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## Welcome to the first monthly newsletter

from the GJA. We intend to bring you the latest information on trades unions and the environment. You can sign up for these updates by visiting our website at [www.greenerjobsalliance.co.uk](http://www.greenerjobsalliance.co.uk) and registering as a supporter.

This is a free service and does not imply agreement with the content of the reports and articles listed. Finally, please contact us with your views and any updates you would like us to promote. We can be contacted through our email [gjacomsg@gmail.com](mailto:gjacoms@gmail.com)

## 1. TUC Congress green fringe meeting 13 September, Brighton

There's a great panel of speakers at the only green fringe meeting at this year's TUC Congress in Brighton, on **Tuesday 13 September from 17.45**.

It's open to delegates and guests who can register at <http://www.eventdata.co.uk/Visitor/TUCCongress.aspx>.

Organisers: **Campaign Against Climate Change Trade Union Group**

Where: **West Bar, Brighton Centre**

Title: **No Jobs on a Dead Planet?  
What Does the Paris Agreement  
on Climate Change Mean for Trade  
Unions and What Should We Call for  
from the Government?**

The meeting will debate the challenges, difficult decisions and opportunities that trade unions face in responding to the threat of catastrophic climate change, while safeguarding jobs in the transition to a low carbon economy. It will also consider the outcome of the UN climate talks in December 2015, the record of our own government and the warning from the ITUC's Trade Union Climate Summit in September that there are "no jobs on a dead planet".

We will hear from speakers about the latest TUC climate change policy debate on the floor of Congress, where this year a TSSA union motion *After Paris: Climate change, just transition and climate jobs*, demands some radical new thinking – see *TUC Congress motions briefing in the appendix*.

Speakers:

**Manuel Cortes:**  
*General Secretary, TSSA*

**Bill Adams:**  
*Regional Secretary, Yorkshire & Humber TUC*

**Chris Baugh:**  
*Assistant General Secretary, PCS*

**Caroline Lucas:**  
*MP for Brighton Pavilion (tbc)*

Chair: **Suzanne Jeffery**, *Campaign against Climate Change Trade Union Group*

**Please register as soon as possible.**



## 2. Briefing: TUC Congress motions 2016



*Kim Seng, Creative Commons*

Unions have tabled four motions on energy, climate change and industrial policy at this year's TUC Congress in Brighton, September 2016. Don't worry, this photo wasn't taken on Brighton seafront (though there is a power station at nearby Shoreham).

The climate change motion tabled by TSSA, the transport union, **After Paris: Climate change, just transition and climate jobs**, commits the TUC to 'develop an active energy and climate change strategy... and to actively engage trade unionists in debate and campaigning on these issues.' TSSA wants to see a "just transition employment strategy for climate jobs and well paid, skilled, sustainable employment." It targets an end to fossil fuels, airport

expansion, air pollution and the new global free trade deals threatening the Paris agreement. TSSA also wants the TUC to support action to tackle the growing crisis of climate refugees, for peoples displaced by harsh environmental changes.

It has become increasingly clear that the transition to an equitable, sustainable energy system can only occur if there is decisive shift in power towards workers, communities and the public. The TSSA motion connects the energy democracy agenda to union struggles and campaigns in ways that should build broad membership engagement.

Both Unite and Community demand an **industrial strategy for steel**, an industry still threatened by high energy costs, cheap Chinese imports and 'the neglect by government that has led to the steel crisis.' They want a place for steel 'in an active industrial strategy' with unions at the table, and with orders for UK-made steel to be used in all major infrastructure projects.

Finally, a GMB motion takes a broader view, calling for a '**modern industrial strategy**' to encourage technological innovation, stimulate growth, skills and to revitalise our key industries.

See Appendix below for the wording of the 4 motions.

Motions available at:

[https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/Congress\\_2016\\_Preliminary\\_Agenda\\_LR.pdf](https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/Congress_2016_Preliminary_Agenda_LR.pdf)

## 3. UK industrial strategy

**With the TUC Congress 2016 again debating energy and climate change strategy, we look at the UK's carbon reduction commitments and what they mean for jobs, industries and trade unions?**

The planet is warming at a pace not experienced in the past 1,000 years, making it 'very unlikely' that the world will stay within the crucial temperature limit set by the UN in Paris last December.

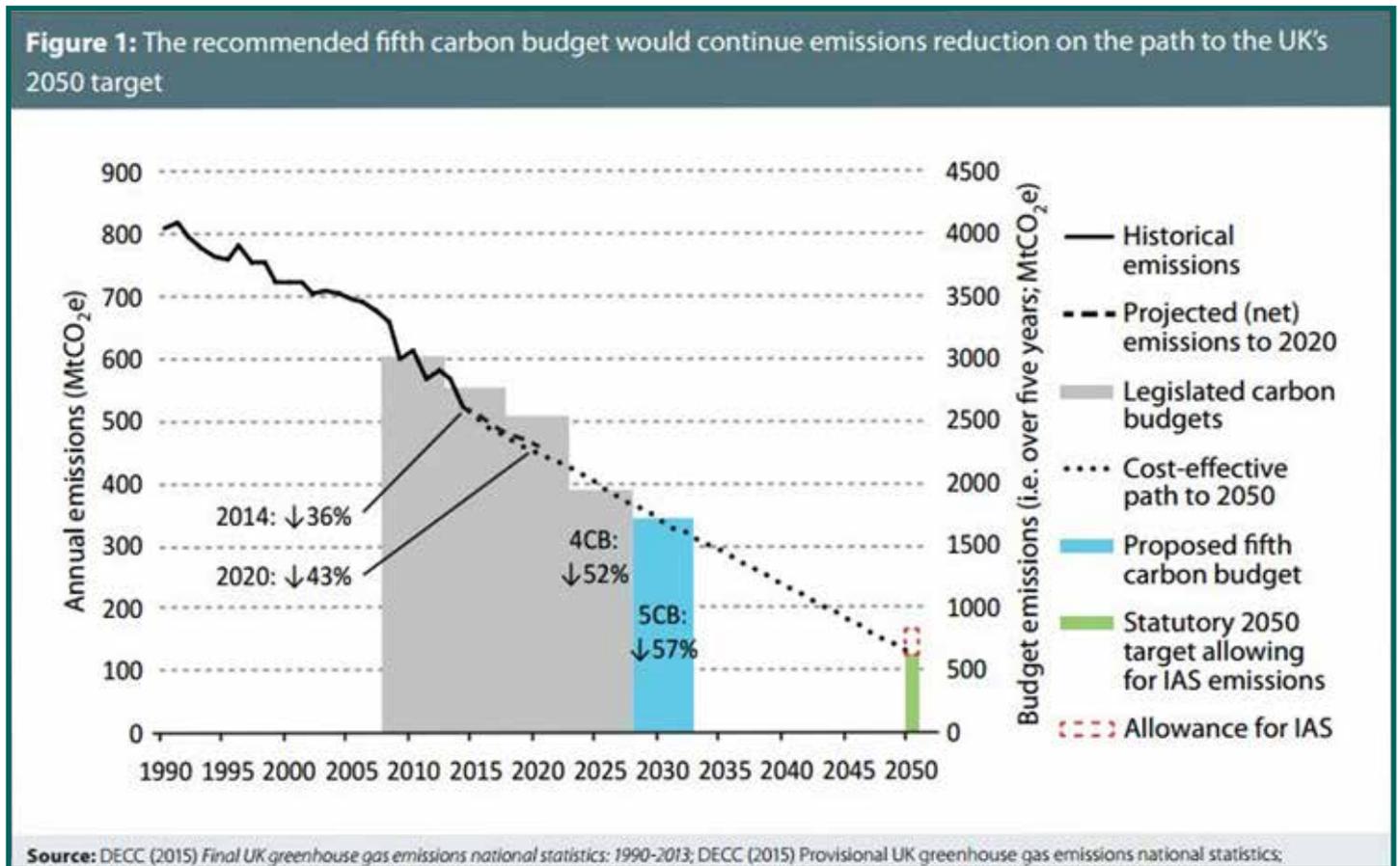
This year, average global temperatures are peaking at about 1.4 degrees above levels experienced in the 19th Century, perilously close to the 1.5 degree limit agreed in the landmark Paris climate agreement.

New research from Carbon Brief shows just five years of our carbon emissions at current levels will wipe out any chance of restraining global temperatures to a 1.5 degree increase and avoid runaway climate change. In 2015, global carbon emissions from everything from fossil fuels to farming were 39 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. At this rate, the UN's estimate of the 1.5 degrees carbon budget will be breached by 2021.

As our contribution to the UN's climate change agreement in Paris, the government has promised radical cuts to our domestic carbon emissions of nearly two-thirds by the 2030s. Every sector of the economy is affected by this commitment – energy, manufacturing, our heavy industries like steel, transport, construction and public services. These sectors all have high levels of union membership. Every union has a stake in this transition. The immediate priority is for the UK to develop a modern low carbon industrial strategy detailing how the UK will meet its long term carbon reductions. But with opportunities as well as risks ahead, an industrial plan for a low carbon era needs the support of all stakeholders – government, unions, business and environmental groups.

## So what are the UK's climate change targets, and how will this affect jobs and industries?

The UK's carbon reduction commitments require a deep 57% cut in the UK's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2030. The government has accepted this target on receiving independent advice from Committee on Climate Change on the UK's fifth carbon budget. So the UK is legally bound to cut national carbon emissions from over 800 million tonnes a year in 1990 (see graph) to 300 million tonnes in 2032, in a planned series of five-year carbon budgets that so far reach out to 2032. The longer term goal is zero carbon Britain by or before 2050.



There's no hiding place: every sector of the economy has a part to play, from transport and heavy industry to energy and households. To reach these goals, the committee spells out what needs to be done:

- a re-tooling of the UK's motor industry to mass produce electric vehicles;
- virtually zero carbon energy supply, so a huge growth in renewables and no room for a fracking industry;
- making steel, chemicals, cement and other energy intensive products in radically different, energy efficient ways, with changes to industrial processes and carbon capture technologies;
- a nationwide home insulation scheme to cut energy usage; and
- a transport strategy in which no sector, not even aviation, has special privileges to pollute.

Because unions are well organised in all of these industries, they have a clear vested interest in developing a modern, low carbon industrial strategy that promotes and supports all of these new developments, including the skills and training infrastructure required.

<sup>1</sup> [www.carbonbrief.org](http://www.carbonbrief.org)

<sup>2</sup> <http://eciu.net/blog/2016/hornsea-could-signal-the-start-of-a-low-carbon-industrial-strategy>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/the-fifth-carbon-budget-the-next-step-towards-a-low-carbon-economy/>

## 4. Transport Sector

Motor manufacturing is a UK success story. Yet transport is responsible for a fifth of the UK's carbon emissions. By 2030, according to the government's independent advisors, cuts in this sector mean that electric vehicles will need to make up 60% of new car and van purchases. This is a huge call, because in 2015, just 72,700, or 2.7% of the 2.6 million new vehicle registrations were electric or hybrids.

The motor industry has begun to change its production fleet. Nissan LEAF, the first fully electric car, has just started production at the plant in Sunderland, setting the industry on a new path with radical implications for investment, skills and employment in this core UK industry. The government has no clear plan for low carbon transport, providing limited support for electric vehicle charging points and plant investment, but raising vehicle excise duty on low emission vehicles. To date, the UK doesn't seem to have a strategy for the mass production of electric and other low emission vehicles.

For electric vehicles to deliver genuine emissions reductions they should also be charged by low carbon electricity – see photo. Meanwhile, the independent committee also argues that aviation should plan for emissions in 2050 to be 'no higher than those in 2005.' Can aviation also justifiably expect to carry on with its business as usual?



## 5. Power sector

In the power sector, the UK is committed to transform the 'carbon intensity' of power supply. By 2030, the 'carbon intensity' must decline from around 450 grammes of CO<sub>2</sub> per kilowatt hour in 2014 to below 100 g/kWh in 2030. A radical remix of low-carbon generation is needed – away from fossil fuels towards renewables, nuclear and some back-up gas power stations fitted with carbon capture technology.

The investments now going into the North Sea windfarms, such as Dong Energy's 300-turbine Hornsea Project together with the Siemens turbine making plant on Hull docks, show the jobs and skills potential of an industrial strategy based around low-carbon technology. Unions in the regions are latching onto the importance of these growth hubs. They are crucial elements of a 'just transition' in regions such as Yorkshire undergoing massive changes with the closure of coal mines and power stations.



Offshore wind power and carbon capture technologies for power plant and heavy industries like steelmaking both have a key role to play in reducing our carbon emissions in a cost effective way.

However, the government has cancelled the UK's carbon capture programme and cut support for solar power and onshore wind projects, the cheapest of renewables, although the May government is apparently having second thoughts over Hinkley Point. Its troubles are many: the price promised for Hinkley's electricity at £92.50 per MWh is double the wholesale price; the total lifetime cost of the nuclear power plant could reach £37bn; its reactors are of unproven design; and there are concerns over whether China's involvement in the UK's power system is a security risk.

The UK can meet its energy and climate change targets even if Hinkley is not built. The alternatives - further wind farm development and investment in energy savings at home and in industry - work out cheaper. But Hinkley continues to overshadow great innovations in the renewables sector - eg a £200m investment in the Outer Hebrides will pump and store sea water in new hydropower reservoir, creating 150 jobs together with community benefits. The large pumped storage hydro scheme on the island will be capable of generating 300MW of electricity.

The majority of the British public – including the majority of Conservative voters – support nationalising the energy and rail companies. The transition to a secure, affordable and low carbon energy system can only occur if there is decisive

shift in power towards workers, communities and the public. Publicly-owned energy companies are the norm across Europe. French, German and Danish power companies are profiting hugely from the UK's privatised energy system. The pretax price of electricity for UK residential consumers is the highest in the EU. Step outside the UK and a wide range of state, city and community energy systems is to be found, eg Danish state-owned Dong Energy is building the UK's largest windfarms in the North Sea.

The urgency of the climate crisis calls for an energy policy in the public interest: connecting the energy democracy agenda to union campaigns for a just transition to a low carbon future, in ways that builds broad membership engagement and solidarity across social movements that share similar goals.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/hinkley-point-edf-nuclear-power-station-deal-how-uk-could-pull-out-a7207776.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://eciu.net/press-releases/2016/cheaper-quicker-simpler-alternatives-to-hinkley>

<sup>6</sup> <https://yougov.co.uk/news/2013/11/04/nationalise-energy-and-rail-companies-say-public/>

<sup>7</sup> *Public ownership of the UK energy system, Pro David Hall*, [https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzZWcWkNKmz\\_LVdJcGZ1ODUxRTA/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BzZWcWkNKmz_LVdJcGZ1ODUxRTA/view)

<sup>8</sup> *See Trade Unions for Energy Democracy -* <http://unionsforenergydemocracy.org/about/about-the-initiative/>

## 6. Skills and technology sector

The government's **Post 16 Skills Strategy** was meant to 'better equip young people for the demands of the future.' But the plan says nothing at all about sustainability skills for the future, even though climate change is set to be the single greatest influence on work in a warming world – from healthcare and fire and rescue services to environmental management and engineering. And despite their long tradition of support for lifelong skills and workplace learning, predictably, there's no mention of trade unions in the government's strategy.

The transition to a low carbon and resource efficient economy can drive sustainable economic recovery and job creation in every part of the country as well as making existing jobs more secure. But the Greener Jobs Alliance argues that this requires a more strategic national and local approach to deliver the workforce skills needed and to stimulate demand for clean energy and energy efficiency services.

The government's independent advisors emphasise the importance of government-led support for new **low-carbon** technologies - renewables, battery storage, low-carbon vehicles, large-scale carbon capture and storage, new energy and carbon-efficient processes in manufacturing and the energy intensive industries. Yet the government's austerity programme has led to it selling off the UK's Green Investment

Bank, cancelling its £1 billion support for carbon capture technology and cutting support for renewable energy, so it's difficult to see how the huge levels of new technology finance will be delivered under this regime.

The need for global commitment to tackling climate change has never been greater, nor has the speed of innovation in low-carbon technologies, which is resulting in reduced costs and new opportunities. The Government's acceptance of the fifth carbon budget out to the 2030s places the UK in a position to take full advantage of an emerging world where low-carbon power, vehicles, buildings, and industry are the norm. Every sector of the economy is affected by this commitment – energy, manufacturing, our heavy industries like steel, transport, construction and public services. These sectors all have high levels of union membership. Every union has a stake in ensuring a just transition that brings the full benefits of change with new investments in jobs and skills across the UK. The immediate priority is for the UK to develop a modern **low carbon** industrial strategy detailing how the UK will meet its long term carbon reductions.

<sup>9</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-skills-plan-and-independent-report-on-technical-education](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-skills-plan-and-independent-report-on-technical-education)

<sup>10</sup> [http://www.greenerjobsalliance.co.uk/?page\\_id=21](http://www.greenerjobsalliance.co.uk/?page_id=21)

<sup>11</sup> <http://eciu.net/blog/2016/hornsea-could-signal-the-start-of-a-low-carbon-industrial-strategy>

## 7. Successful launch of the GJA

The GJA launched our brand new website over the summer. It has already received around 2,500 hits and the list of supporters is growing rapidly. The website hosts a free online course called '**Climate Change Awareness**' made up of 4 modules that can be used in a flexible way to raise awareness. Initial feedback has been very positive. For example, we received this message from Stockport UNISON branch:

“I wanted to inform you that with our (environmental reps) persistence, we have persuaded Stockport Council to provide a link to your online carbon literacy course. It will be hosted on our staff intranet, so staff can peruse at their leisure, it seems like a really positive step forward for the council. Stockport UNISON environmental reps look set to provide a 'short introductory text' next to the link, to provide general info on the course.”

Please contact us if you want any support on the use of these materials in workplaces or community venues.

<http://www.greenerjobsalliance.co.uk/>

## 8. Appendix: Text of Congress motions 2016

### After Paris: Climate change, just transition and climate jobs - TSSA

Congress welcomes the recognition in the COP21 Paris Agreement of 1.5 degrees rise as a safe limit and the role of fossil fuels in climate change, but regrets its' failure to deliver the binding legal commitments necessary to achieve this or any safe containment, including immediate action on fossil fuels and climate justice.

Congress condemns the Government's dangerous dash for oil and gas, and welcomes, in contrast, Jeremy Corbyn's backing for One Million Climate Jobs and a Zero Carbon Britain by 2050.

Congress welcomes the Paris-launched, 'Break Free from Fossil Fuels', the global justice movement formed by frontline communities affected by fossil fuel extraction to accelerate a just transition to 100% renewable energy.

Congress commits the TUC to develop an active energy and climate change strategy, and to work with other organisations to campaign for:

- a. energy democracy and a rapid transition from fossil fuels
- b. a stop to airport expansion
- c. promotion of alternative to short-haul flights including publically owned rail in UK and Europe
- d. a genuine commitment to reducing lethal air pollutants
- e. a just transition employment strategy to climate jobs and well-paid, skilled, sustainable employment
- f. improved links between anti-war, refugee and climate campaign movements
- g. action against TITP, CETA and other trade treaties threatening climate justice
- h. a Climate Justice Fund funded by wealthy nations and polluting companies

Congress agrees to lobby the Labour Party and the Government on these demands and to actively engage trade unionists in debate and campaigning on these issues.

### Industrial strategy for steel - Community

Congress recognises that the steel crisis, which came to public attention in October 2015 when SSI went into liquidation, is far from over. Congress believes that it is vital that the profile of the Save our Steel campaign is maintained and pressure increased on government to deliver the level playing field UK steelmakers need to be sustainable long-term. Congress notes that UK steelworkers have heard plenty of warm words from government and that numerous working groups have been established; however, to date little has been delivered for industry in terms of tangible results. Congress notes that the key areas where UK steelmakers are at a competitive disadvantage are exactly the same as they were a year ago: energy costs, business rates, procurement and unfair trade practices. Congress believes the increasing fragmentation of the UK steel industry and the UK's uncertain economic future mean that now more than ever we need government to adopt a comprehensive industrial strategy for steel. Congress notes and welcomes the belated apparent recognition by government of the importance of industrial strategy and will seek to hold ministers to account on their commitments. Congress calls on the General Council to:

- i continue to support and raise the profile of the Save our Steel campaign.
- ii lobby the government to develop, with trade union involvement, an industrial strategy for steel involving a long-term strategic focus on investment, skills and research and development.

## Save Our Steel - Unite

Congress deplores the neglect by government that has led to a crisis in the UK steel industry with devastating consequences for UK steel workers, their communities and the wider economy. The UK steel industry has suffered from the dumping of cheap Chinese steel, high energy bills, and the absence of an industrial policy with manufacturing at its heart.

Congress recognises that steel is a strategically important industry and has a vital role to play in the active industrial strategy that the country so urgently needs. This crisis affects not only the UK steel industry and its workers but the whole of manufacturing including the automotive sector, aerospace and engineering, as well as supply industries and our national infrastructure.

Congress calls on the General Council to campaign to ensure a long-term and sustainable future for the UK steel industry with an active role for UK government, including a place for the steel industry in an active industrial strategy and a commitment to use UK steel for all major infrastructure and construction projects and government-backed contracts.

## Supporting a modern industrial strategy - GMB

Congress notes with concern that the UK needs an immediate injection in investment in research, innovation and skills to be able to lead and compete in the global marketplace and in order to meet the challenges facing our manufacturing and service industries. Jobs and research and development have migrated out of the country mainly on the basis of price or cost. UK spending in R&D on developing new technology and products should be around three per cent of GDP but the UK and the EU averages less than half that of countries like South Korea. In order to encourage technological innovations, stimulate growth and revitalise them our key industries will need a modern industrial strategy across our four nations to open up new markets and job opportunities.

Congress notes that the government needs to focus on infrastructure programmes that will impact on productivity and business confidence regionally and nationally. These programmes must recognise public procurement policies to support and retain UK jobs, skills and industries. Following the referendum, the government needs an urgent plan in place to cushion us from another recession.

Congress calls on the TUC to:

- i work with affiliated unions to develop a national plan to shape current and future industrial strategy
- ii develop procurement policies that put trade unions and those who invest in skills at the heart of the process
- iii launch a campaign to retain and uplift high quality skills in the UK.

Motions are available on the TUC website at:

[https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/Congress\\_2016\\_Preliminary\\_Agenda\\_LR.pdf](https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/Congress_2016_Preliminary_Agenda_LR.pdf)