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### 1. Editorial – Unions back Youth Climate Strikes

Unions will be backing the Youth Climate Strike on 20 September. The plan, agreed at the Trades Union Congress (TUC) annual conference in Brighton (September 10th), is for '30-minute workday campaigns' across the UK. As Jo Grady, University and College Union, told the conference, 'The Youth Climate Strikes movement is one of the most impressive forms of mass action in recent years.' The education union's general secretary asked, 'How will young people forgive us if we let them down, whilst they are building a movement at this pivotal moment for the world's climate?'

Or, as Unite's Steve Turner put it, 'Unions will back the school strikes on September 20th. If we don't, we will be seen as irrelevant.'

The TUC Congress also welcomed Jeremy Corbyn's commitment that workers and communities 'must not pay the price' for changes to the energy system. He told the TUC that the next Labour government will guarantee that all energy workers are offered retraining and a new job on equivalent terms and conditions. 'Working with the trade union movement, Labour will start a Green Industrial Revolution, creating 400,000 well-paid, high skilled, unionised jobs in renewable energy and green technologies. And we will locate these new industries in parts of the country that have been held back by successive governments that have focused on the richest in the City of London.'

If proof of the need for a new industrial strategy was needed, look no further than our report on the threatened closure of the Orb factory, making steel for electric vehicles. All for want of £50m of new investment, while the Johnson government squanders double that on 'No Deal Brexit' propaganda.

[Read or watch Jeremy Corbyn's speech to TUC Congress 2019 here.](#)

## 2. TUC plans for climate crisis and a just transition

**Trade unions now have a clear action plan to tackle the climate crisis.** The TUC says, *'Net zero cannot be achieved without urgent investment in new, low-carbon energy generation. Climate change is a trade union issue. The future of our planet is at risk.'*

Unions want a just transition to a zero carbon Britain. The plan includes:

1. A clear and funded pathway to a low-carbon economy - taxing the very wealthy and closing tax loopholes in line with Labour Party manifesto commitments.
2. Unions must be at the heart of a reinvigorated industrial strategy.
3. Every worker should have access to funding to improve their skills.
4. New jobs must be good jobs.
5. No community left behind.
6. National and regional Just Transition Commissions, with trade union and education representatives to implement these plans.



At the heart of the union's position is a demand that 'education and training must ensure young people and workers are equipped to live and work in a just transition towards a sustainable future. The fear is that 'high carbon' jobs like steel making or in the fossil fuel industries will be lost without new jobs and skills planned for the communities affected.

As Steve Turner, Unite's Assistant General Secretary, said,

*'The climate crisis is class issue, with the rich reaping the rewards of environmental destruction and working people left to pay the price. We need a green industrial strategy – no part of society is untouched by the transformation required – from transport and energy to the way we heat our homes.'*

How we manage the transition is a matter of principles:

*'Nothing about us without us,'* he said. Unions must be at the centre of a just transition to a low carbon future. And if jobs are at risk in carbon intensive industries, then *'our members must be reskilled or upskilled, with no loss of terms and conditions.'*

Composite 02, Climate crisis and a just transition, supported by Unite, NEU, UCU, Prospect, Aslef and the AUE, is available here: <https://bit.ly/2mijOUf>

## 3. Unions demand: Keep green jobs in UK

'The much-touted green jobs revolution has passed working people by. Work in the energy supply chains has gone overseas. Offshore wind projects are built by state-backed European firms and overseas finance. We need new rules.' This was the view of Tim Roache, GMB General Secretary, setting out the demands in a motion on securing green jobs in the UK.

He lamented the fact that shipyards and fabrication plants in Fife stood empty whilst the wind turbines paid for by UK consumers, were built overseas.

The GMB motion, backed by the UCU, Prospect and PCS, argues that, *'Combatting climate breakdown is not just a moral issue, but an economic one for communities and workers across the UK. It should be a top priority for governments. Decarbonisation could produce thousands of well-paid, skilled jobs in renewables and in the supply chain, but this requires political will.'*

Key demands to keep green jobs in the UK:

- No company registered in a tax haven should be awarded public contracts.
- Local labour: energy construction contracts must have local labour clauses.
- Fair pay and rights at work: companies awarded contracts or getting subsidies must be covered by collective bargaining agreements.

Motion 6, supported by UCU, Unison and PCS, Securing UK green jobs: <https://bit.ly/2kMFk31>

## 4. Climate Change – ‘It’s your choice’ says Tower Hamlets student, Brinet

by Brinet, aged 14, Bishop Challoner School, Tower Hamlets, London



Photo: Tom Oldham, Ministry of Stories

Brinet took part in Speak Up, a speech writing programme with the Hackney-based Ministry of Stories. She delivered her speech at the Houses of Parliament in July 2019 to an audience of MPs and activists.

The world is slowly dying of a fever.

Think of the world like a human. A 1-degree increase is a fever, a 2-degree increase is a high fever and a 3-degree increase is deadly. If these are the frightening facts, why is no one listening to them?

One change we can make is to eat less meat. It is more efficient to grow a crop, then eat it when it is fully grown, rather than grow a cop, feed it to an animal for it to gain muscle mass, then eat the animal. Did you know that a cow, on average, produces between 70 and 120 kilograms of methane per year, methane that is 20 times more damaging than carbon dioxide. So we should make better choices about what we eat.

Of course, some people would complain about a change in their lifestyle, what difference would it make? But would you rather keep your old lifestyle and not have a future or have a future and change. It’s your choice.



*Ministry of Stories is an East-London charity that champions the writer in every child. Through innovative writing programmes and one-to-one mentoring, we help young people discover and realise their own creative potential.*

[www.ministryofstories.org](http://www.ministryofstories.org)

## 5. National Climate Emergency Conference

We demand education for the future



Saturday 12 October 10.00 – 5.00pm.

**National Education Union (NEU)  
Climate Change Conference  
Regent High School  
Chilton Street  
NW1 1RX**

This one day conference is aimed at workers and students from across the world of education to discuss, in plenaries and workshops, how we can work together to bring about the change we so desperately need. Student strikes have inspired a generation of new activists and pushed the climate emergency to the top of the political agenda.

Speakers confirmed so far:

- Kevin Courtney – NEU General Secretary School Climate Striker
- Zamzam Ibrahim - President NUS
- Amelia Womack - Deputy Leader of Green Party
- Professor Joy Carter - University of Winchester
- Richard Dunne - Headteacher at Ashley Primary School
- Henry Greenwood - Green School Project
- Farhana Yamin – Extinction Rebellion
- Suzanne Jeffery - Campaign against Climate Change

For tickets and further information:

[www.climate\\_emergency.eventbrite.co.uk](http://www.climate_emergency.eventbrite.co.uk)

## 6. Factory making steel for electric vehicles to close! 380 jobs to go

A steel plant vital to making parts for electrical vehicles is to close, with the loss of 380 jobs. Steelworkers trade union Community called the closure of Orb Electrical Steels 'devastating' and urged the government to intervene. Roy Rickhuss, Community General Secretary, said, 'At a time when the government wants to decarbonise the economy and support a switch to electric vehicles, losing the UK's only producer of electrical steels would be a grave error.'

Union leaders believe Tata had committed to safeguarding jobs as part of a 2017 rescue deal under which workers accepted reduced pension benefits. The company stated that it required £50m to develop the factory to produce steel for electrical vehicles.



Community's call to **Save our Steel** won the support of delegates to this year's TUC Congress, September 2019. Rickhuss told union delegates:

*'We are suffering from a lack of vital investment, needed to make our plants competitive. And – by their own figures – government procuring just 43% of the steel it uses in public funding projects from the UK is a disgrace... The abject failure of our politicians to resolve Brexit is destroying our manufacturing base – not a week goes by without announcements of job cuts or plant closures. It makes no sense to let the only plant we have that can make electrical graded steel to close, just when that steel is going to be needed more than ever for electric car production.'*

## 7. FoE issues 50-point Climate Emergency Action Plan

Has your local council adopted a Climate Emergency Resolution and you know that actions speak louder than words? Then here's the Action Plan for you – with 50 practical ideas from people power to solar power, 'to work with your local authority to tackle the climate emergency and restore nature.'

Here's one example, **What (Your Council) will do** on the key issue of **Power**:

<b>Power</b>	
Our goal is to enable and support the growth and use of green energy, ensure energy is not wasted, and prevent the development of new fossil fuel extraction.	
What	will do: <span style="float: right;"><b>Tick</b></span>
<b>29</b>	Identify areas suitable for renewable energy in the local plan.
<b>30</b>	Switch street lighting to well-designed and well directed LED lights.
<b>31</b>	Reduce energy used by the local authority in its own estate.
<b>32</b>	Require the integration of renewable energy such as solar thermal, PV or heat pumps in local authority developments and, as much as possible, within private sector developments.
<b>33</b>	Support the development of renewable energy and energy storage.
<b>34</b>	Oppose fracking and other fossil fuel extraction, and where opposition on fracking has been overturned, support peaceful protest.
<b>35</b>	Divest from fossil fuels and invest in renewable energy projects.

FoE is also building up its local climate action network: <https://takeclimateaction.uk>

## 8. Union action on climate change - a trade union guide

Labour Research Department's latest guide says dire warnings that time is running out to tackle rising carbon emissions and global temperatures have propelled the climate change crisis to the top of the union and political agendas.

LRD's guide aims to help trade union reps play their part in tackling the climate emergency and other environmental problems. It looks in detail at:

- causes and consequences of climate change
- importance of ensuring a Just Transition and decent jobs in moving towards a low-carbon economy.
- green union reps.
- union policies on energy, training, transport and air pollution.
- workplace action to reduce waste.

With plenty of case studies and examples of how union reps are taking action at their workplaces, it's a must have for tomorrow's green workplaces!

<https://bit.ly/2m9k8o2>

## 9. GJA launches new online course on Just Transition

The GJA launched its new training materials for unions and their supporters at the TUC Conference, Monday 9 September. We hope it will act as a resource for action around 20 September and beyond.

There is a crucial need for a course that explores the meaning of the term **Just Transition** and why it should be a priority for unions.

Importantly, the course contains plenty of examples of positive case studies as well as guidance on how to implement it in the workplace. As always, we are interested in feedback on how the course was used and how it can be improved.



We are grateful for the financial support of the UNITE London and Eastern 524 (Not for Profits) Branch.

[www.greenerjobsalliance.co.uk/breaking-news/](http://www.greenerjobsalliance.co.uk/breaking-news/)

## 10. GJA calls for a London Just Transition Commission

On September 10th the GJA was invited by the Economy Committee of the Greater London Assembly to give evidence at the 'Future jobs and skills in the low carbon, circular economy' panel. The Economy Committee scrutinises the work of the Mayor relating to economic development, wealth creation, social development, culture, sport and tourism in the capital. It also examines the Mayor's role as chair of the London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP).

Graham Petersen, GJA Secretary, stressed the need for urgent action on all aspects of The London Plan to address the climate emergency. On the question of the kind of support the Mayor of London could give employers and employees, we made the case for the creation of a London Just Transition Commission. The GJA responses can be viewed here:

<https://bit.ly/2IPo2SY>

### 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.