



Image by Alisdare Hickson on Flickr

## Editorial: there are no “loopholes” in the laws of physics

With February being the ninth consecutive month that set an all time high temperature record, [fydcfhg](#) that Ministers are seeking to exploit a “loophole” in the Climate Change Act to “carry over” reductions in carbon emissions resulting from covid lockdowns to relax targets for the next carbon budget, exposes their detachment from reality.

They miss the fundamental point that the 7% emissions decline during the pandemic is what is needed every year to be on track for the level of carbon reductions we need to stave off catastrophe.

As we need to do that without closing down society, we need a faster, deeper pace of transition, with greater investment and far more public education and mobilisation; so we can participate together in making it happen.

Climate breakdown cannot be kicked down the road, or bargained with. It's a reality that has to be grappled with; and dealt with *now*. Current political leaderships will be judged on the extent to which they rise to the challenge of doing that, or fail to.

[&DUER%ULHI](#) has noted that the potential Trump Presidency from 2025-29 would drown any chance of the world keeping within safe limits with a flood of deregulation, drilling and active sabotage of international agreements.

They also note that the current trajectory of the Biden administration, although more positive and providing better progress, falls well short of hitting even its own targets, let alone its reasonable fair share.

It's possible that current mainstream retreats on climate commitments in the UK are preparatory to maintaining Atlanticism in the context of a denialist US Presidency. That is the risk of UK political leaderships keeping on trying to take their lead from the US, whatever it does. We need to break from that.

Even more fundamentally, if our political institutions also prove to be inadequate to saving ourselves from climate breakdown, they will have to be transformed so

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that they are. At the very least by setting up a National Climate Service and Just Transition Commissions in every Region, community, economic sector and workplace.

With even **former Tory Home Secretaries** warning of the dangers of attempting to define anyone asking these awkward questions as “*extremists*” or “*terrorists*”, this is seen as **trying to shoot the messenger** instead of dealing with the problem.

Paul Atkin Ed



Hundreds of activists from across our movement joined the Climate Justice bloc on Saturday's National March for Palestine in London. Find details for upcoming actions and mobilisations in solidarity with Palestine on the Climate Justice Coalition website (<https://climatejustice.uk/free-palestine/>) or get in touch by emailing [info@climatejustice.uk](mailto:info@climatejustice.uk). Photo: Climate Justice Coalition.

**Greenhouse gas emissions from the first two months of the IDF's assault on Gaza are already estimated to be greater than the annual emissions of 20 individual countries and territories, according to a new study released Jan. 9. Overall global military carbon footprint estimated to be 5% of the total. This is not accounted for in the Paris Agreement. [Full report here.](#)**

## FOE, Client Earth and Good Law Project take government to court on climate targets

**We need to see urgent action by our government to address the climate crisis and to reduce the UK's carbon emissions. But unfortunately, that is not what is happening. Of the emissions reductions needed to meet the 6CB, the assessment of the CCC is that there are currently credible policies in place for just 19%.**

Friends of the Earth is taking this case because we believe that the new climate plan is inadequate, and the government has once again fallen short of its duties under the CCA. Our previous case showed that if the government breached its legal obligations, the CCA could be enforced through the courts. We do not believe that this CBDP will deliver the emissions savings needed to meet our upcoming budgets, or the UK's 2030 target (the Paris Agreement Nationally Determined Contribution). It is clear to us that the CBDP is incredibly high-risk, with reliance on technologies which are unproven at scale, such as carbon capture storage. And the government's prediction that the necessary emissions cuts will be achieved is premised on all these policies being delivered and achieving 100% of their intended carbon savings. In our view, that is simply not tenable. For example, as it is, Prime Minister

### Rishi Sunak scrapped certain policies in September 2023.

We have strong policy criticisms of the CBDP, many of which are shared by other organisations, including the CCC. Alongside the legal case, Friends of the Earth campaigners are working to raise awareness amongst the public and politicians of the government's failure to enact policies that will achieve our carbon budgets and our 2030 NDC, and the profound negative impacts that this failure will have on the climate, energy bills, energy security and jobs. Ultimately, Friends of the Earth's position is that we urgently need a strategy with policies to achieve significant emissions reductions across all sectors of the economy and that will enable the UK to meet its climate targets. [Full briefing on legal case here.](#)

Katie de Kauwe and Niall Toru, Lawyers at Friends of the Earth



Photo: Alisdare Hickson on flickr

# Major growth of clean energy limited 2023 global emissions rise



Photo: IMECHE

A [new analysis by the IEA](#) shows that global energy-related CO2 emissions rose less strongly in 2023 than 2022 even as total energy demand growth accelerated. Without clean energy technologies, the global increase in CO2 emissions in the last five years would have been three times larger.

Emissions increased by 410 million tonnes, or 1.1%, in 2023 – compared with a rise of 490 million tonnes the year before – taking them to a record level of 37.4 billion tonnes. An exceptional shortfall in hydropower due to extreme droughts – in China, the United States and several other economies – resulted in over 40% of the rise in emissions in 2023 as countries turned largely to fossil fuel alternatives to plug the gap. Had it not been for the unusually low hydropower output, global CO2 emissions from electricity generation would have declined last year, making the overall rise in energy-related emissions significantly smaller.

From 2019 to 2023, growth in clean energy was twice as large as that of fossil fuels, providing the opportunity to accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels this decade. For example, the deployment of wind and solar PV in electricity systems worldwide since 2019 has been sufficient to avoid an amount of annual coal consumption equivalent to that of India and Indonesia's electricity sectors combined – and to dent annual natural gas demand by an amount equivalent to Russia's pre-war natural gas exports to the European Union.

Read more in the [CO2 emissions report](#) and the [Clean Energy Market Monitor](#).

[Full report here.](#)

## The sorry state of Just Transition in the UK

The GJA has been monitoring progress on climate justice at work since the Paris Agreement introduced the requirement in 2015. It has been a frustrating experience. We have trawled through hundreds of policy initiatives at local, regional, and national level only to find an absence of a commitment to engage with workers and recognised unions.

The latest text from CoP28 last year reaffirmed that unions must be involved in drawing up climate plans. Despite that the process seems to be going into reverse. The Green Jobs Taskforce, which had 2 union representatives on it, was wound up in 2021. The work was taken on by a Green Jobs Delivery Group which had one union representative. A reorganisation removed the union rep and opted for a sector-based approach based on 'Task and Delivery Groups.'

In September 2023 the GJA asked the government department responsible for industrial strategy for the membership of the 6 Task and Finish Groups set up by the Green Jobs Delivery Group. These groups cover key sectors in the transition to zero carbon,

1. Power and Networks
2. Nature
3. Resources and Waste
4. Local capacity and capability for Net-zero
5. Heat and Buildings with Construction
6. Hydrogen and CCUS.

Three emails later and we still hadn't received a reply so we issued a Freedom of Information request in Jan 2024. On 29 Feb we finally got a response.

This shows that there was only union representation on 2 out of the 6 groups – Power and Local capacity. We will follow this up and contact the Chairs of each group to find out why unions have been excluded.

The revelation came as no surprise but begs the question '*Would unions engage even if they were asked to participate?*' A combination of lack of prioritisation and lack of capacity make this a very real concern. That is why union annual conferences this year need to reinforce their commitments to move climate action to the front of the bargaining and campaigning agenda.

# ITUC: Definition of a Just Transition

*This is from the ITUC submission to the Just transition Work programme feeding into the COP negotiations. Full document can be read [here](#).*

A Just Transition secures the future and livelihoods of workers and their communities during the transition to a low carbon economy, effectively limiting global temperature rises to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels.

Just Transition plans should be co-created with workers and their trade unions to provide and guarantee decent work, social protection, training opportunities and job security for all workers affected by global warming and climate change policies.

Plans must be underpinned by the fundamental labour rights of freedom of association and collective bargaining and facilitated through social dialogue between workers and their unions, employers and their governments as established by the ILO.

A Just Transition requires guarantees for intra intergenerational and gender equity, racial justice, respect for the rights of indigenous peoples, impacted communities and migrants and promotes and protects human rights and ILO fundamental labour rights.



**ITUC CSI IGB**

## ITUC/Hazards resources for International Workers Memorial Day (28 April) Climate Risks for Workers

Every year on 28 April all over the world, trade unions, workers, and families hold remembrance events to mark International Workers Memorial Day because work continues to kill millions globally every year, and over 50,000 in the UK, 140 a day before the pandemic arrived to make things worse.

Climate crisis a major workplace risk, [warns ITUC](#)

**Hazards** [resources 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.



# A trade union bargaining guide on resource efficiency



**This guide is aimed at trade union green or environmental reps and other trade union representatives who want to work with employers and members to reduce the environmental impact of their organisation through reducing waste and improving resource efficiency.**

In this guide the term 'resource efficiency' refers to using the planet's limited resources in a sustainable manner, whilst minimising impacts on people and the environment.

The term 'zero waste' means that no residual waste goes to landfill and everything is either reused or recycled. Zero waste seeks to eliminate rather than merely manage waste.

The extraction of the world's resources is responsible for almost **half of carbon emissions and around 80 % of biodiversity loss. Resources are now being extracted from the planet three times faster than in 1970.** This is despite the fact that the population has only doubled in that time.

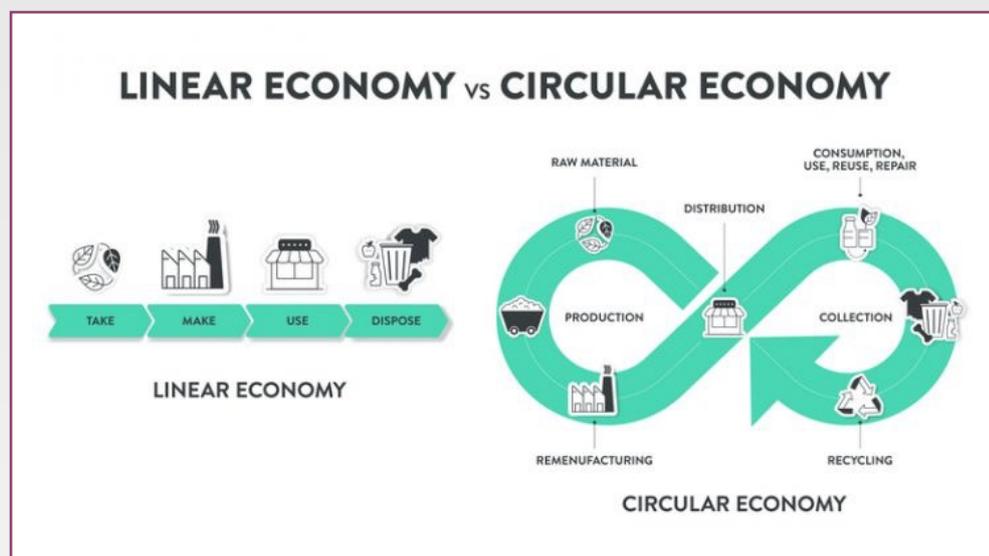
Due to increased consumption and demand, we are extracting the world's resources faster than they can be restored, and some are in danger of being exhausted. Waste and pollution are being released faster than the planet is capable of absorbing it or breaking it down into something harmless.

This is an issue for us as trade unionists because it is not compatible with **sustainable development**. It is also a social justice issue. It is well-documented that the more economically developed countries in the global north consume far more of the world's resources than countries from the global south.

Excessive resource consumption and the waste generated also creates health and safety issues for workers and the wider community both here and abroad. For example, the production of laptops requires the extraction of rare earth minerals and every year a huge amount of toxic electronic waste is shipped to the global south causing damage to human health and eco-systems.

Urgent action to improve resource efficiency and reduce waste is needed to help us stay within our '**planetary boundaries**'. It can help us to address the climate and nature crisis and support sustainable development for all.

## The move to a 'circular economy'



This graphic illustrates the differences between 'linear' and 'circular' economic systems

*Jo Rees; Policy Officer (Wales TUC Education)*

*Full document including links to the legal and policy framework on resource efficiency and waste, a guide on taking action in the workplace and*

# GJA AGM 2024



The Greener Jobs Alliance AGM for 2024 was held on 13 February. Around 50 people attended, either in person or online, and we were pleased to welcome three guest speakers:

**Zack Polanski**, *deputy leader of the Green Party*

**Fliiss Premru**, *LESE Environment Group & now a Hackney councillor*

**Jonathan Essex**, *Greenhouse Think Tank*

We're not going to precis their contributions in detail here as there are invitations to all three to contribute to a future newsletter or the blog page on the website. All made valuable contributions that stimulated much debate among the attendees. Of course, it was impossible to escape the fact that a general election will happen at some point during the year and a likely change of government. As a member of the London Assembly, Zack not only presented a strong case for voting Green as the viable alternative to the two mainstream parties' continued drift rightwards, he outlined proposed policies, particularly in the area of housing, that strongly align with GJA's own position.

As a Labour councillor, Fliiss provided much needed hope that there is life in the party in climate and jobs terms, contrary to the conclusions one might draw from the national leadership. She also spoke powerfully about campaigns in which she has been involved, including [No to the Silvertown Tunnel](#), now making the case for repurposing the tunnel, [Stop The Edmonton Incinerator Now](#), and the campaign for [free public transport in London](#), among others.

Jonathan presented a vision of what is needed for society to stay within its climate limits, and that this means not only transition away from fossil fuels but a necessary reduction in demand, thereby reducing production and consumption. A Greenhouse report, [Rethinking Energy Demand](#), goes into detail on this under-discussed subject.

Given that the news of the [Port Talbot closures](#), and associated redundancies, were fresh in the mind, discussion of patterns of consumption and reducing these tended to focus on steel production - how far we can reuse scrap, is green hydrogen powered production a realistic proposition, and what are the jobs that are actually needed across the supply chain?

With some union leaderships retreating from climate-oriented positions in response to the absence of constructive policy proposals from the 2 main parties, such discussions are urgently needed to get our demands in order.

The AGM also did its regular business, presenting the finances (in good shape but we still need donations to replace the lost £450 newsletter funding per year - see motion at the end of this Newsletter) and the Newsletter itself (produced regularly but need to expand the readership) along with a summary of our activities over the course of 2023, details of which can be found in the [Annual-Report](#).

**Tahir Latif** *GJA Secretary*

## Campaign for Better Transport Budget Demands

A Budget which shifts the balance of funding away from carbon-intensive road building and tax breaks for the aviation sector, towards more sustainable public transport with an emphasis on the transport people use everyday.

- An end to the 5p fuel duty cut
- A long-term fare offer for bus passengers
- A kerosene tax on polluting domestic flights
- New taxes for private jets
- Bus funding for all local authorities
- A 'pay-per-mile' tax on EVs
- Rail ticketing reforms.

### [Full Budget Proposals here](#)

*The Budget barely addressed these issues, with a token tax on some private jets and the fuel duty freeze kept in place. But we should note that a Review of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods by the Department of Transport, set up to provide evidence for Rishi Sunak's "pro motorist" posture, found, to his embarrassment, that they were both popular and effective in reducing traffic, with little or no displacement of traffic onto surrounding roads.*

*This was scheduled to be published in January but instead has been quietly shelved. A government source stated that it was "categorically not the case" that it had been suppressed. Ed*



# Unions For a Just Transition

On 8 February north London trade unionists met with Jeremy Corbyn MP to discuss the challenges and possibilities for a just and sustainable environmental transition. Tata Steel had recently announced thousands of redundancies in Port Talbot as part of its planned transition to green steel manufacturing; on the day it was reported that average global temperatures had breached 1.5°C warming over the previous 12 months; and the Labour Party was abandoning its green investment plans.



*Jeremy Corbyn MP, Linda Clarke, Sam Mason (speaking) and Jim Mowatt at the meeting.*

Mel Mullins (RMT, BLM and co-chair of LESE TUC environment group) said that transport workers are on the front line of climate heating, at risk from heatstroke and related health hazards. Unions must protect workers from climate risks and insist on investment in safety procedures and equipment. Cheap, or free, public transport should be central to climate policy, getting cars off the roads, reducing carbon emissions and air pollution.

Union members are increasingly active on environmental issues, but the climate movement must become more inclusive of people of colour. Politicians are ignoring the environmental concerns of communities, for example the Silvertown Tunnel project. Mel urged people to consider environmental issues when voting in elections.

Sam Mason (PCS Officer for Sustainability and Climate Change) warned that governmental structures did not exist to deliver an effective and comprehensive climate strategy. Discussions about a sustainable transition usually focus on technologies like carbon capture and nuclear power in the context of financial limitations (for example, Labour dropping its £28 billion climate policy) while money is available for other priorities. 'Green' jobs exist and can be expanded beyond industrial sectors.

PCS is developing a National Climate and Biodiversity Service, formulating green industrial bargaining to incorporate environmental and just transition elements into labour negotiations and disputes.

The [Climate Justice Coalition's](#) meetings are building awareness and networks. As Tata Steel's announcement shows, a transition is underway but without workers' influence it will not be 'just'. If climate issues are not addressed by the left, they will be captured by a right-wing narrative and neoliberal 'solutions'.

Jim Mowatt (UNITE) argued that workers may not have a picture of a just transition but recognise an unjust one. Unite members in fossil fuels intensive industries feel threatened. They will reject decarbonisation strategies that result in the suffering experienced by coal mining communities since the 1980s. Unions representing such workers must defend jobs. This creates tensions with others in the Labour movement pushing for a sustainable transition.

However, discussions on this are becoming more open and constructive. Unite's priority is to build green industries with secure jobs and is working to negotiate for them.

Jeremy picked up Jim's theme that an environmental transition must carry people with it. During his leadership, Labour's Green Industrial Revolution programme involved consultations with unions, environmental groups and communities. Forums across the UK discussed the expansion of public transport and employment. Labour committed funding against job losses and damage to communities, assuring people that the aim was prosperity for all, not a repeat of past industrial revolutions which resulted in wealth for a few. A green transition requires public ownership of basic services like water and energy and state directed investment in manufacturing, providing encouragement for further investment in green energy and infrastructure.

Crucial issues were raised during discussion, including how to overcome sectional divisions and create social coalitions for a green transition. The narrative that environmental measures can't be afforded must be challenged. Increasingly environmentalism is cast into culture war discourses and climate policies are subject to '[greenlash](#)'. These trends must be countered.

Discussions about a just transition frequently neglect the global south where the north exports much of its waste and environmental problems. UK unions need to increase links with unions campaigning for climate justice there.

In conclusion, trade unions need to continue to develop cross-sectional networks and forums in which these issues can be addressed and strategies and policies developed for climate justice. ILEF will contact attendees to develop such a forum in north London.

*Martin Franklin Islington Labour Environment Forum*

# New Rules

**Transport for London** is making all fares on a Friday Off-Peak for March, April and May and Mayor Sadiq Khan has frozen fares for the whole of this year.

By contrast the **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities** has issued a directive to prevent local authorities setting higher energy efficiency standards than the inadequate ones they are setting nationally, on the basis that this would “*add further costs*” to building new homes. As their statement argues that their own standards would build homes that are “*net zero ready*”, the Committee on Climate Change spells out that all homes built from next year have to be net zero to meet Net Zero targets, the solution to this conundrum is to “level up” the national guidelines to meet that challenge. **The Good Law Project** is taking the government to court on this.

**Ottawa** is considering removing **minimum parking regulations** for new building developments; following the lead of Toronto, which replaced them with maximum levels in 2021 and Vancouver which did the same for two specific developments in 2023. This is aimed to cut costs - as parking space - either above ground or under it - is expensive - in Toronto \$160,000 per space - so this increases the costs of the housing and eats up space that could be used for more apartments or green space. As the Parking Reform Network notes “*Parking is never really free; the choice is between paying for it directly, through user fees, or indirectly through higher rents (for residential parking), lower wages (for commuter parking), and higher taxes (for on-street parking).*” It also makes communities less equitable, by forcing “*car-free (and car-lite) households to pay for costly parking spaces*”; leaving it lower-income families subsidising parking for their wealthier neighbours. The chair of the planning committee notes that minimum parking regulations runs “*counter to the trends of reduced car ownership. It is counter to the trends of younger people not getting cars at all*” and the Mayor notes “*Eliminating parking requirements for new builds is one of the key strategies we’re taking to speed up the development process and build more homes faster.*”

## Future Homes - Higher Standards Needed

A consortium of Good Homes Alliance, Bioregional, the UK Green Building Council and LETI (a network of over 1,000 built environment professionals, working to put the UK on the path to a zero carbon future) has written to Michael Gove arguing, as we did in this Newsletter last month, that the standards proposed are a smaller step forward than the bold stride we need and call for “*a further iteration of the Standard be developed to ensure new buildings are of a higher specification by 2028*”.

Their concern, like ours, is that lower fabric standards will increase bills for residents, increase electricity demand at a time when the system will be under increasing strain and point out that installing PV as standard should be a no brainer, overall enhanced standards will be virtually no cost.

[Full letter here.](#)



Photo by Sandy Millar on Unsplash

## Costs of Gas

Despite a **massive disinformation campaign** from the gas boiler industry, and serious worries that the government was going to **scrap the plan** the **Clean Heat Market Mechanism** will be going ahead from **1 April**. This mandates fossil fuel boiler manufacturers to prioritise **heat pump sales** to displace significant amounts of **gas usage** by 2035.

The **Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit** had warned that, had it been abandoned, gas demand could have surged by 70TWh, leading to a 19% increase in **gas imports** exacerbating energy security concerns and consumer costs.

*Demanding that gas fitters are retrained to install and maintain heat pumps has to be part of this process. Ed*

# Going through the motions



## Possible Motion for Labour Parties and Affiliated Unions on Green transition Investment

*(insert name of) CLP/Union branch recognises that*

- *we are now in uncharted territory with the climate breaking down at an accelerating rate*
- *this is an emergency and it requires an emergency response*
- *an investment of at least £28 billion a year is needed in UK infrastructure to make up for decades of investment*
- *such a level of investment would take the UK up to EU and US levels in still be well below that of China*
- *this could be paid for in the first instance by equalising tax rates on capital gains and incomes and wealth taxes and in the medium to long term will pay for itself many times over*
- *without it there is no coherent alternative economic framework to that set out by the Conservatives, who are seeking to box the next government into a spiral of unsustainable decline with “Truss lite” tax cuts and public investment cuts.*

*Calls on the Party to*

- *make concrete plans for the level of investment needed to keep on track with the UKs legally binding carbon budgets, involving the unions and communities in the relevant sectors and places*
- *set up a shadow Just Transition Commission to oversee this work, aiming for a National Climate Service*

*Resolves to send this motion to all our elected representatives, including NEC Reps.*



## UCU Climate and Ecological Emergency Network draft motion for Union Congress

*International and political influencing on climate and ecological emergency*

### **Congress notes:**

1. *The tertiary educational sector is under-developed in narratives or framings in parliamentary and international discussions around the climate and ecological emergency.*
2. *UCU’s successes in local and national bargaining and organising on the CEE.*

### **Congress resolves:**

*UCU develop parliamentary and international campaigns for education’s centrality to the green skills agenda and a Just Transition, including:*

- *Influencing of and in parliament, including a publication and event, supported by an All-Party (or the UCU) Parliamentary Group.*
- *Frame-setting media campaign through the UCU press office, targeting national print and broadcast media.*
- *Template materials for regions & branches to localise and approach local media and government.*
- *Collaboration with supportive trade unions and aligned groups, especially PCS and Greener Jobs Alliance.*
- *Act to influence, and amplify via, international trade union networks such as Education International, ETUCE, Greening Education Partnership, and at COPs, including supporting member attendance.*

# Going through the motions



## Motion Submitted to GMB Congress

This Congress agrees that climate change and the warming of the earth's temperature is the result of burning fossil fuels since the dawn of the industrial revolution.

### Congress notes;

The UN Secretary General has warned we are in an era of global warming and can expect extreme weather conditions in every part of the globe with alarming frequency.

The International Energy Agency ( IEA ) states that to stay within a 1.5 degrees celsius increase in temperature, as agreed at COP21 in Paris, the use of fossil fuels must reduce by 25 per cent this decade and without developing new fossil fuel projects.

According to the UK Climate Change Committee, the UK government is failing to protect the public from the impact of climate change and watering down its international climate commitments.

The scientific evidence is irrefutable that unless we transition to a zero carbon economy there will be devastating consequences for the planet and current and future generations.

### Congress agrees;

Climate Change is a trade union issue.

Trade unions must play a central role in developing an industrial strategy on behalf of GMB members and all workers, to ensure a Just Transition.

For any transition to be just, any economic transition must be based on guarantees of protection of pay, jobs an employment conditions, most notably for those working in energy intensive industries.

It is not the workers who must pay for this transition but the energy corporations in the UK and globally. A mere 90 companies since the late eighteenth century

are responsible for over two-thirds of all greenhouse emissions in history. The Fossil Fuel Corporations and Petrostates continue to be responsible for unsustainable levels of greenhouse gases and use their power and wealth to obstruct any threat to their profits.

Congress recognises the importance of building upon the work of the Shop Stewards who produced the Lucas Plan ( 1976 ) This showed how existing technology can be redirected into socially useful production.

Congress therefore instructs the CEC to support and resource elected members in GMB Sectors, who wish to utilise their knowledge, technical expertise and industrial power to draw up concrete plans for a Just Transition. This can include plans for public investment into renewable energy forms, energy efficiency, clean, affordable public transport, manufacture of turbines and nacelles, and a national grid based on latest technologies. This will help reduce our dependency on imported energy and the foreign goods and equipment that should be built domestically and are essential for a Just Transition.

The plans we draw up can used to inform our bargaining agenda, influence Labour Party policy and place GMB at the heart of planning a Just Transition.

Presenting our industrial alternative will be needed to prevent the employers and government dominating the agenda and imposing upon GMB members the very opposite of a Just Transition that we saw with the Tories decimation of the Coal Industry and attack on the National Union of Mineworkers ( NUM ) in 1984.

Congress agrees that energy should meet social need and not feed the rapacious appetite of the giant energy companies for record profits as many workers struggle to heat their homes.

We agree to continue to campaign for the re-nationalisation of energy production, storage and distribution under the democratic ownership and control of central, devolved and local government.

## Subsidised Transport Works

Researchers (in the United States) found that metro areas that received more government subsidies per capita were more likely to run buses and trains with lots of passengers on board, rather than running inefficient, wasteful routes with just a few heavily subsidised riders per vehicle.

NYC subsidised transit to the tune of a whopping US\$445 per resident per year between 2016 and 2019, but generated \$565 in revenue and had the highest efficiency score of any region in America, with an average of 27.4 passengers per vehicle during the study period.

Car-dependent Phoenix, by contrast, “received just \$97 in subsidies per person annually, collected only \$20 in revenues, and had the lowest efficiency score by far, with just 8.7 people aboard every bus and train.

[Full report here.](#)

## FARE-FREE LONDON campaign launched



Free public transport in London would “open the city to all”, said trade unionists and community activists who lobbied the Greater London Assembly on Thursday 7 March.

They called on Mayor Sadiq Khan and Assembly members to adopt the zero-fares approach, and commission research on how it could be implemented. The lobby was organised by Fare Free London, a broad coalition set up at a meeting in February.

“Free public transport is socially just, supporting the lowest-income households that are least likely to have a car”, say the group’s aims. *“It is better transport, underpinned by substantial investment, with a secure, properly-rewarded workforce.”*

Free public transport is *“one of the drastic, demonstrative actions needed to tackle climate change globally and air pollution locally”*.

Luxembourg, Tallinn (capital of Estonia) and cities in France and the USA have successfully scrapped fares on public transport. *“London can be the first big global city to follow their example”*, Fare Free London says.

The group advocates the zero-fares principle nationally, and welcomes contact from campaign groups elsewhere in the UK that want to work together.

At the February meeting, at the Waterloo Action Centre, speakers argued that free public transport is an essential complement to policies that reduce the level of car and HGV traffic in London. The Mayor has said that vehicle-

kilometres driven in the city would have to go down by 27%, by 2030, to meet his climate targets. But researchers at Imperial College showed, in a research paper published last year, that much more swingeing cuts – of 72% by 2025 – would be needed, to stay in line with internationally-agreed targets.

The first step is to stop spending money on new road projects, and invest in public transport and active travel, say supporters of the Stop the Silvertown Tunnel coalition, which helped set up Fare Free London.

The £2 billion+ tunnel, due to open next year, is the biggest spending commitment the Mayor has made. It undermines London’s already slow progress away from car-centred transport.

A campaign briefing, Free Public Transport for London: Why and How, supported by Fare Free London, the Greener Jobs Alliance, the Stop the Silvertown Tunnel coalition and Tipping Point, is available on the Transport Action Network website.

To get in touch: [info@farefreelondon.org](mailto:info@farefreelondon.org)

Please also listen to, and circulate: **Fare-free London: the case for free public transport across the capital – a podcast** hosted by Future Transport London.

*Simon Pirani*

# Islington Labour Environment Forum



## London's Environment: How it has changed and the challenge of May 2nd

Speaker: Alastair Harper

7.30 14 March 2024

Alastair is the Mayor of London's adviser on the environment and energy. Previously he has worked for environmental NGOs and led campaigns on net zero and tackling toxic air, holding the Mayor and other politicians to account.

### Join Zoom Meeting

After questions and discussion the meeting will focus on Islington issues and campaigns.

*Islington Labour Environment Forum (ILEF), is a forum for discussion, campaigning, and activity on the environment, coordinated by the Environmental Officers from both Islington North and Islington South Constituency Labour Parties.*

# Campaign Against Climate Change Trade Union Conference

**Saturday 13 April**

Crowndale Centre  
218 Eversholt Street  
London NW1 1BD

11.00-16.45 (registration from 10.30)

The climate crisis is more real, and has a bigger impact on our lives, every day. Around the world, those who have contributed least to the crisis, suffer the most.

The climate crisis is a class issue and a trade union issue. Fighting for a huge transformation of the economy in the interests of people and the planet should be at the top of the trade union agenda. But it isn't. So how do we make sure the strength of the working class and trade union movement is at the heart of tackling the climate emergency?

Part of the answer is in knowing what arguments and battles currently divide and weaken us and how we win these. Part of the answer lies in being part of a global movement of international solidarity standing with the struggles of the oppressed for justice. Come and join us for this important conference.

[Buy tickets and get full details here.](#)



# Green Bites

## Stats of the Month

50%

Of the reduction in carbon emissions needed by 2030 that could be met by **energy efficiency measures** cutting demand. That means doubling the current rate of 2% a year to 4% with stronger building codes, energy retrofit initiatives, LED lighting, more efficient water heaters, more efficient building designs to use less steel and concrete in construction, scale up the adoption of electric vehicles, heat pumps, and other electric appliances that use far less energy than their fossil fuel-powered counterparts; e.g. EVs are two to four times more efficient than combustion engine cars and heat pumps are up to five times more efficient than oil and gas boilers.

27GW

Amount of **wave power required** for UK to get to 100% renewable energy generation, while **reaching this** would save £100 billion and cut 20% more from UK carbon emissions than the current government plan.

800GW

The amount of power that could be produced by all of the **renewable energy projects** currently in the pipeline for approval and held up by the current capacity of the grid. This is 12 times the current UK consumption of 75GW and 6 times the 150GW projected as needed by 2050.

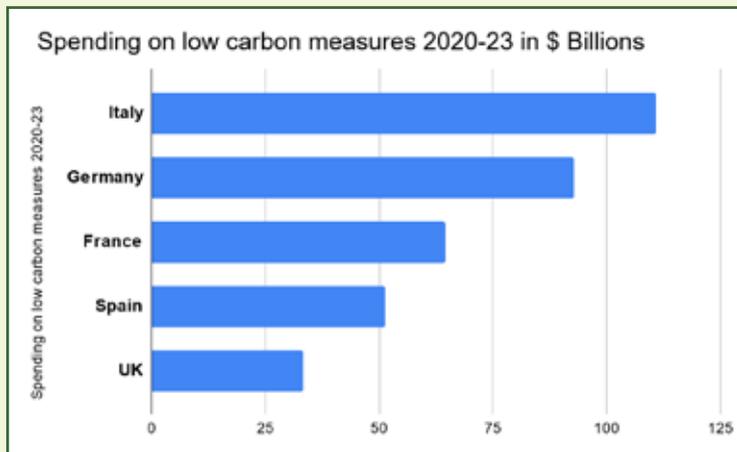
20%

Increase in bus journeys across the country since the introduction of the £2 fare cap. This is due to be withdrawn in November. The campaign for better buses could use your support to keep it **here**.

45%

Proportion of new single and double decker buses bought in the UK in 2023 that were zero emission (1,100 in total). **From Business Green**

## Graphic of the Month



Not exactly "world leading". Ed.

## Quote of the Month

*'I think 2023/24 is the year in which fossil fuel companies have woken up to the very real threat that their businesses now face. Already, electric vehicles are taking 1.5m barrels of oil off the road every day. That's enough for oil companies to start noticing problems and you are beginning to see some scale back production forecasts. As a result, some are trying to foster a backlash against the [net-zero] transition. I think some of them are beginning to get very worried about what their future looks like.'*

Greg Jackson of Octopus Energy in the Sunday Telegraph.

## To support our work, please pass this 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.

## Follow us on social media



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