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1. Editorial: Just Transition

In this Newsletter, we are launching a new [Joint Statement on Just Transition](#), and would urge you to offer your organisation's support. Global trade unions successfully campaigned to have a commitment to a 'just transition' inserted into the UN's Paris Agreement in 2015. What happens next here in the UK will determine if this term has any meaning.

Social dialogue is the key to Just Transition, with unions at its heart. Moving to a modern low carbon economy in such a way as to protect workers' livelihoods, create new industries and deliver a fairer society in all regions and devolved nations.

The Scottish TUC and Friends of the Earth have shown the way. They successfully campaigned for the Scottish Government to set up a Just Transition Commission to help deliver Scotland's climate change and energy plans. It's now government policy <http://bit.ly/2Gq1eiP>

The UK government's Industrial and Clean Growth strategies fail to reference the need for a Just Transition. So we launched the statement at the Campaign Against Climate Change conference in London on 10 March, to widespread support among over 200 delegates. We gained early backing from PCS, the NUT section of the National Education Union, Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, People and Planet and the National Union of Students.

As a practical example of Just Transition, in Glasgow, UNITE, Unison and Community have jointly created the City Building social housing project, combining 100% union membership, training and high environmental housing standards.

As CACC chair, Suzanne Jeffrey, said at the organisation's national conference, 'There is both an urgent need for action on climate change and a real opportunity for trade unionists to be at the forefront of campaigning for a just transition.'



2. Jobs and Climate Conference Report

The Campaign against Climate Change conference held on 10 March was a huge success. Over 200 people attended the event at the National Education Union Head Office.



Keynote speakers: Asad Rehman, Prof. Joanna Haigh, Suzanne Jeffrey, Barry Gardiner MP, Sara Woolley

The theme of the opening session was 'Jobs versus the environment: challenging a false choice'. Professor Joanna Haigh, a leading scientist at the Grantham Institute, outlined the urgency of action now to get to zero carbon by 2050. Sarah Woolley, whose union, the Bakers Food and Allied Workers Union, moved the climate change motion at the TUC, spoke about the need for unions to prioritise this issue. The BFAWU are calling on their health and safety reps to take this up and are producing a Newsletter to support this role. Asad Rehman from War on Want, spoke about the importance of seeing this as more than just an environmental issue, and the need for a vision of the future that challenged a system that has caused the problem.

Barry Gardiner, Labour Party Shadow Secretary for Trade and Climate Change, concluded the morning proceedings. He emphasised that action should not be just a top down approach. Communities engaged in the fight against fracking illustrated this and gave a pledge that one of his first priorities in any incoming Labour Government would be to introduce a ban on shale gas extraction.

Ten workshops were held either side of the lunch break. The Greener Jobs Alliance hosted one on 'Just Transition: Challenging the Green Growth Strategies'. We gave an overview of industrial strategy and the failure to reflect the obligations of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals. The discussion identified ways in which union engagement from local to international level could be embedded.

The final plenary heard from Suzanne Jeffery, CACC, Mika Minio-Paluello, Platform, and Liz Hutchins, Friends of the Earth, who highlighted the inequalities of the current system and the need for public control of energy systems. It concluded with Chris Baugh, PCS, giving a rallying cry for the trade union movement and local communities to campaign to put social justice and decent jobs at the top of the political agenda.

3. Our Air Quality training hits the road

With air pollution responsible for 40,000 deaths a year in the UK, our training programme with the Hazards Campaign is gathering pace, with three well attended sessions in Manchester, Leeds and London. All have led to detailed plans for taking up the issue of air pollution in both workplaces and communities. The need for a trade union perspective on this has never been greater.

Next stop – Southampton – another of the 6 cities in England where pollution is so bad they are required to introduce a Clean Air Zone by the end of 2019. Plans must be in place by the end of 2018 so the next nine months will be crucial in ensuring that they fit the bill. Trade unions need to have their say and get involved.

Details of the Southampton course on 18 May can be found [here](#):



Some of the participants at the Air Pollution course held at GMB Head Office in London on February 9th, 2018'

In February 2018, the courts found Government's Air Quality plans to be unsatisfactory for **the third time**. In an embarrassing defeat in successive cases brought by environmental lawyers, ClientEarth, the judge Mr Justice Garnham declared "unlawful" the government's failure to require action from dozens of local authorities with illegal levels of air pollution in England. The UK Government must finalise new plans for England by October 5th, 2018 <http://bit.ly/2tsGLqX>

4. ETUC Just Transition video

The European Trades Union Congress has produced a 6-minute video on Just Transition – what it means and the role of trades unions.

This video is useful to raise awareness and is something that can easily be slotted in to union training programmes.

<http://bit.ly/2FH8BEG>



5. Canadian unions: ‘leave no-one behind’

Canada’s trade unions are leading the nation’s Just Transition debate. *‘Communities across Canada need a national strategy to ensure the move to a zero-carbon economy leaves no one behind,’* according to a new report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA). For the first time, the report uses census data to identify the regions in each province with the greatest reliance on fossil fuel jobs. We urgently need a jobs-at-risk audit like this in the UK.

<http://bit.ly/2GhwFLE>

6. Home Insulation ‘cut to the bone’

In England, public investment on insulating our leaky homes has been cut by 58% since 2012, according to an independent review of the government’s Clean Growth Strategy <http://bit.ly/2FH8BEG>

This despite the four big gains from a national home insulation programme: job creation, cutting carbon emissions, lower energy bills and fewer cold weather deaths. The One Million Climate Jobs <http://bit.ly/2nagGqZ> campaign reckons that refitting houses, public buildings and businesses to reduce their energy use would create 185,000 jobs for twenty years. Unions like UNISON are campaigning for a national homes energy efficiency programme. <http://bit.ly/2Gid1je>

But the last five years saw an average of 32,000 excess winter deaths in the UK, with 9,700 each year linked to living in cold homes. England has the second worst record on cold weather-related deaths out of 30 European countries.

Scotland now spends four times as much per head as England on energy efficiency:

	2012 Public investment in homes energy insulation	£ per head of population	2017 Public investment in homes energy insulation	£ per head of population	Percent change since 2012
England	£1,022m	£18	£425	£8	-58%
N. Ireland	£52m	£27	£44	£23	-16%
Scotland	£190m	£35	£192	£35	+1%
Wales	£93m	£30	£54	£17	-42%

The fall in investment kicked off under Cameron’s government, which ended all taxpayer-funded energy efficiency programmes in England and halved the UK-wide obligation on energy suppliers to deliver energy efficiency improvements. *“This is now widely considered by experts as a massive mistake,”* said Pedro Guertler from e3g, the independent think

tank. *“The saving on energy bills from David Cameron’s cuts were soon cancelled out by energy price increases, while the energy efficiency programme was cut back to the bone.”*



7. Construction Unions and the Environment - A case study from Glasgow

The Glasgow-based City Building project is a model of social housing construction, combining union engagement (UNITE, Unison and Community), training and high environmental standards. Over 2,200 construction workers are employed directly under good trade union conditions, with nearly 100% union membership. Vocational education and training is offered for young people, and good quality and energy efficient social housing is built for working people in the city. Our thanks to Linda Clarke and co-workers at the University of Westminster. Read more here: <http://bit.ly/2FNfVPg>

8. Fracking under the radar

Like tax avoiders, fracking companies are finding new ways around the fracking regulations, by using much less water and higher volumes of acids. The Weald Action Group (WAG) says plans to drill in Surrey and Sussex now involve the so-called 'acidisation' technique, which is not currently defined as fracking despite the environmental impacts. Under the Infrastructure Act 2015, fracking is defined by the amount of fluid used - ie either more than 10,000 cubic meters of fluid per well, or 1,000 cubic meters at each exploration stage. By switching to more chemical intensive techniques, companies are saying they don't need to frack.

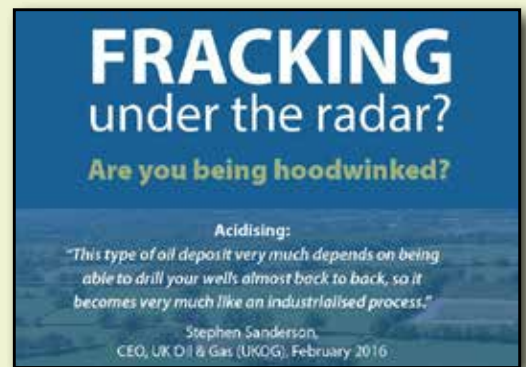
So far, oil companies are prospecting in a few scattered places across the South East. But WAG, whose members include No Fracking in Balcombe and Leith Hill Action Group, says they are thinking big, and planners are bound by the current state of Planning Guidance. www.facebook.com/WealdActionGroup/

WAG argues that the whole basis of the regulations is wrong headed. The regulations should focus on the type of rock the frackers are targeting – essentially, is the limestone or shale abundant in oil and gas, and open to 'conventional' drilling; or 'tight' requiring fracking with chemical cocktails and significant

pressure and volumes of water to squeeze out every last drop of fossil fuel.

Campaigners, including the WAG, FoE and many others, are submitting evidence to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee inquiry into 'Guidance for local authorities taking planning decisions on fracking: does the Guidance need to be updated or improved?' Their evidence will demand tighter regulations. And they want to open a debate on a law change, so fracking is defined by rock type not 'law-avoiding' fracking techniques. Closing date 14 March 2018. We'll keep you updated!

<http://bit.ly/2tGmtdH>



9. The water will come

The environment secretary, Michael Gove MP, has just issued his first big report, A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment. The Green Party described it as a 'fluffy communications strategy which lulls people into the sense you can trust this government on the environment.' The report's passive language suits the government's austerity programme. On flooding, the report says, *'In recent years we appear to be seeing greater incidents of flooding.'* Indeed! December 2015 was the wettest month ever recorded.

The Paris Agreement signed just over two years ago was based on reports that that as a result of melting ice sheets and other causes, sea levels could rise by up to 3 feet by 2100.

But in late 2017, the National Oceanographic Association, the pre-eminent climate science agency in the US, revised its sea change estimates upwards dramatically. By 2100 sea levels could rise by over 8 feet (2.5 meters) <http://bit.ly/2jgZnRb>

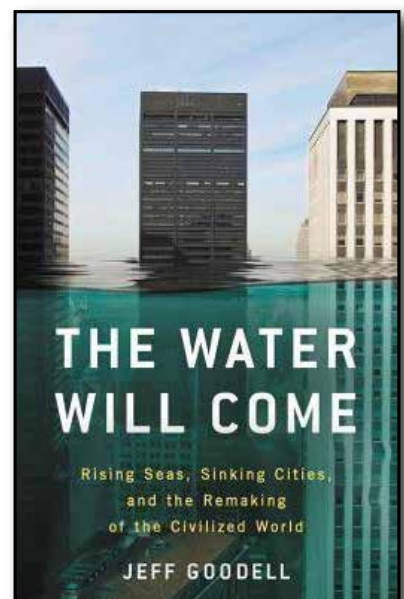


Photo credit: Fire Brigades Union in flood rescue operations

Others have a clearer sense of danger. A review <http://bit.ly/2CyaBcW> of the latest evidence on rising sea levels argues that,

"In the coming years, as cities around the world need to be raised, walled, rebuilt or abandoned, millions of people will be displaced and impoverished, left to fend for themselves by governments unwilling to act."

A new book from Jeff Goodall, *The Water Will Come*, <http://bit.ly/2p3tD72> includes a frontline report on the state of climate denial in Miami. After a talk with an estate agent about whether the booming city's property developers should be required to disclose flood risks, the agent told him, *'That would be idiotic...it would just kill the market.'*



10. Public sector energy carbon reduction targets

Universities want binding rather than voluntary carbon reduction targets, says the Environment Association of Universities and Colleges. Their response to a government consultation, '*Cutting energy bills and carbon emissions in the wider public and higher education sectors*,' says that a mandatory target would help overcome many of the barriers to investing in energy saving schemes on campus, especially finding the necessary finance.

Read the EAUC submission here:

<http://bit.ly/2Dkp6kT>

11. Resources

350.org's new On-line Courses



There is a real need to provide information on all aspects of climate change and social justice. The GJA has produced a set of training modules on climate change and related issues like Air Quality. We're pleased that friends at 350.org have also produced a set of interactive on-line courses: on Climate Change, Fracking, Divestment, and Campaigning. To register and find out more go to:

<https://trainings.350.org/online-skill-ups/>

12. Research Opportunity - fees paid

Is this for you? The University of Westminster Business School is offering a three-year Research Studentship on Climate Change, Labour and Work. Course fees are waived, and the deal includes a £16,000 annual payment. This PhD studentship is part of an international programme on Climate Change and Work, conducted in partnership with the York University, Toronto, entitled Adapting Canadian Work and Workplaces, an international perspective. There may also be opportunities for exchange visits to Canada. Closing date Monday, 14th May 2018. For further information visit:

<http://bit.ly/2p8pwWf>

To discuss this informally, contact Professor Linda Clarke: clarkel@wmin.ac.uk

Joint Statement on

Just Transition in the UK

It's time for a **Just Transition** in the UK, moving to a modern low carbon economy in such a way as to protect workers' livelihoods, create new industries and deliver a fairer society in all regions and devolved nations. The need for action to support the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Change Agreement to keep global temperature rises to 1.5 degrees, is urgent if we are to avert the environmental and economic costs of climate change.

We share a concern that the Government's Industrial and Clean Growth strategies fail to reference the need for a Just Transition. This embodies the principles of consultation between all sections of society; investment in skills and jobs; the creation of decent work; and social protection for individuals and communities, particularly those reliant on fossil fuels. It is necessary to confront the danger facing our industries and power system as employment in traditional sectors declines. Workers, if losing their job in these sectors, should be able to retrain and redeploy to a new job on equivalent terms and conditions, covered by collective agreements, and fully supported in their housing and income needs through transition.

Government must take a decisive lead with plans to transform key sectors, through publicly and community owned energy supply, transport infrastructure, investing in energy efficiency and sustainable heating in our homes and in industry. The speed and scale of Government action must be increased, as advised by the Committee on Climate Change. Where necessary to secure change at sufficient pace and scale, options for public and community ownership or partial stakes in flagship energy projects and enterprises should be pursued.

Employment and social benefits for communities most affected by industrial change should be secured through local investment in new jobs and skills, the creation of local supply chains, and 'community benefit' clauses in public contracts and local ownership. The principles of social justice and equity must be adopted to ensure no-one is left behind in the transition to economic and environmental sustainability.

Meanwhile, internationally, the government should support the strengthening of workers' rights and environmental standards in the global supply chains for low carbon industries, such as solar panel and battery production.

We believe that all key stakeholders should be represented on consultation and implementation bodies linked to the industrial, skills and climate change strategies. This should include proposed industrial and sector bodies at national, regional and local levels.

We therefore call on the UK government to:

1. incorporate Just Transition principles within the UK's commitments to implement the Paris Agreement, including the UK's Industrial and Clean Growth strategies.
2. legislate for the right to appoint workplace environment representatives to help ensure workers' views are fairly represented at local level. At company and sector level unions need the right to a voice in the economic restructuring decisions that will take place.
3. establish a *Just Transition Commission* to develop a shared understanding of the challenges and opportunities ahead, along the lines of the welcome initiative of the Scottish Government to establish such a body.

March 2018

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Early supporters of this statement include:

