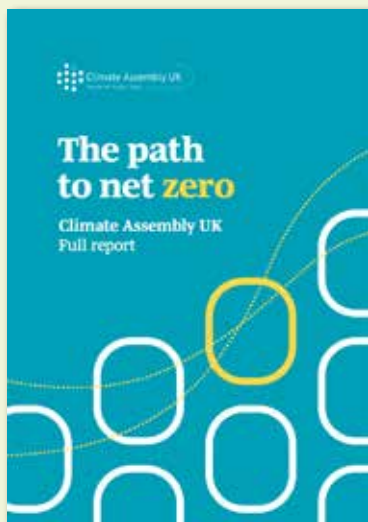


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1. Editorial: When will this government see the green light?

Both the TUC and the CBI are urging the government to invest now to create over a million new green jobs in response to rising unemployment and the COVID-19 crisis. As the Tories' 'furlough scheme' comes to an end, the TUC is calling for a new Job Protection and Upskilling Plan. New support for businesses must come with strings attached, unions say, to promote decent work, protect jobs and give union rights. Meanwhile, the CBI, the employers' organisation, says we face 'two seemingly separate yet fundamental problems: Covid-19 – the biggest health crisis in living memory – and climate change, the defining challenge of the modern era.'



Manufacturing and retail employers have made massive redundancies - 9,000 at Rolls Royce, 7,000 at M&S – while others are driving down pay and conditions. Germany, France and Italy have already invested billions in green jobs and skills, and extended their versions of the 'furlough' scheme into 2021. But not this incompetent government. The Chancellor should open a German-style programme to save jobs by subsidising part time work and offer training support. Investing in green industries, childcare and social care and reducing our over dependence on the finance sector are essential first steps to a green recovery.

The first UK-wide **citizens' assembly** on climate change published its final report on 10 September. It set out a clear, internally consistent and timely path for how the UK can reach its legally binding target of net zero emissions by 2050. Assembly members said that it is 'imperative that there is strong and clear leadership from Government to forge a cross-party consensus that allows for certainty, long-term planning.'

Ordinary citizens, the TUC and CBI have seen the green light. When will this out of step government fall into line? See: <https://www.climateassembly.uk/>

ONE MILLION
CLIMATE JOBS NOW!
Invest in People & Planet! A New Green Deal for Workers!

2. TUC's virtual Congress backs green new deal

<https://bit.ly/3kwaO6z>

Zooming may lack passion, but the TUC's online Congress (September 15-16) did not lack serious intent. 'Ordinary working people shouldn't be the ones bearing the burden of the pandemic,' the TUC said. 'Unions will fight for the decent jobs with fair pay that Britain needs to get out of this recession and prevent the devastation of mass unemployment.'

Unite, GMB, PCS, UCU, RMT, FBU, ASLEF and the Bakers, Food and Allied Workers unions all backed a crucial motion on the economy we rebuild. It 'cannot merely represent continuity with the past,' the unions said, calling for:

- A green new deal that 'creates a new generation of jobs in the industries and infrastructure we need to tackle the climate crisis.' This means 'investment in our manufacturing capability and sustainable infrastructure - electric vehicles and charging infrastructure, construction materials and retrofitting all homes, carbon capture and storage, synthetic aviation fuels and the Swansea Bay Tidal Lagoon.'
- Infrastructure is needed for a fully integrated and green public transport system to encourage people to return to public transport when it is safe to do so. 'We will not meet our climate obligations without more people and goods using our railways, waterways and buses.'
- A shorter working week 'with no loss of pay to realise the benefits of new technology and to facilitate new green job creation in order to mitigate against mass unemployment,' (Composite motion 2).

And in motion 14, Community won support for demands to *'retain and develop our sovereign steelmaking capacities and that a green British steel industry is fundamental to a low-carbon future.'*



Photo: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/126497846@N03/>

3. Voice and Place: TUC plan for net zero

<https://bit.ly/35Rklwu>

Fleshing out its future industrial strategy, a new TUC report called on the government to build an industrial strategy for a 'zero carbon Britain.' Research by Transition Economics for the TUC shows that an £85bn programme of investment now could create 1.24 million jobs over the next two years, with significant benefits for jobs in each region of the UK. Government, says the TUC, 'should use its procurement powers to focus on high quality jobs and every new infrastructure project must come with an Olympics-style plan to promote good quality jobs and training.'



To road test the TUC's plans, we invited three trade union and academic representatives to comment on three key aspects of their proposals:

- Skills and training - Prof. Linda Clarke.
- A Just Transition commission with a workers' voice – Sam Mason, PCS.
- Regional recovery bodies to help drive the recovery after the corona virus – Bill Adams, TUC.

Skills and training

Prof. Linda Clarke comments:

The TUC report makes important recommendations:

1. All workers to have a right to paid time off for education and training.
2. An integrated skills strategy, including the effective embedding of Education for Sustainable Development across the curriculum and rapid introduction of a short-course sustainability skills programme to train the existing workforce.
3. An expansion of quality apprenticeships to ensure access by under-represented groups.
4. Investment in further and higher education to meet binding climate targets.
5. Trades unions to negotiate Transition Agreements with their employer.

Whilst commendable, there are also serious concerns about their implementation. In the first place, if we take for instance the construction sector, there has been a dramatic decline in apprenticeships (recommendation 3), due in large part to the domination of 'bogus' self-employment and fragmentation of the industry, which have undermined any work-based training infrastructure.

The TUC report fails to recognise such problems with apprenticeships in its recommendations on procurement, framework agreements with employers, and ‘Olympics-style’ plans for quality jobs and training on new infrastructure projects.

Only passing reference is made to the energy-saving retrofit of public buildings and social housing, too, though a national retrofit programme could be the means for providing the good quality jobs and training demanded. If well-planned and regulated, it would also ensure access to under-represented groups.

A further weakness of the report is insufficient recognition of the very significant investment and transformation needed. Further education has been severely underfunded, just when a much more highly qualified and energy literate workforce is needed to address climate targets. Vocational education and training (VET) for nearly zero energy buildings, for instance, including retrofitting, requires a very significant college and workshop input to impart the knowledge, know-how and competence necessary. Today’s construction processes are complex, whether for the existing workforce or new entrants into the labour market. This cannot rely just on ‘learning-by-doing’ on often dangerous construction sites or on short, firm-specific courses.

As in European countries like Austria, alternative routes to apprenticeship and to continuing VET need to be devised. Options include local authority direct labour organisations or in colleges providing well-financed and equipped workshops and carefully monitored work placements.

The TUC’s recommendation for a new right to retrain for everybody, including bringing forward National Skills Fund funding and accelerating work of the National Retraining Partnership, needs to be situated in the context of transformed FE colleges and curricula.



Training workshop at Qualibuild low energy construction, Dublin.

Prof. Linda Clarke, Co-Director at the Centre for the Study of the Production of the Built Environment (ProBE), University of Westminster; and board member of the European Institute for Construction Labour Research.

Just Transition Commission



Railroad workers climate strike, Brussels 2019 (Sam Mason)

PCS Policy officer, Sam Mason, writes:

The TUC’s recognition that a Just Transition is not a ‘one size fits all’ model is important, and the inclusion of a Just Transition Commission in its recommendations is wholly welcomed. We are awash with ‘green’ jobs plans. There is no doubt that a new low carbon economy can be built, if only we could bring the materials, workforce, policy, and politics together in one place to do this.

Whilst many parts of the jigsaw are required for the transition needed to address both climate change and environmental destruction – industrial strategy, coordinated planning, training and skills – it is still not forcefully put where this responsibility should lie. Therefore, we need to start articulating what this architecture would look like and the role a Just Transition Commission will play.

For this we can and certainly should learn from the Scotland Just Transition Commission

<https://bit.ly/2FSBwr4> It has clearly articulated the

principles around which it is working, principles which themselves are drawn from the International Labour Organisation (ILO). However, for a UK wide national commission, clearly this is a bigger part of the architectural framework we need to meet our climate and environmental targets.



Source: Report of Scotland’s Just Transition Commission

Workers voice and the principle of “nothing about us without us” is essential to this process. The interrelation between a Commission, industrial strategy and long-term coordinated planning needs to be

spelled out. It is also important that workers voice is more than just a seat at the table. ‘Union voice’ must be seen as part of the ‘knowledge economy’ which can help devise decarbonisation plans working with schools, colleges and universities to develop education, training and skills pathways to transition jobs and for future work.

A Commission also has to be able to identify resourcing solutions, including through the tax system, and to look at the welfare system, in addressing poverty and inequality. Finally, a ‘whole economy approach’ is important to ensuring the architecture is built across all regions and nations founded on a pro-public economy.

In the context of the Coronavirus pandemic and global economic disruption, this is not just an “opportunity to build a better recovery” but to build a different recovery. The regional case studies provide a good overview of the shift to more precarious work and levels of inequality both between and within regions. This was already well known but it has been highlighted more starkly with the pandemic, catapulting the economy into a transition that not only isn’t just, but clearly shows the lack of institutional and political mechanisms to support people and create the new economy we need.

Our next task therefore, should be to start setting out our collective terms of reference for the Just Transition Commission we want as the voice of workers.

Sam Mason, PCS Policy Officer

Regional recovery: the case of Yorkshire & The Humber

Bill Adams, TUC Regional Secretary, writes:

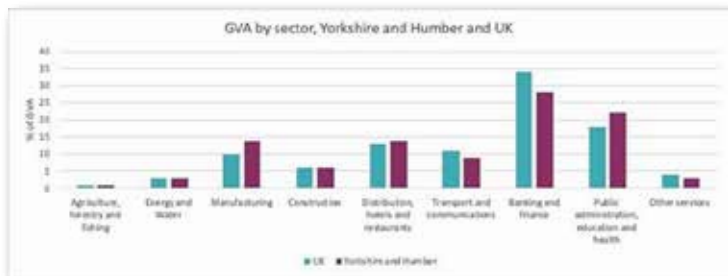
As the covid-19 pandemic starts to re-appear especially across the northern regions, you can forgive people that worry about the health and futures of their loved one’s that the climate emergency can somehow wait until we drive the virus to extinction. I can understand that this may be a popular view, but the truth is that beating the virus and tackling the climate emergency are one and the same thing.



Our economy across the Yorkshire region has been hit very hard by the lockdown. Many hard months, even years, lie ahead of us in returning to something like

normal, and we do face possible mass unemployment and social isolation for our communities.

That’s why it is vital that we as a region come together to build back better, not only to give people new opportunities who may have been displaced by the pandemic, but to make sure that any recovery includes all our people and leaves no-one behind. Something we know only too well in Yorkshire and the Humber. Deprived communities’ litter our county, and this must not be able to happen again.



Source: TUC ‘Voice and Place’ report, August 2020.

I pay credit to our local politicians who have drawn up plans for our region to recover. These plans are built around a new green economy, upgrading public transport, investing in flood alleviation programmes, and advanced manufacturing projects to take advantage of investing in our region in a green and sustainable way.

Whilst we have some powers, we still need central government to give us the tools to do the job, to ensure Yorkshire and the Humber contributes to a successful national economy, and develop trade and business links all over the world. We also plan to invest in skills and training to make sure that the job growth will be good well paid, and well skilled, so that our region can be a great place to live, work and play again.

Trade Unions stand ready to play an active role in rebuilding our economy. We want to be central and working with business and our politicians to achieve what we know we are capable of. Social partnership is the way to build trust, build the economy, and create change that benefits everyone.

We hope that our efforts during this pandemic are recognised, and climate change development can continue at pace. Our trade union reps are raising these issues as we speak. It’s now time for local authorities, businesses and unions to come together to create a formal commission for our region to address the ongoing emergency. Dealing with covid-19 gives us that opportunity to work together to build back better, building a society free from threats, a sustainable future for our children and grandchildren. We owe it to them to seize this opportunity.

4. Global Day of Climate Action: September 25th



Four unions - UCU, NEU, BFAWU, and PCS - have joined forces on Friday 25 September to support the new **Fridays for the Future** action.

They have proposed 6 steps union members can take for a stronger green union presence at their workplace: <https://bit.ly/3hMJAai>

5. Fight rising Air Pollution



Pollution levels are rising again after a period during lockdown when there were significant reductions. New analysis from the Environmental Defence Fund Europe shows that, outside the centre of London, levels are now higher than in 2019.

<https://bit.ly/33QMO7M>

The National Education Union (NEU) is promoting new Clean Air for Schools resources: "The NEU

continues to be hugely concerned about the impact of air pollution on children and therefore welcomes this new resource which will help raise awareness of the impact of air pollution and also help schools to take practical steps to improve their own environment,' says Kevin Courtney, NEU Joint General Secretary, National Education Union.

<https://bit.ly/3mBNE0D>

These increases will have an impact on occupational health. CBI research shows that polluted air in the UK causes 3million working days to be lost every year owing to people getting sick or taking time off to care for sick children.

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

With EU research showing 1 in 8 deaths linked to pollution the need for action has never been greater. The Trade Union Clean Air Network (TUCAN) is working with the Healthy Air Campaign to press for the implementation of World Health organisation (WHO) standards on particulate matter in the government's upcoming Environment Bill.

www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-54071380

We are also joining with Global Action Plan to support actions around Clean Air Day on October 8th. One event is a session called 'Cleaner air for healthier employees.' We will be discussing the importance of good air quality in the office, the home office, and industrial workplace, and what can be done by employees, unions and companies to clean up the air we breathe while we work. Check the GAP web site for details on how to join this discussion.

www.cleanairstay.org.uk/

The CBI Report 'Breathing life into the UK economy' can be found here:

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

Thanks to Graham Petersen TUCAN



Photo: www.flickr.com/photos/philrose/

6. GJA backs local climate campaigning

Yet another official report, this time from the Institute for Government, shows that the Johnson government strategy for achieving net zero is failing

<https://bit.ly/3iOMFaX>

In the absence of effective national leadership, the GJA is looking to regional and local authorities to step up. Many have declared climate emergencies, while the Local Government Association has issued guidance on 10 questions to ask to scrutinise these local strategies

<https://bit.ly/32P2IAAd>

The GJA has also recently published guidance for union reps looking to interrogate local plans in their communities. <https://bit.ly/2FDpxOB> We would value any feedback on union experiences of trying to influence the content and delivery of local and regional climate related actions. Of course, some authorities are more receptive than others. Where it is not possible to establish any effective engagement there may be a need to campaign for alternative approaches.

In South London, the GJA has linked up with Battersea and Wandsworth Trades Council to address concerns about the climate strategy of the London Borough of Wandsworth. The focus has been on Low Carbon building in the borough as the best way to address carbon emissions, social justice issues like fuel poverty, job creation and skills. Our proposals can be found here <https://bit.ly/2ZU4uxS>

The GJA is assisting trade union input to local and regional policies around different parts of the UK. Please contact us if you have any case studies we can use for a good and bad practice guide scheduled for the end of this year.



Photo: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/pnglife/>

7. CBI calls for 'green recovery roadmap'

CBI, the employers' organisation, believes the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic is a 'real opportunity to build back better and pivot towards the low-carbon, sustainable, and net-zero aligned economy that we know we need.' The CBI wants a 'green recovery roadmap,' to deliver on the net-zero emissions target the government supported last year. More than 350,000 jobs can be created in key sectors with government backing, from electric vehicles and home insulation to new energy systems.

Low carbon sector	CBI jobs estimates
Accelerate low-carbon electricity generation and investment in electricity grid	36,000 renewable energy jobs + 25,000 construction jobs at Sizewell C nuclear plant
Electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure; boost demand for EVs: 7 new gigafactories needed by 2040	78,000 new jobs
energy savings by retrofitting homes and buildings	150,000 jobs by 2030 spread across all regions
Carbon capture, utilisation and storage	6,000 new highly-skilled jobs in Teesside, Humberside, Merseyside and Aberdeenshire
Kick-start a hydrogen economy to replace natural gas	75,000 additional jobs
Develop sustainable aviation fuels	5,200 jobs

Strategies are long overdue for the decarbonisation of transport, for domestic heating and for buildings insulation. This autumn's Spending Review must set out support to create a positive investment environment. *'But to ensure that the 2020s continue to be a decade of delivery on net-zero, there needs to be step-change in the pace of investment, supported by a government commitment to drive delivery. The timing of COP26 next year represents a clear deadline for a national net-zero strategy to be in place,'* the employers body says. <https://bit.ly/35QM3y5>

8. Training lessons from Canada

For a case study of green skills training in construction, the coalition established in Ontario - Workforce 2030 - is hard to beat. It's a broad cross-sectoral coalition of employers, unions, educators, and practitioners across the construction ecosystem, working to collectively impact government policy, business practice and education in Ontario.



Further information on their project can be found here <https://bit.ly/33N569B>

The Canadian trade union movement has also developed a set of union based courses. Karen Lior, the Director of the Working Green Program at the Labor Education Centre (LEC), Toronto has sent us this outline: 'LEC's Working Green Program is a research and action approach to climate change. Working Green provides opportunities for workers to learn how to take action on climate change.'

There are four aspects to the Working Green program:

1. Climate Justice is Union Business - working in our unions and communities for climate justice.
2. Let's Talk About Climate Change - workshops for union activists
3. Collaborate to Reduce GHGs - Joint Union/ Management Workplace Emissions Reduction Committees
4. A Greener Future For Workers - Transitioning to a Low Carbon Economy

For more information go to:

www.laboureducation.org/working_green

9. £3 billion of lucrative wind turbine contract go overseas

The GMB is furious that governments in Westminster and Holyrood have allowed a company in China to fabricate most of the of the 114 turbine jackets for Scotland's largest offshore wind farm. Scottish firm Burntisland Fabrications (BiFab), with three mothballed yards in Scotland, has failed to win any work on the £3 billion Seagreen project.

The project is publicly funded by a levy on our energy bills. SSE Renewables, which won the main contract, claimed that the gap between BiFab's submission and foreign rivals was 'too significant to close.'

The jackets are steel structures standing on the sea floor. Earlier this year, SSE awarded a contract for 30 jackets for the wind farm to United Arab Emirates (UAE)-based firm. SSE is owned by Spanish-based Iberdrola, and is the second-largest energy supplier with almost 9 million customers.

Seagreen is being built 17 miles from the Angus coast and will have its operations and maintenance base in Montrose. BiFab union's GMB organiser, Hazel Nolan said, 'We warn industry majors like SSE and the governments at Holyrood and Westminster that constant disappointment is now turning to growing anger.'

'Communities dependent on offshore wind fabrication contracts... are being totally failed, and so is the country. Scraps off the table from our own offshore wind sector is bad enough. But when billion-pound fabrication contracts are wholly completed abroad and then shipped to the waters off Scotland, you know that any credible prospects for a green economic recovery are sailing by.'

<https://bit.ly/2ZU1jaP>

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.

