

GreenerJobsAlliance

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



DEMANDING CLIMATE JUSTICE

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Annual Report 2023

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. 2023 AGM and work plan

GJA held its AGM on 14th March 2023. Guest speakers at the AGM included Hannah David (PCS Vice President), Clive Lewis MP and Niall Toru (Lawyer, Friends of the Earth), and there were around 60 attendees.

A number of factors set the context within which the objectives of the 2023 work plan were pursued. These included:

- The continuing cost of living crisis, and while inflation was less steep than in the previous year, the economic context combined with the government's ongoing neglect of, if not outright attacks on, the poor, homeless and vulnerable leave many without the luxury of being able to think about broader issues beyond their immediate circumstances.
- The rowing back by the Tories on even their minimal environmental commitments, most notably through the granting of many oil and gas drilling licences (including at Rosebank) and promoting a distinctly anti-climate approach, for example their renewed emphasis on being 'motorist friendly.' This direction was then mirrored by the Labour leadership's watering down or abandonment of its policy pledges – most significantly it's £28Bn climate pledge being amended to a 'ramp up by the end of the first term' (and subsequent dropping altogether as this is written in 2024.)
- This backsliding on the part of the main political parties reinforced the regressive narratives promoted by certain trade union leaderships. While in no way representative of the fears of their members about what the future will look like, strong support for the continuation, and even expansion, of the fossil fuel industry displayed a short termism similar to that of government and business interests while neglecting the long term job security of members, and demonstrating clearly that a worker-led response to the climate crisis has to be built from the bottom up.

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- Most significant of all, of course, in the latter part of the year, has been the advent of the war in Gaza. The ongoing attacks on Palestinian civilians and the sheer scale of the deaths has horrified the world and given rise to some of the largest demonstrations ever seen in this country (and across the world). The latter development has been nothing short of inspirational, even in the face of tragedy. It is true to say that the huge upsurge of anti-war sentiment has absorbed the organisational and campaigning energy of many activists such that climate has, not unreasonably in the circumstances, taken a back seat, including the Global Day of Action in December. What is apparent to many is how these crises are interlinked aspects of a global hierarchy of interests that needs to be confronted and overcome.

All 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 2023 made progress on the cornerstones of our work programme:

- Green jobs and skills development, including the introduction of Green Bargaining Officers, Greener Workplaces Toolkit and University-developed course.
- Participation in activity around the Green Jobs Delivery Group and London Climate Resilience Review.
- Generating debate, discussion and policy development across the trade union movement through deployment of our newsletter, website, social media and meetings.
- Working in conjunction with union branches and regions, and local councils and TUC to roll out retrofit plans and education.
- Continuing the work of TUCAN.

These are described in more detail in the next section.



3. Main 2023 activities

This section provides a non-exhaustive description of key GJA activities during 2023; links to relevant material are provided for further information.

3.1. TUC work

The GJA has worked with the TUC on a range of projects:

- Helping to draft a UK version of the Wales TUC [Green Reps Toolkit](#). This will be launched in 2024.
- Developing a 'Negotiating for a Just Transition' 3-day course for Wales TUC. This was piloted in the Autumn and included a 1 day briefing for trade union tutors on how to deliver it.
- Supporting regional and national networks like the [Wales TUC Green Reps Network](#) and Yorkshire and Humberside Just Transition network
- Delivering sessions in conjunction with an international project co-ordinated by the University of Umea in Sweden. Residential courses took place with the TUC in Scotland, Wales, and Yorks and Humberside region.

3.2. TUCAN/Hazards

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.

We attended the [2023 Hazards conference](#) in September and participated in Clean Air Day on 15th June. We have written to the [Healthy Air Coalition](#) (HAC), emphasising the importance of indoor and work-related air pollution.

TUCAN supported workers carrying out air monitoring in a number of workplaces. The focus has been on indoor air quality and during 2023 we worked closely with the Healthy Air Coalition to highlight this issue. This included conducting tests in the covered markets in Tooting, SW London. This uncovered major occupational and public health concerns which will be taken forward in 2024. This will include a briefing paper to politicians and enforcement agencies highlighting the inadequacies of existing standards. A video and other communications to develop the campaign are planned for 2024.

Further details of TUCAN activities in 2023 are summarised in the [Autumn 2023 newsletter](#).

3.3. Events

GJA helped to organise, spoke at, or attended many events throughout the year including:

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- Speaking at the XR-organised 'Big One' in April.
- Organising, in conjunction with CACCTU and PCS, a TUC fringe meeting on 'The Case for a National Climate Service.'
- Speaking at a demonstration in Whitehaven in September, against the planned West Cumbria coal mine.
- Acting as one of the sponsoring organisations for, and attending, the We Make Tomorrow conference in Manchester in May.

3.4. Sign-ups and support

During the year, GJA signed up as formal supporters of the Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) Bill (see [Zero Hour](#) website) and the [Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty](#). We also hosted presentations at Steering Group meetings, and offered support to:

- The whistle-blowing organisation [Protect](#), providing input to their new environmental whistle-blowing guide.
- We Are Possible and their [Climate Perks](#) initiative.
- The report produced by Platform and Friends of the Earth Scotland [Our Power: Offshore Workers' Demands for a Just Energy Transition](#)
- The [Free public transport in London](#) proposal produced by Simon Pirani from the Stop The Silvertown Tunnel campaign (full report forthcoming).

3.5. Campaigning and political activity

GJA has, in addition to the many blogs and newsletter items published, involved itself in direct contact with social and political actors with the aim of promoting our objectives:

- We [wrote to Angela Rayner and Rachel Reeves](#) about home building and retrofit, and Labour's financial approach respectively. These were constructive and substantive enquiries about the detail underpinning the headline statements, reflecting an expectation about the scale of the transformative action that is essential.
- Met with Zoe Garbett, the Green Party's candidate in the forthcoming London mayoral election, to discuss how far our objectives might be in alignment.
- Wrote to the [General Secretaries of the energy unions](#) on a transition to renewables and justice for workers. This followed on from an extensive exchange of views with GMB on how best to approach these issues.
- Worked with our colleagues at CACCTU to produce a [General Motion on Climate Change](#) for passing by union branches and regions, with an ultimate aim of putting before 2024 Trades Union Congress.

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3.6. Other initiatives

GJA has been involved in the [Green Jobs Delivery Group](#) and the [London Climate Resilience Review](#). Both are ongoing as of January 2024 but in each case the common concern is the absence of reference to trade unions or workforce requirements. For the Green Jobs Delivery Group, we have asked BEIS and its successor (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero) on several occasions for the composition of the six Task and Finish groups (Power and Networks, Nature, Resources and Waste, Local capacity and capability for Net-zero, Heat and Buildings with Construction, Hydrogen and CCUS). In the absence of any response, we have submitted a Freedom Of Information request.



4. Communications and Newsletters

In the coming year - as climate breakdown accelerates and its impacts become ever more visibly costly - we face the prospect of

- a General Election in the UK in which the Conservative government will be trying to make "*the cost of green transition for working people*" a major issue; a real paradox when you consider that they have just served up a textbook example of how to dump costs downwards in their stitch up of Port Talbot with Tata Steel, while excluding any voice from the unions or working people in the local community.
- At the same time we have a Labour leadership that is in retreat on its "*Green Prosperity Plan*", with conflicting reports at the time of writing that they may drop it altogether [now confirmed], or are firmly committed to a reduced and indeterminate level of investment.
- This will be at the same time as a Presidential election in the US, which could lead to the Second Coming of Donald Trump, which would mean that the USA would actively disrupt what global cooperation there is at state level by pulling out of the Paris Agreement for the second time and heading up a denialist international.

The debate on the role of trade unions in getting onto the front foot, trying to define and mould the transition we need, getting ahead of developments rather than reacting defensively to them, will intensify in all this, and we want the Newsletter to be at the heart of that, helping to push things on.

In the last year we have maintained a monthly schedule for Newsletters and increased the number of debate blogs including our annual assessment of climate related motions at the TUC. As last year, these have not necessarily led to *debates* on the site, though some have sparked some correspondence that contributors have not been willing to have published, which are, nevertheless, illuminating.

We have widened our range of contributors, which has helped get the Newsletter circulated into new Networks. *Labour Outlook* has an arrangement with us now whereby they regularly republish the editorial on their site and social media, and sometimes other articles, with a link to our site. This means that some of our material is being read off site and we have no tabs on how many times, but that's not a bad problem to have in my view. If anyone has suggestions for other sites that might do this, please let me know.

In the last year the number of subscribers has increased to 835 from 754 at the last AGM and 629 in 2022.

On average, the number of people reading each Newsletter has been about 400.

Reads of the debate blogs vary considerably. Some get <100 views. Most are around 200. Our greatest hit last year was "*The Climate Contradictions of Gary Smith*", which had slightly > 1,000.

The number of hits on the website in 2023 was 26,000, from 5,454 users. Comparisons with 2022 can't be exact, as we have only been using Google Analytics for the last year, but the

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number of hits from Feb 21 to Feb 22 was 11,102. So that's a substantial increase. A more exact comparison will be possible next year.

There has been a dip in use since October 2023 as people in the movement have been increasingly preoccupied with Gaza, also reflected in the turn outs at the respective demos in December.

Our readers are mostly in the UK. The top ten countries for GJA readers can be seen here. The three little unidentified slivers are Australia, Canada and Germany, in that order; all on about 1%. We have just had a request from a COP delegate for a version of the last edition in Spanish - which is easy to do because we can just translate the Google doc draft. Other languages are available!

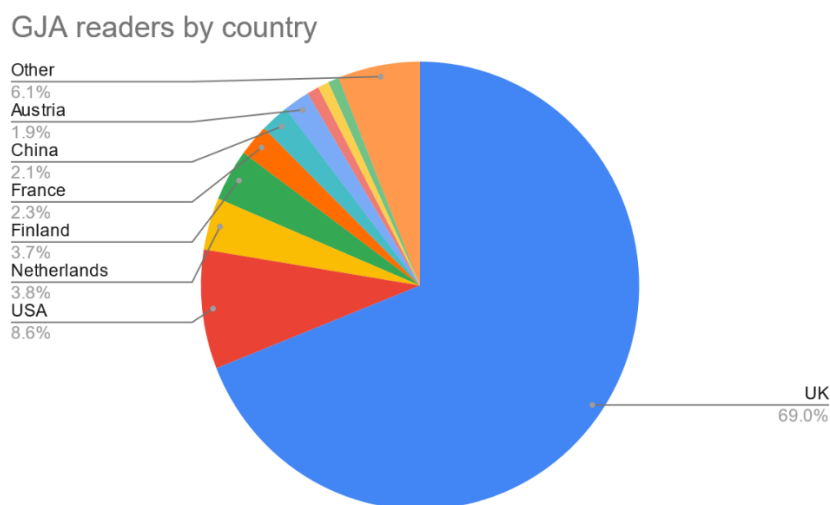
What you can do

Everyone can help get the word out by passing on the link to the Newsletter/particular debate blogs on your own social media, Emails, Facebook, X, Instagram, whatever you use and circulating to colleagues and friends in the unions and climate movement generally. I'd like to see 1,000 subscribers by the next AGM.

In 2022 UNITE kindly donated £450 to help defray the costs of the Newsletter. We could match that in the coming year if 5 union branches passed the following motion.

Recognising the need for the trade union movement to take a lead in fighting for a just transition, and the role played by the Greener Jobs Alliance Newsletter in developing the debate on how to do this, (insert name of branch) agrees

1. *to donate £100 to the GJA to help keep this work going*
2. *to circulate the next edition of the Newsletter online to our members with a suggestion they subscribe if interested.*



Paul Atkin, Newsletter Editor

5. GJA 2023 Financial Summary

The GJA ended the 2023 calendar year with a **balance of £9,434.90. (£9,656.90 in 2022)**

Details of the accounts are available for inspection.

The total income for 2023 was £3,396.78 (compared to £3,510 in 2022). This came from 2 sources. The Glastonbury server team raised £2,946.78 (compared to £1,710 in 2022) from the Workers Beer Co. Unite provided £450 for the newsletter up until February 2023, when the funding stopped. We are grateful to both organisations for their contributions.

The total expenditure was £3,618.78 (compared to £3,366.30 in 2022) the bulk of which was for the newsletter and communications. Other significant payments were £300 for co-hosting a climate fringe at TUC Congress, and £320 for sending a delegate to Hazards Conference.

GJA is grateful to the officers and members of the steering group for providing their services free without which the organisation would not be able to function. As the only source of income identified for 2024 it is vital that we send a GJA server team to Glastonbury in June.

Graham Petersen, GJA Treasurer

6. GJA Post Holders in 2023

Chair – currently vacant

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

Social media – Carter Latif

Tahir Latif
GJA Secretary
February 2024

GJA Work Plan for 2024

During 2024, GJA will build further on the work carried out during 2023. 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. The main contextual elements that will underpin the work plan are as follows:

- *2024 is an election year* – it has become clear during 2023 that we are living through a protracted period of ‘lame duck’ government. Recognition that time is running out has produced some desperate responses from Sunak and his cabinet: adoption of unchecked extremist language, actively seeking to make things as difficult as possible for the incoming government and individuals jostling in preparation for the election after next. This has produced wildly extreme positions and rhetoric, especially as regards migrants (which provides urgency to a ‘join the dots’ response that recognises the links between economic, social and climate justice), in terms of climate change itself as denialism undermines even their own false solutions, and increasingly heavy handed and authoritarian responses to protest of all forms. We can expect to see much more of this in the lead up to the election.
- *Labour not fulfilling its pledges* – in theory it should be a given that we want to ‘kick out the Tories and replace them with a Labour government’. The reality of the current Labour leadership is stretching that aspiration to breaking point. Abandoned pledges, of which the dropping of the £28Bn climate investment is but the latest, and political factionalism of the worst kind are conspiring to reduce Labour to, at best, the ‘least worst’ option (and at worst, no difference at all). The arbitrary ‘fiscal rules’ place workers and communities at a lower priority than financial institutions and the right-wing media. In practical terms this means that the ‘Green Prosperity Plan’ will be subjected to the market as projects seek private sector funding in the name of a nebulous (and Trussian) commitment to ‘growth’. None of this will enable the planning and coordination required for the task at hand and will undoubtedly be the site of intensive struggle.
- *Union leaderships and grassroots activism* – in light of the political climate created by the parties described above, it is perhaps unsurprising that key union leaderships have retreated into regressive protectionism. In climate terms this has manifested as an increased commitment to jobs in fossil fuel industries that have a limited life span, and a turning away from a more progressive agenda of transformation that could secure long term job security for millions of workers. Grassroots activists in these same unions are acutely aware of this schism and recognise that time is running out on the ability of workers to have a say in their own futures rather than having it done to them. That polarisation is only likely to intensify during 2024.

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- *Global justice issues* – clearly the plight of Palestinians in Gaza, and domestically the call for a ceasefire, will continue to dominate the international arena. This is bringing a much-needed recognition of climate change as requiring worldwide solutions that are explicitly bound up with complex questions of global justice. This is not reducible to a simple ‘climate crisis causes political instability’ formula, though that is one element of it, but land grabbing, the scramble for scarce resources, how and where food is grown, and the power inequalities that are overlaid on these, all have to be considered. In terms of GJA priorities, it also highlights the balance to be struck between ensuring many jobs are domestic (for sound environmental reasons not nationalistic ones) and the struggle by workers in the Global South to replace exploitation and neocolonialism with a just transition that counters inequality, promotes peace and works towards climate justice on a global scale.

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 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.
 - ii) *Retrofit campaign* – continue to support this key demand in regions across the country and disseminate the work already done on developing training courses, including working closely with the TUC on what a comprehensive retrofit programme will comprise.
 - iii) *Support for TUC and other initiatives* – this includes resurveying local authorities, responding to the London Climate Resilience Review and the Green Jobs Delivery Group, and the Free Public Transport proposals.
 - iv) *TUCAN* – continue to work with other groups for better legislation than that which has emerged in recent years, further develop the air quality monitoring work, both indoor and outdoor, and promote the results through a range of media including a short film.
2. **Labour’s Green Prosperity Plan** – influence how the plan is implemented following the election, work with local council contacts and parliamentary groups to provide a voice for workers, ensure that unions are explicitly involved in developing strategy, and that practical implementation meets expectations, including public ownership and democratic control, employment rights and practices, adequate training and reskilling programmes and avoiding greenwash in favour of proven solutions.

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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

13TH FEBRUARY 2023

12.00-14.00

AGENDA


1. Introduction	Secretary	12.00
2. Buildings/materials survey	Jonathan Essex Q&A	12.10
3. Labour and Climate activity	Fliss Premru Q&A	12.35
4. Present annual report and work plan	GJA Secretary	13.00
5. Green Party policy	Zack Polanski Q&A	13.10
6. General discussion	All	13.40





Green Jobs ----- Global Climate Justice ----- Just Transition for workers

Annual General Meeting, Tuesday 13th February 2024, 12.00-14.00

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

Guest speakers on
Green Party policy:



Zack Polanski
Deputy Leader
Green Party

Climate activity:



Fliss Premru
Hackney council
and LESE JT/
Environment
group

Buildings and materials:



Jonathan Essex
Greenhouse
Think Tank

Q&A, discussion and debate (Election, Tata, GKN, Climate motion etc.), GJA plan of action for 2024.

Register for attendance at Tahirlatif51@icloud.com