

The GJA ran 2 workshops on the role of green reps and spoke at the fringe meeting on Extreme Heat. As with clean air the link between climate heat and extreme weather is becoming increasingly recognised. Health and Safety reps need to liaise with Green reps to identify the control measures needed. Dealing with the immediate hazards of excessive workplace temperatures needs to be linked to action on the root causes. It is a long-established principle of the Hazards movement that unions must address both immediate risks but also the longer-term safe solutions needed. In this case a rapid reduction in the burning of fossil fuels that are fuelling global warming.

Thanks to the Hazards organisers who did another remarkable job in making this another fantastic coming together of rank and file activists.

Graham Petersen

Photo: Delegates at Hazards with a key message by Jawad Qasrawi



No future in Coal

The GJA was invited to speak at the September rally against the proposed new coal mine outside Whitehaven in Cumbria. The South Lakes Action on Climate Change (SLACC) have been organising opposition to yet another example of the Tory Government's efforts to 'max out' on fossil fuels. The idea that a new coal mine, planned to operate until 2049, could be considered as part of a net-zero strategy is laughable. [SLACC have launched legal action and the details can be found here.](#)

Graham Petersen, from the GJA spoke about the need to ensure that the demand for jobs in the Cumbria region is achieved through the creation of employment that would support a reduction in carbon emissions, not make it worse. There are potentially thousands more new jobs in the clean energy sector than the 500 being touted in a new mine. [CACCTU](#) has just published a useful pamphlet - Climate Jobs for Cumbria - setting out how this can be achieved, which you can [read here.](#)

Unions need to make their opposition to the coal mine loud and clear. The coalition that defeated attempts to frack for shale gas can be mobilised around this campaign too. The next Speakers Corner event is on Tuesday, October 24th. Please support this campaign.



Photo: Cumbria coal mine demo. Photo Linda Walker

Forthcoming Climate Campaigning Events

Climate Justice Coalition



September 15 to 17, millions of people worldwide will be taking to the streets to demand a rapid, just, and equitable end to fossil fuels.

Visit fightfossilfuels.net to find an action near you.

Check out this [UK Messaging and Call to Action](#). Use hashtags #EndFossilFuels and #FastFairForever to amplify the message on social media.

Support our [demands](#), which include no new fossil fuels, a rapid, just, and equitable phase-out, international cooperation commitments, ending greenwashing, holding polluters accountable, and ending fossil fuel corporate capture. Organise your own action for mid-September; from protests to digital mobilisations. Check out this [toolkit for guidance.](#)

- **Sun 1 Oct:** [Protest at Tory conference](#), Manchester
- **Fri 6 - Sun 8 Oct:** Green Party Conference, Brighton
- **Fri 6 Oct - Sun 8 Oct:** [Global Climate Jobs conference](#), The Netherlands.
- **Sat 7 - Tue 10 Oct:** [The World Transformed](#), Liverpool - Programme to be announced.
- **Sun 8 - Wed 11 Oct:** Labour Party Conference, Liverpool
- **Sat 9 Dec:** COP28 global day of action

Green Bites

2116

The year that insulation will be completed for all 28 million homes that need it at the rate or progress projected by the government's [Great British Insulation scheme](#) (300,000 a year). A pragmatic sense of proportion in action? This might be optimistic, as this is what the government "*hopes*" will be the rate of progress.

59%

The majority vote in the [referendum in Ecuador](#) to keep the Oil reserves in the Yasuni National Park in the ground. Rishi Sunak, take note.

60%

The quantity of [existing fossil fuel reserves](#) that have to be kept in the ground to keep to below 1.5C, requiring 20% of current fields to be shut down. Rishi Sunak, take note.

95,000

The number of offshore jobs at risk without a successful transition to renewable energy. [Powering Up the Workforce Report](#).

Carbon Capture - the statistics

In 2022 CCUS captured 43 million tonnes of carbon emissions. 0.1% of global emissions. This is **projected** to rise to 279 million tonnes by 2030. 0.6% of today's emissions. Every little helps, and useful for hard to decarbonise industrial sectors, but posing it as an overall answer is like trying to stop a charging rhino with a pea shooter.

Hopeful sign

City AM reported that "*the Treasury's latest attempts to lure lenders back to the North Sea this week [are] likely to fall on deaf ears*". It said: "*The Treasury has invited some of the world's major banks to a meeting. However, only a handful are expected to attend the meeting, with dozens of banks already pulling out of investing in domestic fossil fuels due to concerns over the UK's poor investment climate and growing pressure to fulfil ESG obligations.*"

Follow us on social media



Subscribe
to the
Newsletter
HERE

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.