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1. Editorial: Unions united have a unique opportunity to shape Labours policy...

There is much to welcome from this summer's round of union conferences. Unite came out firmly against fracking, PCS decided to campaign for a *Just Transition Act*, and the Bakers' union, champions of the McDonalds strikers, launched a new green newsletter, *Green Stuff* goo.gl/o7nwBt

Add to this, Unite, the leading union in the motor industry, has criticised the government's new strategy for tackling carbon emissions from road transport. The union wants 'urgent meaningful talks on a 'just transition' for motor manufacture.

Set against this, of course, are the unresolved impacts of the government's decision on the 3rd runway. The decision is backed by some but not all of the biggest unions. Heathrow expansion will add 6 million tonnes of CO2 a year to the UK's carbon footprint. We publish below a PCS Opinion, and would welcome a response from union supporters of Heathrow expansion. Meanwhile, in July the government's official climate change adviser said politicians were 'failing to rise to the challenge of a rapidly warming planet.'

Labour in Opposition is offering trade unions a unique opportunity to help shape its ambitious plans in *Government*, on energy democracy and a new low carbon industrial strategy. As we report here, the devil is in the detail: for example, Unison is worried about the exclusion of the Big Six customer and retail workers from public ownership. The GMB is unrelenting in its support for the fracking on behalf of its members in the gas sector. Such differences – Heathrow, fracking, energy and more – keep unions in silos when unions, collectively, have a unique moment of political opportunity to help shape Labour's vision for energy under public ownership and a climate proof industrial strategy.



GREEN STUFF

Historical TUC motion propels the BFAWU to the forefront of the battle against climate change!

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Putting Green issues first for our children and our children's children

Green Stuff 1 May 2018

2. TUC Congress 2018 – Just Transition fringe meeting!

Shadow Treasury Minister Clive Lewis MP is speaking at a joint Trades Union Congress fringe meeting, *Just Transition – beyond tokenism*, organised by the GJA and the Campaign Against Climate Change (Manchester, Tuesday 11 September, 5.30 pm.

As we go to press, we hear that Congress may debate new motions on anti-fracking and a low carbon Yorkshire. Our fringe meeting aims to challenge the false choice still seen by many as between jobs and the environment.

Speakers:

Clive Lewis MP

Shadow Treasury Minister

Chris Baugh

Assistant General Secretary, PCS

Sarah Woolley

Regional Secretary, Bakers, Food and Allied Workers Union

Bill Adams, Regional Secretary, Yorkshire & the Humber TUC

Chair:

Suzanne Jeffrey

Campaign Against Climate Change



3. Union conferences round up

PCS calls for Just Transition Act
PCS annual delegate conference in Brighton (May 2018) resolved <https://bit.ly/2NOH0BT>
to campaign for:

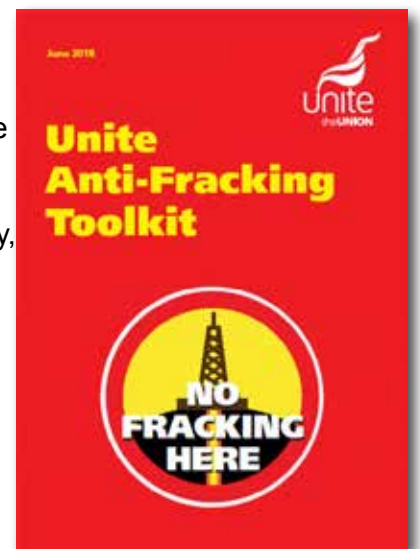
- A *Just Transition Act*, to deliver the UK's binding targets to cut carbon emissions. PCS says: *'Unfortunately, our politicians are far from unified on the steps needed to reach a path to a zero carbon economy.'*
- A National Climate Service, lobbying the Labour Party on 'machinery of government' changes to ensure a civil service ready to deliver on climate change.
- Promote local 'climate jobs projects' such as in Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre, as positive alternatives to fracking.
- A conference of Scottish PCS branches to consider the impact of the recently published Scotland Climate Change Plan on public services.

Unite fights fracking

"The arguments against fracking on public health and ecological grounds are overwhelming. There are clear grounds for adopting the precautionary principle and prohibiting fracking."

So says Unite's new anti-fracking handbook, agreed at its policy conference in June. The booklet busts all the myths about fracking bringing cheaper energy, posing no dangers to public health.

Building on Unite's model of community trade unionism, the handbook advises on creating community resistance to fracking, the planning process, and who the main industry players are.



NUS launches plastics campaign

The National Union of Students' annual conference resolved to campaign against single-use plastics on all campuses, to find alternatives in its commercial supply chain, and provide a toolkit for students' unions for *Go Green Week*.

<https://bit.ly/2Jg3KMz>

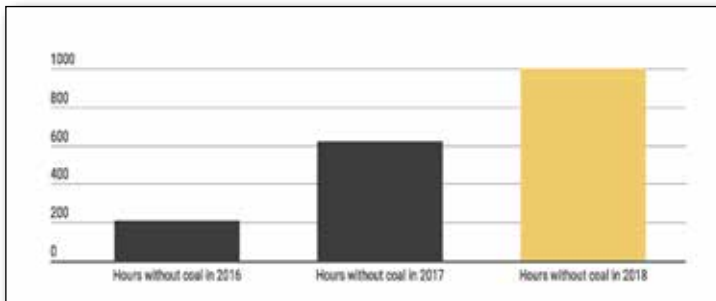
The NUS reports that new plastic production is around 322 million tonnes globally, with at least 8 tonnes leaking into our oceans each year. The NUS will lobby the government to ensure that the 25 Year Environment Plan is translated into ambitious targets for cutting plastic waste.

4. Official report puts renewables before nuclear

The government's infrastructure adviser has told Ministers to back renewables as a cheaper and less risky alternative to new nuclear plant. At best, only a single new nuclear power station is needed after [Hinkley Point C](#), because renewable energy sources would prove a safer investment. The Tories' plans for six new nuclear plant should be mothballed, according to a report <https://bit.ly/2Ok8tMU> from the independent National Infrastructure Commission.

Britain has been powered for more than 1,000 hours without coal so far this year, in a new milestone underscoring how the polluting fuel's decline is accelerating, according to a new website, MyGridGB: <http://www.mygridgb.co.uk/coal-tracker/>

Coal free electricity



With coal in steep decline, the Commission calls for:

- half of the UK's power provided by renewables by 2030
- three quarters of plastic packaging recycled by 2030
- £43 billion of stable long term transport funding for regional cities
- preparing for 100% cent electric vehicle sales by 2030
- ensuring resilience to extreme drought through additional supply and demand reduction.

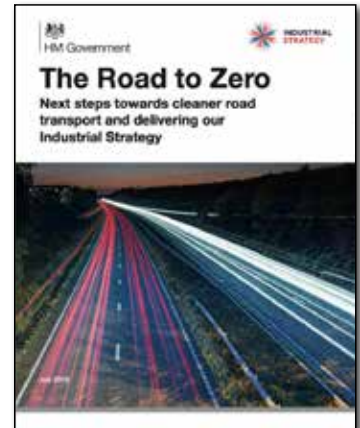
Sir John Armitt, the commission's chair, said: 'They say full speed on nuclear. We're suggesting it's not necessary to rush ahead, because during the next 10 years we should get a lot more certainty about just how far we can rely on renewables.'

However, the GMB's energy secretary, Justin Bowden, challenged <https://www.gmb.org.uk/> the commission's report:

'If we are to address the reality of climate change, whilst keeping our country's lights turned on, our homes heated and our economy working, then we have to face up to the fact that we need a mix of energy which combines increasing renewable sources, like wind and solar, with new nuclear and gas.'

5. Electric vehicles: Road to zero, or road to nowhere?

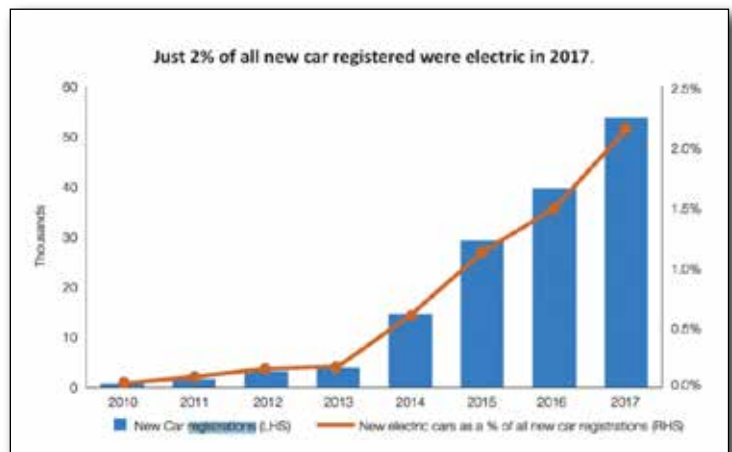
Unite the union and the government's independent watchdog have both criticised *The Road to Zero*, <https://bit.ly/2uba2o2> the government's new strategy for tackling carbon emissions from road transport. Tony Burke, Unite's Assistant General Secretary, said:



'After years of confusion and indecision the government's latest policy lacks direction, fails to tackle the huge infrastructure changes needed for drivers to be able to use their vehicles and lacks detail on jobs and future employment.'

<https://bit.ly/2LKTmOg>

The union represents thousands of workers in the motor industry. Burke said Unite supports the just transition to electric cars but is calling for the government to enter into 'urgent meaningful talks on a just transition' with the car industry and Unite.' Over 2.7 million new cars were registered in 2017, of which just 2% were electric.

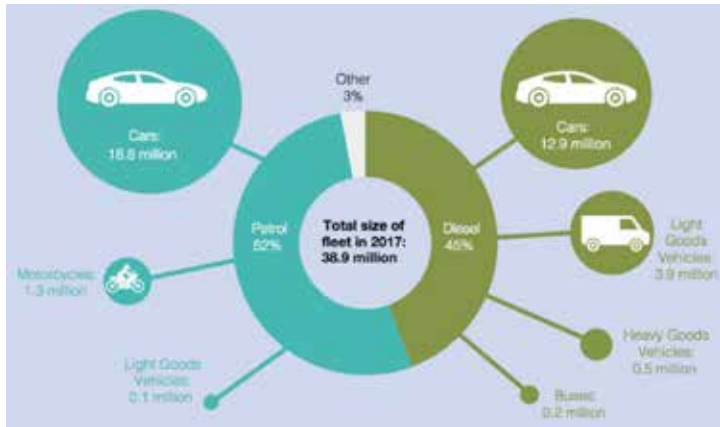


Unite wants far more investment in charging infrastructure and battery production.

Road to zero plans to:

- end the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040.
- set an interim "ambition" for "at least 50 per cent of new car sales to be ultra low emission by 2030.
- launching' a £400m investment fund for electric charging points. (We have discovered that this is a rehash of an announcement made last November, and the government still hasn't recruited staff to run the scheme).

Meanwhile, the Committee on Climate Change said 2040 is far too late for a ban on conventional vehicles. It accused the Department for Transport of “falling short of expectations” and potentially risking the UK’s climate targets, at a time when emissions from road and air transport are rising <https://bit.ly/2v9ZN2H> The vast majority of road vehicles are still diesel or petrol.



6. Trade unions debate energy democracy

‘To go green, we must take control of and transform our energy system.’ This was Rebecca Long-Bailey, Labour’s Shadow Secretary for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, at a Trade Unions for Energy Democracy gathering at Wortley Hall, Sheffield (28-29 June). She outlined Labour’s thinking on how to realise its energy and climate commitments, including a network of new regional and local public energy companies.



Stuart Fegan (GMB), Rebecca Long-Bailey, Sean Sweeney (TUED), Bill Adams (TUC)

Unison expressed concern for the fate of their members in today’s privatised energy suppliers. A new TUED report suggests a *‘whole power system public body’*, overseeing power generation, the power grids and customer supply: *All, or Something? Towards a ‘Comprehensive Reclaiming’ of the UK Power Sector.*

John Storey, Unite, argued that “the jobs messages from a green economy - in battery storage, renewable energy, hydrogen instead of gas, or electric vehicles - just aren’t getting across to the wider movement... How can we get our members who actually work in these industries involved in working out the changes to come and the jobs and skills opportunities?”

A TUED discussion paper argues that democratic control of energy itself had to be central to the changes needed. However, the GJA believed that unions are right to go for more social dialogue but ‘without illusions’. We argued that the GJA’s Just Transition campaign calls for far stronger union involvement, from the shop floor (with new rights for green reps), through company bargaining to the establishment of a national Just Transition Commission. <https://bit.ly/2K2dypF>

The meeting included delegates from GMB, UNISON UNITE, PCS, TSSA, BFAWU, NEU and the TUC, allies including the GJA, and others from Norway, Greece, Barcelona, Brussels, and Berlin.

The TUED conference briefing concludes: <https://bit.ly/2NPJRuv>

‘There’s a lot of disagreement among different unions about various energy sources. But what we have at the moment is a political opportunity to rally behind the idea of public ownership, which has the potential to shift the narrative across Europe. We have a situation now where the public narrative is rising, not just around energy but around other public services as well.’

TUED resources:

Just transition: the search for a transformative politics <https://bit.ly/2LlpUlo>

Unison statement: Public ownership of the Big Six: <https://bit.ly/2LWMIRN>

7. Opinion: The Heathrow debate is far from over



Math Brown - <https://www.flickr.com/photos/fondomatti/>

The Parliamentary vote on whether or not to proceed with the third runway at Heathrow was a huge disappointment to the oppose campaign. An overwhelming majority of MPs voted in favour despite all the evidence to the contrary: the economic benefits and the jobs claims in severe doubt, no credible plan to tackle poor air quality, and the giant shadow of carbon emissions from an additional 70 flights an hour to be considered.

Many Labour MPs voted in favour, in the face of official Party policy. Some even made unsubstantiated claims that Labour's 'four tests' (see below), mainly about environmental impacts, had been met, when in fact none have.

Jobs are the key issue for trade unions supporting Heathrow expansion. Heathrow claims up to 180,000 new jobs across the U.K, a claim that has been thoroughly debunked by an independent study. While it's understandable in principle that unions with members at the airport need to be seen to be protecting their members' interests, this has led them to uncritically roll out management's line and quote the jobs figures as gospel.

How unions responded to the third runway is symptomatic of a wider problem where action against climate change and other environmental impacts is urgently needed. Fracking is the obvious example. The dilemma is between short term protection of members by supporting destructive industries, and long-term job security by looking 'over the horizon' at the changes that will be forced upon society by catastrophic climate change.

A clue lies in the comments of Unite General Secretary, Len McCluskey. Supporting the third

runway, he used the phrase 'good, unionised jobs' several times. This reinforces a view that the reason for support is to protect members in well organised areas of high membership density rather than because of any commitment to runway expansion per se. It seems unlikely that any trade union would be actively for environmentally destructive activity if an alternative was on offer.

The challenge is to persuade these unions that increasing climate instability will drive changes in transport, energy and other sectors. While the 'green' sector is currently under-unionised, that represents an opportunity for unions to get into those sectors and ensure that they are fulfilled by 'good unionised jobs.' That is how we build an alternative, rather than by clinging on to industries that will have to change and aligning with an employer who is attacking us anyway.

PCS wants to bring together those unions who are opposed to a third runway, and to seek constructive ways to engage with unions who currently support it. A fringe meeting is being organised in conjunction with the No 3rd Runway Coalition, during TUC Congress in September. We will debate Heathrow and broader transport issues, the challenge of climate change and what the jobs of the future will look like. Details are to be confirmed but we hope for a productive debate on how unions can engage on these critical issues.

Tahir Latif, President, PCS Aviation Group

The GJA would like to publish an Opinion Piece by one the unions supporting the 3rd runway in the next newsletter, in the interests of encouraging the vital debate around jobs and the environment.

Notes:

Labour's four tests are

1. That increased capacity will be delivered
 - That we can meet our CO2 reduction commitments
 - Minimise noise and local environmental impactBenefits of expansion felt across the regions of the U.K., not just the South East and London
 - Labour's analysis of the National Policy Statement finds that NONE of these tests have been met.
2. Heathrow Airport Limited, Britain's Final Call, 2015
 3. R Seifert/S French (for PCS), Heathrow Jobs Final Report, November 2016
 4. Heathrow third runway speech
<https://bit.ly/2NQ5MS7>

8. Just Transition Progress Report

The GJA efforts to get Just Transition on the political agenda are starting to bear fruit:

The Just Transition Statement – The Green Party is the latest organisation to sign up for the statement launched in March. We have issued a joint press release and will be looking at how we can embed the demands for a union voice.

Greater London Authority - GJA members held meetings at City Hall in July to highlight our concerns about the lack of a union focus in the Mayor of London's strategy documents. The Environment Strategy was amended to insert the words 'Just Transition' following our submissions during the consultation process. We agreed to work with the Mayor's team to assist with developing a workplace/ union focus to raise awareness around the implementation of the strategies.

At a subsequent meeting with Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, through the TUC London and SE Region, we discussed the Economic Development Strategy. We won a commitment to strengthening of the union role in the Mayor's plans.

TUC Yorks and Humberside Region – In July we met with members of the Taskforce to develop the union training programme. The course for union reps in October will be the first training on Just Transition and a low carbon economy and we are hopeful that it can be replicated in other regions.

And finally, Tolpuddle – where the GJA ran a stall promoting our work and the JT statement.



9. Skills policy – A national scandal

The GJA has spent 8 years highlighting the lack of an integrated industrial and skills policy. No surprise then that the UK's productivity is one of the lowest in the OECD and that the apprenticeship system is in crisis.

We will be running a skills roundtable at the Labour Party Conference on September 25th, in conjunction with SERA (the Labour Party Environment Group) and the NUS. In the absence of a national lead from the Government there is potential for Regional Mayors to show how it should be done. The case study below offers an illustration of how not to do it.

Case Study – The Isle of Wight Studio School

The failure of Government policy to connect industrial strategy to training is compounded by the money wasted by Michael Gove's introduction of Studio Schools' when he was Education Secretary.

The Isle of Wight Studio School is "financially unsustainable" according to the Inspire Academy Trust, as only 40% of places have been filled. The school opened in 2014 to specialise in training youngsters to work in marine manufacturing and renewable energy. All crucial skills for a low carbon economy you might think, so why the lack of interest? One explanation could be that a Tory Energy Minister refused permission for the proposed Navitus Bay offshore wind farm in 2015!

<https://bit.ly/2LItDWo>

10. Resources

The latest reports from the *Adapting Canadian Workplaces* <https://bit.ly/2Akqx6O> project show how unions and their members are getting involved in just transition. The project is led by Linda Clarke at Westminster Business School, London. We recommend:

- *Women and Climate Change Impacts and Action in Canada:* The new, green economy could create thousands of jobs in renewable energy, but women might see few of the benefits because of the male dominance of the industry.
- *Promoting climate literacy among apprentices:* There is a significant gap between the needed skill sets for low carbon construction and the capacity of the training and apprenticeship systems to deliver appropriate skills – including climate literacy – to the construction workforce.
- *Making decarbonization work for workers:* the shift to a zero carbon economy will mix opportunities and risks. Governments must invest in workforce development programs to ensure there are enough skilled workers to fill new jobs created by the zero-carbon economy.

10. GJA Press Release



GJA Press Release

The **Greener Jobs Alliance*** is pleased to announce that the Green Party has adopted the statement on a 'Just Transition in the UK'.

Graham Petersen, Secretary of the GJA, stated,

'We greatly welcome the support of the Green Party for this statement. Realising a Just Transition will require not just the commitment of civil society organisations, but high level political support as well.'

Green Party co-leader Caroline Lucas MP said:

'The Green Party has always recognised the urgent need to shift to a fairer society and a sustainable economy.'

Tackling climate change by investing in the renewable energy and green infrastructure our future depends on will create more jobs than the fossil-fueled past it replaces - but we must invest in retraining workers now to allow everyone to make the most of the opportunities ahead.'

The UK should be leading the world on this. Ministers could make a start by committing to a Just Transition.'

The opening paragraph from the Just Transition Statement that was launched this year reads:

'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.'

Read the full version here: <https://bit.ly/2mUV0yN>

27/7/18

End

The Just Transition Statement has been signed by a number of organisations who are committed to the development of a low carbon economy. If your organisation would like to sign up contact Graham Petersen [gjacomsg@gmail.com](mailto:gjacoms@gmail.com)

**The Greener Jobs Alliance (GJA) has been formed as a partnership body inclusive of trade unions, student organisations, campaigning groups and a policy think tank. It campaigns around the issue of jobs and the skills needed to transition to a low-carbon economy. <http://www.greenerjobsalliance.co.uk/>*