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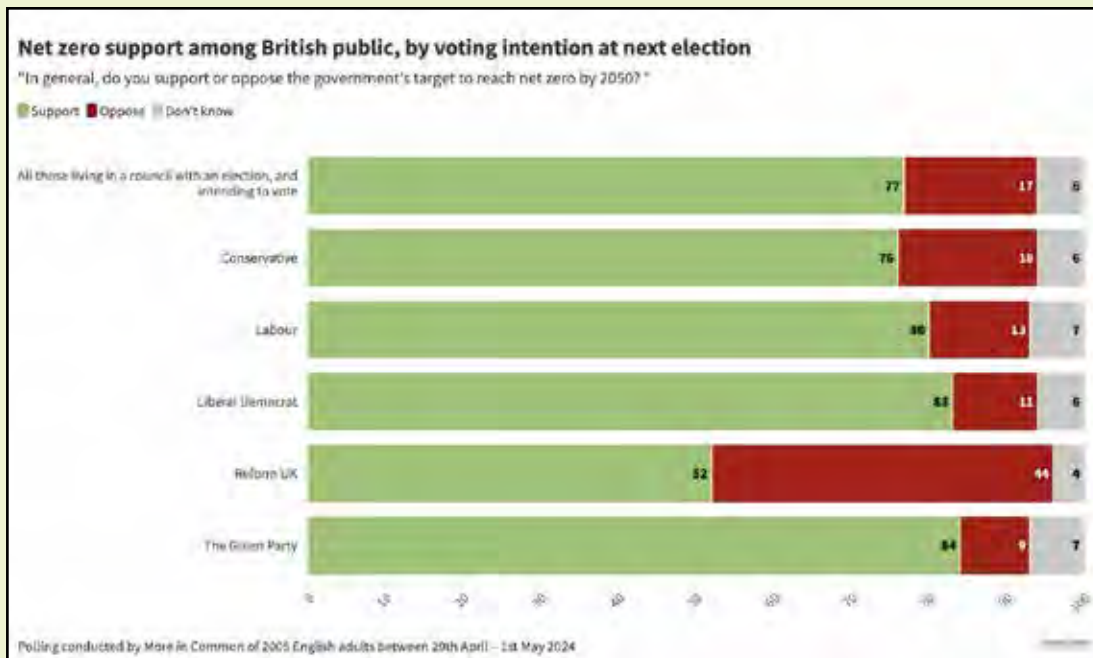
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Editorial: Green Straws in the Wind

The even heavier than expected defeat of Susan Hall in the London Mayoral election, after she made her campaign a “referendum on ULEZ”, has wider lessons for anyone who wants to be “close to the voters” in the coming General Election and after.

Latest **figures from the ONS** show 61% of people rating climate change as an important issue facing the UK. Only the cost of living, the NHS and “the economy” score higher. Housing, crime, immigration and international conflict are all rated lower.

Across the country a majority of supporters of all Parties, even Reform (!) support action on climate.



The **assessment of IPCC scientists** that, without accelerated and deeper action, the world is heading for an increase of 2.5C by 2100, with every prospect of “*major societal disruption in the next five years*”, means that climate has to be foundational for any politics to be relevant in the 21st Century.

The **Court ruling this month** finding that the UK government is, yet again, failing to match action to its own Net Zero targets, and requiring them to update accordingly, underlines this.

In that light, the advice given to the Labour Party on how to deal with the rise of the Green party, in a recent New Statesman article by David Gauke, is useless, complacent, outdated conventional wisdom from the Holocene era that we are leaving at terrifying speed.

Saying that Labour

- Should “*not over promise*”; means not doing what needs to be done,
- Should not “*validate criticisms that you cannot address*”; means dissing the science instead of responding to it,
- Should not put “*too much power in the hands of your Party members*”, rightly fears a response from them,
- Should not “*pursue a policy of economic self harm*” presumes that the costs of inaction are lower than those of transition; the opposite of reality.

Gauke’s advice to “*remember where the voters are*” contradicts all this, as concern over climate breakdown has consistently been a top four issue this decade.

Mobilising that concerned majority to take action on the scale and pace that is needed, with Just Transition bodies in every workplace and community, will be key to whether the next Labour government is a part of the solution.

If followed, Gauke’s proposals would ensure that it is part of the problem.

Paul Atkin Ed

Statement:

Solidarity with the Global Student Movement Protesting for an End to the Genocide in Palestine

We stand in full solidarity with students across the globe protesting to demand universities divest from institutions profiting from or engaging in Israel’s acts of occupation and genocide in Palestine. The fight for peace and liberation is fundamental to climate justice and overcoming the climate emergency.

As students launch a new wave of action on campuses across the UK, we applaud the bravery and resilience of all students and staff – on these shores and beyond – protesting for divestment, boycotts and sanctions to bring an end to the genocide and for the liberation of the Palestinian people.

Full statement here.



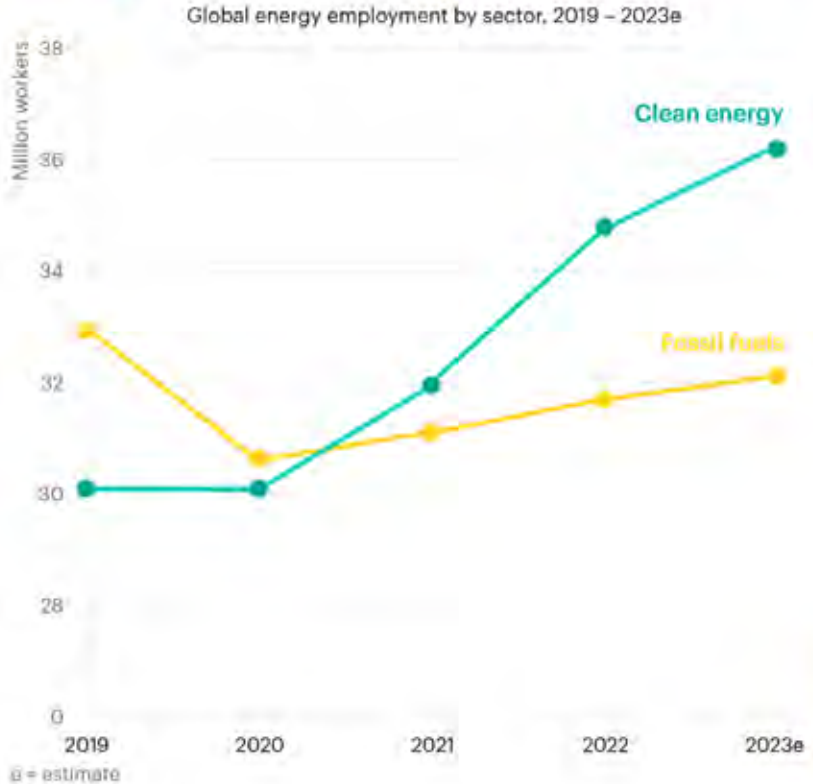
Photo: Climate Justice coalition

IEA projects fall in oil demand

With the strong recovery in demand following the disruptions of the Covid-19 pandemic having largely run its course, structural factors are set to lead to a gradual easing of oil demand growth over the rest of this decade. These include continued market share gains by EVs, steady improvements in the fuel economy of vehicles, and efforts in the Middle East to reduce the use of oil for power generation.

[Full report here](#)

Since the pandemic, job growth in clean energy has outpaced fossil fuels



ITUC call on International Financial Institutions

For a shift away from policies that undermine job quality to address major transformations such as climate change and the digital transition.

Without reform, the statement says, “these transformations will further divide the world between those who benefit from new technologies and greater productivity and those that see their livelihoods destroyed with no replacement nor hope on the horizon.”

[Full statement 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.



What struggles

do we need to win and how?

On Saturday 13 April, Campaign Against Climate Change Trade Union Group hosted a conference on this theme in London. There were around 100 attendees, which was impressive considering there was also an event being hosted by the Peace & Justice Project at the same time, and a huge Ceasefire in Gaza march through the city that day.

Not only was attendance good, but also the level of enthusiasm on display. It felt like people really wanted to talk about doing something constructive; an ebullience in sharing positive ideas and a sense of relief that we can come together to 'do' something, not only protest against something.

With the Conference theme of 'what struggles do we need to win and how?' the intention was to avoid simply reiterating well known arguments about what the problems and solutions are, but to identify the arguments we need to get across to people, the blockers preventing us from taking positive action now for people and planet, and what we need to do to overcome them; expressed in a series of excellent workshops and plenaries, each with three or four speakers:

- What's the balance sheet on climate in trade unions? Are we going backwards in the trade union movement?
- A National Climate Service - why the market can't deliver a plan for the climate.
- Greenwash and Jobswash - the false solutions which trade unions should oppose, not support, and why it matters.
- Climate Justice and Palestine - no climate justice on occupied land.
- Climate, Jobs and Public Services - public services and public ownership that deliver for people and planet.
- Sustainable food production and decent work - organising across the food system
- War, fossil fuels and climate - why defence diversification is a key battle for the climate.
- Ending fossil fuels and renewable energy - what would a workers plan for energy look like?
- Racism and migration - social justice and climate justice for North and South.
- An election year for the climate.

The objective is to drive the movement from talking about the issues to taking practical action for social and climate justice.

Two such actions would be local and regional versions of this conference, and expanding on the key areas with perhaps lengthier dedicated meetings - energy, public services/ National Climate Service and the food supply chain being obvious examples - and building from a discussion to a definite plan.

This summary has kept to describing the conference in general, but see below for several contributions on Just Transition solicited from the speakers themselves, elaborating on the themes of specific workshops

Tahir Latif GJA Secretary



Photo: Mick Holder

How do we develop a worker's plan for a just transition?



Conference discussion in full flight. Photo CACCTU

There's plenty of evidence to show that phasing out oil and gas combined with serious investment in renewables creates more jobs. The Sea Change report, published in 2019, shows how switching from oil and gas to wind and solar would create a big net increase in jobs and how failing to make this transition would mean that targets to cut carbon emissions would not be met.

Similarly, home insulation, retrofitting and replacing gas with electricity for heating and cooking is essential, but critically dependent on a skilled workforce.

The main elements of a workers plan for just transition are in place, but there's not yet a simple consensus about a plan. Having a plan is clearly necessary, and critical to being credible in the eyes of working people who are not yet convinced.

In one sense we've made serious progress in the last five or so years, it's now common sense in the climate movement to talk about the role of workers and the need for a just transition. I think in this respect COP26 in Glasgow was a watershed moment. But ironically in practical terms, in terms of action I think we've gone backwards in the same period. So, for example, the number of workers in renewables in Scotland is about the same now as it was in 2014. In the eyes of

many workers, talk of just transition looks like hot air. And in the hands of right-wing populist politicians, it fuels arguments that the climate crisis is not a problem and climate action is a threat. So, there's a real danger that repetition of just transition, in the absence of tangible steps that improve lives and livelihoods, becomes a form of greenwashing.

So, while we need consensus on what to do, for me the 64,000-dollar question is: How do we build a mass movement with powerful roots in every workplace and working-class community that has the power to make the necessary changes happen?

I think the climate movement often underestimates the extent to which commitment to the North Sea and to the interests of the big oil and gas companies shapes and directs climate policy. Westminster, Holyrood, the energy sector trade unions and the oil and gas industry work in partnership through what

used to be called Oil and Gas UK and has now been rebranded as Offshore Energies UK. They are all signed up to the North Sea Transition Deal and it essentially guides their actions. So, for example it's hard to find a serious analyst who thinks hydrogen for domestic heating and cooking makes sense, but using hydrogen in this way remains a key plank of policy for both Westminster and Holyrood. And while it does, other options are not pursued. Why? Because hydrogen together with Carbon Capture and Storage is the best option for Fossil Capital that wants to maintain existing market dominance, infrastructure and (not least) profits.

Pete Cannell Scot.E3 (Employment Energy Environment). These notes are from Pete's contribution to the discussion at the recent CACCTU conference, as is Linda Clarke's article below.

The role of the construction workforce in reducing energy consumption and producing energy

The construction industry has a vitally important role to play in reducing carbon emissions and energy consumption, constructing the infrastructure needed for renewables, and retrofitting the housing stock, especially as the built environment accounts for 40% of end use emissions. Yet it is a sector beset with problems; not least low levels of unionisation in much of the private sector, apart from engineering construction. Over half the workforce is classified as 'self-employed' for tax purposes, most firms (c. 97%) are SMEs - many of which are micro firms, so the subcontracting chain can be very extensive, including labour-only subcontracting, and there are massive 'skill' shortages.

The fragmented nature of the industry means that it lacks a training infrastructure, which goes a long way to explaining why apprentice numbers are so low and the majority of young people seeking to train for a career in a construction industry, whether as a carpenter, plumber, electrician, etc, are to be found on full-time courses in FE colleges, though they can then have problems obtaining the necessary work experience. Ironically, given this weak work-based training infrastructure, combined with underfunding and lack of recognition of the key role of FE colleges, this is also a sector in which the labour process has become more and more complex and abstract, requiring significant knowledge, know-how, and competence of the workforce, and ever higher qualification levels.

This is especially the case with low energy carbon construction, where knowledge of, for instance, air tightness and thermal bridging is needed, as well as knowing how, for instance, to install solar/photovoltaic systems and heat pumps, whether air or ground source, not to mention insulation, and having competences in, for instance, communication and integrated team working.

How to retrofit: the role of DLOs

The urgency to meet emissions targets and tackle fuel poverty means that retrofitting the housing stock needs to be on a large-scale, whilst also ensuring good employment and working conditions

and valuing, training, and developing the workforce to carry this out.

It is here that the local authority building departments or direct labour organisations (DLOs), representing one of the key areas of construction where unionisation has remained strong, can play a key role. (i) The DLOs date back to 1890, when the London County Council was set up, in which the Progressives played a significant role, campaigning against the corrupt use of contractors and for municipal socialism, whilst at the same time the Housing of the Working Classes Act was passed making way for the first council housing (ii). DLOs subsequently played a major role in building, refurbishing, and repairing council housing and training and employing the workforce needed for this, especially in the 1890s, after the two world wars, and then on into the 1970s, when they also opened up to employing many women as well as those from BAME groups.

Under Thatcher their activities were seriously curtailed, especially for new building, though many continue to operate to this day, even expanding as local authorities insource work.

The DLOs, therefore, operating on a non-for-profit basis, politically accountable, unionised, inclusive, offering secure employment and good working conditions, and providing monitored work experience for trainees, are an obvious way to carry out large-scale retrofitting. They could begin with fuel poverty

council estates and, following the setting up of local Retrofit Task Forces, work in collaboration with FE Colleges, unions, local and environmental groups, etc.

Engineering construction and the NAECI

The other area of the construction industry that is unionised is engineering construction, which covers power stations (including nuclear) and similar constructions and comes under the National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry, known as NAECI (iii). NAECI is one of the few remaining collective agreements in the UK, is a centralised agreement, stipulating good employment and working conditions, limits to the subcontract chain and overtime, and including such aspects as integrated team working. It is a key reason why the notion of just transition and nuclear energy itself often pose dilemmas for unions, including at Hinkley Point, which is covered by a variant of NAECI and where EDF offers many training opportunities and encourages the employment of women.

The advantages of NAECI, an agreement that should be extended to the whole industry, need to be weighed against the disadvantages of large nuclear projects, including Hinkley, Sizewell, and Sellafield. These depend for their construction on a mobile workforce, many living away from home for long stretches of time as 'travellers'. The projects

kill the surrounding area and threaten communities as other industries are reluctant to locate themselves nearby. And, they are eventually decommissioned, so cease to generate energy, though continuing to operate, as in the case of Sellafield, which employs about 8,000 workers under NAECI and is left to treat nuclear waste, including from Sizewell.

The construction workforce and renewables

With large scale retrofit and renewable energy and district heating programmes, much less travelling is involved, and the workforce required is thus more locally based, as with DLOs. These can be coordinated by the Retrofit Task Forces and offer good employment and working conditions and comprehensive training programmes according to agreed occupational standards, so countering the insecurity of employment in the private sector and the often-hazardous working conditions to which construction workers are subjected.

i. Direct Labour Collective (1978), Building with Direct Labour: local authority building and the crisis in the construction industry, Housing Workshop of the Conference of Socialist Economists (CSE)

ii Clarke L., (2014) 'Building by Direct Labour: the significance of Direct Labour Organisations in the provision of public housing in the UK 1890-1980' in eds., Campbell, J, Andrews, W, et.al Proceedings of the first Construction History Society Conference, Construction History Society.

iii. Clarke L and Fitzgerald I. (2020) 'The changing nature of labour regulation: the distinctiveness of the National Agreement for the Engineering Construction Industry (NAECI)', Industrial Relations Journal, 51/1-2, March, 58-74

Linda Clarke: University of Westminster

Recordings of the workshops and plenaries at the CACCTU conference can be viewed [here](#).



Justice for Workers in the Just Transition – Reflections on the experience of the Nigerian Workforce



Comrade Eche engaging with Comrade Joe Ajaero (President of the Nigeria Labour Congress) at the COP:

As I sat in Room 6, Zone B1, Al Ghafat Building at the COP-28 Expo Centre, Dubai, venue of a Just Transitions negotiation, I wondered if Tony Mazzocchi, former President of the US trade union – the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers Union now merged with Steelworkers, would be able to recognise the word ‘Just Transition’ – if he walked into the meeting.

My apprehension is not far-fetched. When Tony Mazzocchi started the campaign for a Superfund to take care of the livelihood risks faced by workers transiting from fossil fuel industries to green energy economy, he envisaged that workers would be at the heart of engagements on Just Transition. Such priority to workers is expected to follow the International Labour Organisation’s Guideline on Just Transition for Environmentally Sustainable Economies and Societies for All which include social dialogue, reskilling and upskilling, development of green enterprises, promotion of active labour policies, social protection and development of policies that address the concerns of the working people of the world.

Unfortunately, the schism between the ILO Guidelines and outcomes of Just Transition negotiations continue to widen at successive COPs and other climate change policy spaces. Back to my thoughts at Room 6, Zone B1, I was amiss why it was difficult for negotiators to see that respect for labour rights is cardinal for a Justice Transition that does Justice to workers – an issue that had to be bitterly fought until about the last day of COP 28.

I also had other reflections. A few hours earlier, the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) had organised a Side Event at COP 28 themed “Justice for Workers in the Just Transition” and supported by Africa Development Bank (AfDB) – an evidence of the kind of social

partnership needed to drive the Just Transition Process. All the discussants at the NLC COP 28 Side Event were of the consensus that workers must be at the heart of climate change negotiations especially discussions on Just Transition.

The reason for this consensus is not difficult to situate. The greenhouse gas emissions responsible for climate change are produced in workplaces and workers are the index victims of such pollution. This was buttressed by the President of the NLC, Comrade Joe Ajaero, at the side event where he presented the dire health hazards faced by workers in Nigeria’s oil and gas sector in the face of unabated gas flaring tantamount to ecocide. The same is the situation with agriculture workers who are the largest segment of Nigeria’s workforce. These workers handle hazardous fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides without adequate equipment, living wages and in near total absence of social protection safety nets.

As I summed up my reflections in Room 6, it dawned on me that there is a need to follow through with the recommendations of NLC Research on Just Transition in Nigeria’s Seven Priority Sectors and how to achieve justice for workers whose health and livelihood are threatened by climate change.

Comrade Echezona Asuzu is the National Coordinator of the NLC Climate Change, Green Jobs and Just Transition Program

stuc

Scottish TUC demands a worker-led just transition

At congress, trade unions backed a motion which outlined shared demands for a just transition that is led by workers across their workplaces and communities. The motion calls out the lack of progress after years of warm words from politicians.

It sets out the need for an Industrial Strategy to deliver the necessary system change in transport, energy, and buildings while maintaining jobs and skills, and creating new opportunities across supply chains in Scotland.

Workers and trade unions taking action on Just Transition in their workplaces and communities were recognised and applauded by Congress delegates.

You can read this motion, and all other motions, **on the STUC website.**

See also the **STUV Just Transition Newsletter.**



Photo: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/350org/>

RMT backing for free public transport campaign



The RMT London Transport regional council, representing 13,000 London Underground and Transport for London employees, has backed a call for public transport in the capital to be made free for users.

“Essential public services should be socially provided and accessible for free, not paid-for commodities”, said a resolution adopted by the council, submitted to it from the RMT Bakerloo line branch.

The council has met with the Fare Free London campaign, set up in February by labour, community and environmental activists, and we plan to work together to popularise the “zero fares” demand.

As a social justice measure, “zero fares” is tried and tested in numerous European cities, the Fare Free London speakers said at the council. Properly combined with measures to discourage unnecessary journeys in private cars, it can be a powerful weapon in tackling climate change and chronic air pollution.

In discussion, one speaker said that transport workers’ jobs would improve if they did not have to collect fares; revenue-collection staff could be reallocated. Another asked whether free public transport would work best if public ownership of transport is extended – to which the answer was yes.

A third speaker said that the big challenge would be to build wide popular support in London for the “zero fares” demand. That’s the big job in front of us.

Fare Free London has also won the support of other trade union branches and made its case at the recent Campaign Against Climate Change conference.

We are hoping, too, to build links with other campaign groups in the UK and internationally. There is some momentum around free public transport in Glasgow, where the city council is funding a limited programme, with a view to possible wider implementation.

There is also progress in the Strathclyde region (which includes Glasgow) on re-regulating bus services. After a long campaign by Get Glasgow Moving, the regional transport authority have acknowledged that deregulation has failed and have put the potential for a new publicly-owned bus company back on the agenda.

On Sunday 19 May Fare Free London will hold a strategy discussion to consider how to build the campaign in the coming months. If anyone wishes to participate, please email us on info@farefreelondon.org to register. There is more information about the campaign, and a detailed briefing, at farefreelondon.org.

Simon Pirani, Fare Free London.

Justice for Zane: Climate Crisis and Contaminated Land



Zane Gbangbola. Photo copyright: [Truth about Zane](#).

Ten years ago, 7-year-old Zane Gbangbola tragically lost his life. The basement of his home in Chertsey was flooded with water from the river Thames, and evidence suggests this allowed hydrogen cyanide gas from a former landfill site nearby to seep into the house. In fact, hydrogen cyanide gas was detected 3 times in the home. Both Zane and his father Kye suffered a cardiac arrest. Zane tragically lost his life and Kye was paralysed from the waist down. His parents, Kye Gbangbola and Nicole Lawler, have been tirelessly seeking justice and answers ever since

The inquest found that Zane died from carbon monoxide poisoning, but his parents are convinced that it was hydrogen cyanide gas from a nearby landfill, a view which is supported by the NEU. Doctors determined the cause of Kye's paraplegia to be exposure to hydrogen cyanide gas and the deadly gas was detected at the time by the fire brigade. Despite this, the inquest effectively pushed the blame on to his grieving parents and carbon monoxide from a water pump in their home. Carbon monoxide was, however, never detected, and the inquest found the pump didn't even work. The family was also denied legal aid. This scandal bears all the hallmarks of yet another government cover up, akin to the ongoing Post Office scandal.

With the impact of climate change resulting in greater frequency and intensity of floodings, the risks of such events will only continue to rise, with infrastructure unable to cope. Indeed, almost exactly 10 years after Zane's death, in January this year, the Thames once again burst its banks, leaving the family facing the same peril and Kye and Nicole suffered the trauma of needing to evacuate their home for a second time. Nothing had been done in the intervening period to make the historic landfill site safe, and no remediation efforts had been undertaken to prevent further flooding.

Zane no longer has a voice, but it would be a fitting tribute if thousands of union members stood with his family by helping to share the shocking facts about this case and raise the profile of the campaign.

- Watch and share the new video **fronted by NEU General Secretary Daniel Kebede**
- Check out the website **Truth About Zane** to find out more and keep up to date with the campaign
- Sign and share the petition **CALL FOR AN INVESTIGATION AND INDEPENDENT PANEL INQUIRY INTO THE DEATH OF 7 YEAR OLD ZANE | 38 Degrees'**

The NEU is built on the principle of fighting injustice and we will continue to support justice for Zane.

Sarah Lyons NEU Health, Safety and Environment

After the rainiest 18 months since records began, the Met Office is projecting that winters in the UK are going to be 30% wetter by 2050; so the prospect of flooded out landfills will need serious attention. Ed

Going through the motions

PCS has an Environment section of its agenda. With the centrality of climate breakdown becoming ever more pressing, this is one way to address as many angles as possible for union action. This year there are five motions.

One seeks for conference to instruct *“the NEC to put environmental issues at the centre of all policy decisions and bargaining positions, including explicitly linking the fight for worker’s rights with the fight for climate and biodiversity action”* including instructions to

Another argues to

- seek legal avenues to protect PCS members who refuse to support policies that go against the advice of the Climate Change Committee and the Office for Environmental Protection and publicly voice support for the Climate Change Committee and the Office for Environmental Protection as they push-back on the UK Government’s regressive, anti-scientific policies which threaten the environment.
- oppose the narrative that the UK has taken sufficient action on climate change and biodiversity loss and therefore has no obligation to radically reduce its emissions and restore its ecosystems.
- oppose the narrative that the expansion of domestic fossil fuel extraction is a) compatible with the UK’s domestic and international climate change commitments or b) will help improve the UK’s energy security

The third motion is the Climate Change is a class issue motion that is being promoted by GJA, CACCTU and others, with the added instruction to take it to the TUC for discussion in September.

The fourth emphasises the need for the trade union movement and PCS to take a lead role on climate issues, to lobby the Labour party to stick to its green investment commitments, and *“demand that government publishes a comprehensive “Green Impact Assessment” for every policy decision.”* This includes countering the rightwing propaganda that green investment is a waste of public funds and to campaign for the international finance and practical assistance needed for poorer countries. Finally, it also calls on the union to *“establish a national green bargaining agenda/claim and provide guidance to bargaining representatives as to how that agenda may be pursued in delegated bargaining units.”*

The fifth notes that the current UK *“Greening Government Commitments”* are *“not linked to science-based targets and lack the drive government needs to meet its 2050 net zero commitments”* nor *“linked to funding to departments, which puts immense pressure on staff trying to deliver against these”* and instructs *“the National Executive Committee to urgently appoint negotiators and discussions around how government delivers environmental commitments through GGC’s and Civil Service wide targets to put pressure to improve the development of GGC’s across government to have these targets be linked to long-term Net Zero 2050 and future climate change/ environmental commitments and for government funding be directly linked to enabling delivery and for this to be ring fenced allocations and review this at least annually if not quarterly and create a feedback loop between PCS groups either by their president or nominated lead to discuss and share government progress against GGC commitments to enable the sharing of best practice across government that PCS can use in negotiations.”*



Going through the motions

Action points from NEU Heat Motion passed this year

The Union executive was instructed to

- a. *Work with districts and reps, as well as other unions in creating a policy for working conditions in adverse heat, applying existing guidelines from the TUC on working conditions in temperatures considered unreasonable (above 30°C) and the World Health Organisation's guidelines on working conditions in temperatures considered uncomfortable (above 24°C)*
- b. *Encourage districts and reps to refer to existing policies for working conditions in adverse heat implemented by trade unions and actively promote the joint union heatwave protocol across the membership, at the start of every summer term, and encourage districts to lobby for the adoption of this in their local authorities, trusts and schools.*
- c. *Encourage districts to work with local authorities, child protection services and employers for the implementation of a policy for indoor and outdoor working conditions in adverse heat*
- d. *Encourage schools to adopt a policy for working conditions in adverse heat as advised by their respective district*
- e. *Direct districts to work with unions with existing policies in lobbying local councillors and MPs in a campaign for a legal maximum working temperature*
- f. *Direct green reps to conduct research in their district that supports the rationale for a campaign for a maximum legal working temperature.*
- g. *Campaign for maximum working temperature to be established in law*
- h. *Launch a campaign around dress codes for staff and pupils in the summer, calling for schools to relax them in cases of extreme heat*
- i. *Work with other unions, and tie in with our work on just transition, to campaign for schools to be retrofitted to be carbon neutral, and able to cope with the adverse temperatures*
- j. *Fully support and encourage local school groups to take action to fight against unreasonable working conditions brought about by heat and develop training for reps on organising around this.*
- k. *Start discussions within the union and take legal advice, on a move to combine green and safety reps into a new "health, safety and environmental rep" role to gain more rights for green reps so the union is in a stronger position to fight the effects of climate change and extreme weather events*

national
education
union



Events and Courses

NUCLEAR POWER: A HARMFUL DISTRACTION TO CLIMATE CHANGE?

Monday 13 May 2024 @ 1900



*Sam Mason, Labour CND
Prof Linda Clarke, University of
Westminster and Islington Labour
Environment Forum
Dr Phil Johnstone, University of Sussex*



Greener Jobs Alliance: Building Climate Literacy into Skills Training – the Canadian experience

Tuesday 14 May 1- 2 pm in person at UCU HQ ,Carlow Street London NW1 (Nearest tube Mornington Crescent) or email Tahirlatif51@icloud.com to register and receive a link if attending online.

One of the strategic problems with making a green transition in the UK is the chronic skills shortages in key trades. But, making that transition depends not only on training up a new generation of engineers, plumbers, fitters, carpenters, retrofitters, heating specialists, designers across the whole range of occupations, it is embedding climate literacy into each and every course, so that apprentices and reskilling workers understand not only the technicalities involved in the jobs they will be doing, but the overall social imperative of doing them, and doing them well. This is a necessary part of re-educating and retooling our society at all levels so that the people doing the work to make the transition are also driving it throughout society.

Dr John Calvert and **Professor Linda Clarke** have been working with the Canadian trade unions to get climate literacy embedded into the new set of standards for training courses in the Canadian construction trade. In this meeting they will explain how that was done, and Linda will touch on current developments in the EU too.

HEAT STRIKE

WORKPLACE TEMPERATURE & CLIMATE JUSTICE

ONLINE WORKSHOP
Wed 22nd May - 6.30pm

Sign up here:

tinyurl.com/HeatStrikeWorkshop



This has three demands

1. **Set a national maximum working temperature** - When it's too hot to work, Heat Strike. Since 2008 unions have been calling for a maximum working temperature, but the UK government still isn't listening. We demand the UK government set a national maximum working temperature.
2. **Put in place a heat wave furlow scheme** - Heat waves in the UK are only set to get hotter and more frequent, working people can't afford to bear the cost of climate breakdown and they shouldn't have to. We demand the government and employers set up a heat wave furlow scheme.
3. **Make a climate action plan** - The UK government's climate action plan has been ruled illegally inadequate. People are feeling the heat right now. We demand the government make a plan to protect workers and vulnerable people now, and to avert the worst of climate collapse in years to come.

Given the anti-Trade Union legislation in the UK and the tight regulations of strikes, the Heat Strike is not a legal strike but a Day of Action, on a similar model than the Climate Strikes. We are aiming to include a number of workplace activities Trade Unions can engage with on the Day of Action whether they are lunchtime walkout, stalls or cool stations.

Organised by **Heat Strike** and **Tipping Point**. [Register here.](#)

CLIMATE JUSTICE FOR STEEL WORKERS



TUE 28 MAY, 7PM - ONLINE

REGISTER: [TINYURL.COM/STEELCLIMATEJUSTICE](https://tinyurl.com/steelclimatejustice)

In January 2024, Tata Steel confirmed that it would shut down its Port Talbot blast furnaces with the loss of 2,800 jobs. This announcement came a few months after it was confirmed the company would receive £500 million subsidies from the government to transition its site to electric ARC furnaces, raising questions on how a 'green' transition should happen to the detriment of workers and their communities.

Our online event [Climate Justice for Steel Workers](#) will welcome Unite rep Jason Wyatt, Steel worker at Port Talbot and hear about their dispute.

LCFCH Meeting on decarbonising council housing

Labour Campaign for Council Housing zoom meeting 25 May 3.00pm

Speakers will include

- Clive Lewis MP (pictured)
- Emma Taylor-Beal (who works in the industry)

[Details and links here.](#)





Changing the world
of work for good

TUC – Introduction to the role of the Green/Environmental Rep

3 days – 11 to 13 June 2024 (9.30 until 4.30)

Classroom course at City of Bristol College – Parkway Campus

(free parking or 5 minutes' walk from Bristol Parkway Station)

This course will help all Green/Environmental Reps – or potential green reps to find out:

- Why the environment is a trade union issue
- The role of the Green/Environmental Rep
- Understand environment definitions
- Discuss workplace processes and their impact on the environment
- Be able to map environmental issues and look at greening the supply chain
- Engaging with management over the environment
- Support in getting the branch and members on board
- Carry out environmental surveys in the workplace
- Communicate about and promote environmental issues at work

To apply - www.tuc.org.uk/training/TUCcourses#southwest or email tuenquiries@cityofbristol.ac.uk

This course is for reps in the South West – if you are not in this area please email tuenquiries@cityofbristol.ac.uk to see if you are eligible for funding if you want to attend.

Green Bites

Stats of the Month

3/10

UK government score for pursuit of its own “energy security” targets. They have failed in those most in line with sustainability; to retrofit 450,000 homes by 2026, cutting disproportionate levies on electricity bills, new offshore wind projects. Plans to deliver frameworks for eight new nuclear power stations have also fallen short. The Clean Heat Market Mechanism framework and the 2026 phase-out of off-grid gas homes has been pushed back. Reforms to National Grid connection and transmission, and roll-out of solar technology, are going too slowly. Their successes are a small curate’s egg; the welcome establishment of a National Grid Future Systems operator offset by issuing more [licenses](#) on oil and gas projects. Progressing final decision [processes](#) and contract selections for hydrogen projects is ambiguous, because this is essential for some industrial processes, but a dead end for domestic heating and cooking.

70%

Of flights are taken by 15% of the population. The New Economics Foundation [proposal for a Frequent Flyer Levy](#) aims to tax the people who can afford it and cut aviation emissions without penalising ordinary people.

171
Gigawatts

New wind power capacity installed in 2023, a 50% increase on 2022. Over 65% of the new capacity was installed in China, with the US, Brazil, Germany and India the next biggest markets. To meet the global target to triple renewable energy by 2030 the industry must install twice as much new wind capacity in the next seven years as it has in the last 40. [From GWEC.](#)

40%

Projected drop in the cost of battery storage by 2030, from the IEA. *“The combination of solar PV (photovoltaic) and batteries is today competitive with new coal plants in India,” and “just in the next few years, it will be cheaper than new coal in China and gas-fired power in the United States.”* **Fatih Birol**

30%

Quantity of [global electricity produced by renewable sources](#) last year, up from just 12% in 2022, beginning to squeeze out fossil fuels. Emissions from this sector are now slated to decline.

-12%

Potential impact of nature degradation on UK GDP, according to research from the [Green Finance Institute](#), which is supported by DEFRA and the Treasury. By comparison the effect of the 2008 financial crash was - 5% and the COVID pandemic was - 11%. Campaigns against rewilding and to maintain unsustainable farming methods, like those we have seen recently in the EU, are pushing in this direction.

\$900
Billion

How much could be raised by 2030 by properly taxing fossil fuel companies just in the OECD countries. The [Climate Damages Tax Report](#) argues that \$720 billion of this could finance the Loss and Damage Fund for developing countries. *“The richest, most economically powerful countries, with the greatest historical responsibility for climate change, need look no further than their fossil fuel industries to collect tens of billions a year in extra income by taxing them far more rigorously,”* Stamp Out Poverty Director David Hillman

Green Bites

New Rules: Acid test for CCUS in US

According to new regulations, Coal plants that plan to stay open beyond 2039 would have to cut or capture 90% of their carbon dioxide emissions by 2032.

Plants due to retire by 2039 would face a less stringent standard but still would have to capture some emissions.

Coal plants that are set to retire by 2032 would not be subject to the new rules. Having spent years arguing that CCUS makes their plants viable, the industry is now arguing against these proposals, indicating that it can't be.



Photo by Sam LaRussa on Unsplash

Quote of the Month

"The pace of climate breakdown that we're witnessing is faster than I think the vast majority of climate scientists were anticipating five or 10 years ago. Things are changing so rapidly that myself and quite a few of my colleagues do have concerns that some of our estimates could be on the conservative side."

Prof Jonathan Bamber: University of Bristol Guterres

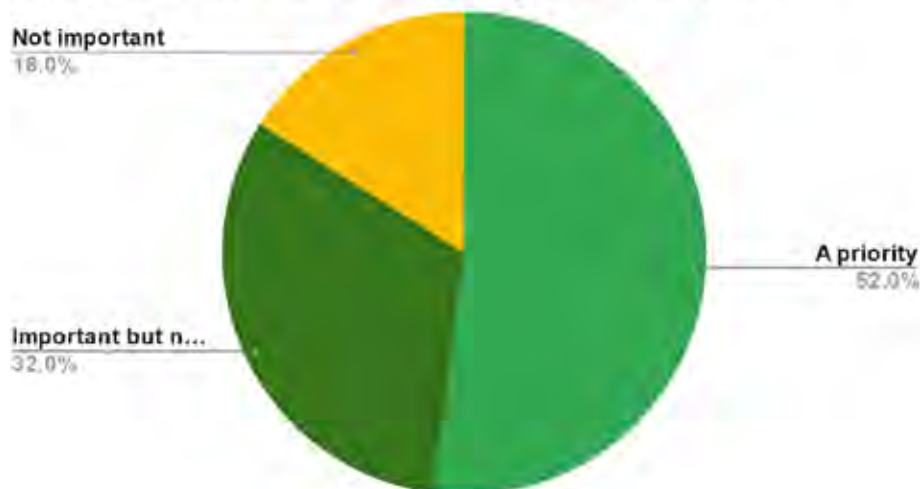
New on the Debate Blog

- **#1. Phew! What a scorcher! Overheating is good for you!"**
- **#2. Was it really hotter in the Mediaeval warm period?**
- **International Workers Memorial Day and a sense of perspective about the climate crisis**

Website of the Month

Friends of the Earth research with the University of Exeter showing that England could generate thirteen times more energy from renewable sources than it currently does, using a fraction of the land area currently devoted to golf courses (and therefore posing no conflict with food production) [can be explored here](#).

European voters views on priority of climate action



For the Euro elections in June 84% say climate action is important. 52% that it is a priority. Only 16% that it isn't.

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