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## 1. Editorial: COP and beyond. Don't Despair - Organise!

**We are in for a prolonged struggle. Every day the crisis gets worse we have the choice of passivity and despair, or action and hope. Every day we have to ask ourselves the questions, if not us, who? If not now, when?**

We are now in a period of damage limitation; in which anything and everything we can do to make a difference we must do. Current plans have us on course for a catastrophic 2.7C increase. There is no excuse for anyone arguing for delays, or for someone else to take the lead. There is especially no excuse for the world's richest countries - collectively responsible for 92% of emissions to date - trying to foist blame onto the industrialising parts of the developing world for their impertinence in wanting their people to be as well off as ours are.

The International Energy Agency states that 70% of the investment to head off climate breakdown must be made in the Global South. This makes the failure to meet the £100 billion a year pledged from the Global North without creative accounting even more obscene; especially when you consider that 71% of the capital transferred up to now has been in the form of loans that have to be paid back, that the richest 1% amassed an additional \$10 trillion in wealth in 2020 alone, and that Elon Musk could pay for a year of it on his own and still have £25 billion left over from his 2020 increase.

There should be no delusions about this. Carbon emissions per head from China are just 46% that of the US, Brazil 14% and India 12%. So, the biggest, sharpest, fastest cuts in emissions have to come in the **wealthiest countries** with no excuses.

The Prime Minister tells us that "if we don't act now, it will be too late", but doesn't tell Rishi Sunak, and is quietly sitting on **40 pending fossil fuel applications** that amount to three times the UK's current annual emissions. Naked in the conference chamber with no leg to stand on.

More significantly, the way that the Republicans and the pair of fossil fuelled Democrats who bloc with them have beaten down the the Green New Deal parts of Biden's infrastructure bill to just \$550 billion over ten years, leaves US action now significantly adrift of its targets.



## Quote of the Month

*As long as we keep ignoring the historic responsibility of the countries of the Global North and as long as we continue to ignore it, the negotiations will not have a successful outcome.*

Greta Thunberg.

That makes pushing for Just Transition an immediate issue for us here. The GJAs proposed legislative framework for workplace transition (see below), alongside the TUC's **15 minute course**, is very timely. The campaigns for insulation which we will cover in a special edition next week are crucial to reduce emissions, but also to cut bills and the health costs of damp, cold homes. We need to unite the entire movement and press this forward, in the unions, communities, local authorities, political parties; so it becomes a defining issue in every forthcoming election and a framework for the next government, if this one won't move.

## 2. Cheaper flights, cheaper booze anyone?

Ask the public about their greatest concerns, and they put **climate change second** only to the pandemic. But Chancellor Rishi Sunak's budget speech made no mention of 'climate change,' while managing three dozen references to cutting taxes on wine, beer and alcohol.

Instead, Sunak announced a lower rate of air passenger duty for domestic flights and froze fuel duty. **TSSA General Secretary Manuel Cortes** said it was 'the wrong budget for a climate emergency. It will do nothing to decarbonise travel. Domestic air flights cause seven times the carbon impact of rail journeys, and car journeys produce more than four times the greenhouse gas per passenger mile as travelling by rail.'

Instead of focussing on green investment, the Chancellor reaffirmed investing £21bn on road schemes, with 'green investment incentives' totalling just £750m. Meanwhile, ahead of the speech, £1.7bn was committed towards the cost a new nuclear power plant, another open ended commitment to be paid for by consumers out of their energy bills.

Overall, the budget didn't match the scale or ambition needed to tackle the climate crisis. According to the Green Alliance, Treasury documents claim the Chancellor has committed £30 billion on climate action since March. But that's contradicted by **new data** from the Office for Budget Responsibility revealing that only £25.5 billion has been pledged over three years to 2024-25. And just £8 billion is new money, leaving a gaping three-year hole.

The government claims, controversially, that its contribution will leverage new private investments of up to £90bn by 2030. Meanwhile, the Labour party has pledged £280bn of green capital investment by 2030, equivalent to half the defence budget, and by far the party's biggest spending pledge.

Unite General Secretary, Sharon Graham, commented, "*The chancellor's statement today makes it clear that the government wants workers to pay for the pandemic. Their incomes are under attack from tax rises and inflation while the super-rich will continue to prosper. This Budget also failed to invest in growth and jobs on anything like the scale required*".

*Philip Pearson*

### 3. Down to Zero - Touch and Gone?

At first it looked like Boris Johnson might say something sensible. Announcing the government's "**net zero strategy**", and showing his seriousness by citing Gordon Gekko as a cultural reference point instead of Kermit the Frog, he said: *"there is a force that is stronger than governments. It is even stronger than Business" and, at that point, it seemed obvious that he had to say "science", or "nature", or "the laws of physics". What he actually said was "consumer choice"*.

That's the strategic failure of Conservative thinking in a nutshell. The transition requires guaranteed investment. Only the state can guarantee it.

The Treasury sucking its teeth at the costs of transition ignores

- the costs of inaction - the Net Zero Strategy notes "The Office for Budget Responsibility's recent report showed unmitigated climate change resulting in "debt spiralling up to around 290% of GDP thanks to the cost of adapting to an ever-hotter climate and of more frequent and more costly economic shocks" -
- the positive multiplier effects generated by productive investment and the **rapidly falling cost of renewable technology**; which means that a rapid transition will actually save money.

Their allergy to state investment means that they are hoping the private sector will finance most of the sums they need; relying on £654-784 billion by 2037, or £50-60 billion a year "leveraged in" by the end of this decade. The Committee on Climate Change notes that there is no plan for how this will be done; even though private sector capital surpluses in UK banks have grown by over £1 trillion since 2010. With no plan to tax it nor direct investment, this is likely to stay there; or seek outlets that are more profitable.

So, as plans go, this is what Hamlet might have called "*a thing of shreds and patches*", with no time-bound, numerical, sector-specific decarbonisation targets. Instead, it sketches out possible options for high-emitting sectors like energy generation and transmission; transport; heavy industry, heat and buildings; some of them speculative.

- They hope that public/private partnerships will deliver four CCUS clusters by 2030; aiming to remove 6 MtCO<sub>2</sub>/year of industrial emissions and 24MtCO<sub>2</sub>/year from other sectors; a quarter of the 138.4 MtCO<sub>2</sub>/year total UK emissions from energy and business in 2020. But, at present, the largest Carbon Capture site in operation is trying to stop a tsunami with a tea spoon, sucking in just 4,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>/year. Scaling that up to these targets will take some doing; but foregrounding the attempt to do so is likely to allow high emission industries to carry on with business as usual; on the promise that this techno fix is just round the corner.
- They are putting £120m into a Future Nuclear Enabling Fund. One new large-scale nuclear power plant will be announced before 2024 (probably Sizewell C) but there is no firm commitment to small modular reactors (SMRs) despite pressure from Tory backbenchers to plump for these over renewables. They have put themselves in a bind here. Cutting Chinese investment out of Sizewell means that they either have to fill the gap themselves, or seek a partnership with US or French companies that have a poor record on both cost and construction over runs. As large scale nuclear is expensive, and SMRs even more expensive, they are kicking the can down the road.
- Similarly, Hydrogen development is scheduled to get £140 million up to 2023-4. The projection to "leverage up to £20-30 billion" in private/public investment by 2037 appears to be in the hopeful punt category. Their aim to generate 5GW from Hydrogen by 2030 would have to be multiplied 162,000 times over to match the 811,000 GW actually generated from natural gas in 2019. A decision in 2026 on expanding this dramatically depends on the results of a "Hydrogen village" trial in 2025. Their pledge to phase out gas boilers from 2035 is downgraded to an "ambition"; dependent on costs for heat pumps or hydrogen being technically viable and sufficiently cheap for "consumers" to "choose" them.
- By contrast, there is no planned removal of planning constraints on onshore wind; and tidal power is still seen as exploratory; both of which could make a massive contribution.
- They have built themselves a loophole for oil and gas. The new "climate compatibility checkpoint" for future licencing on the UK Continental Shelf, means that they are still contemplating approving them. The

postponement of the Cambo Oilfield decision until after the COP almost certainly means they are going to approve it. Were they to have blocked it, they'd have wanted to boast about it in Glasgow. There is no proposal to shift subsidies from fossil fuels and the report from FOE and NEF that there are 40 fossil fuel projects in the pipeline for government approval in the UK, which would release 1.3 billion tonnes of CO2 equivalent if allowed, shows just how bad this could get.

- Taking down the **“Net Zero: principles for successful behaviour change initiatives”** document within hours of it being posted – removing its arguments for a shift to healthier, low meat, low carbon diet and inhibition for long haul flights – indicates how unguided “consumer choice” is going to be; the opportunity to get social momentum behind the transformation frittered away. As they put it, *“this will be a gradual transition, working with the grain of consumer choice”*. So, don't hold your breath.

There are three problems with this approach; scale, scope and pace. Inertia and slippage are written all over it. The total headline sums are speculative. The small sums actually committed twist the recognition that everything will get cheaper into the self sabotaging assumption that, the slower they move to start with, the easier things will get in the medium term. But the dynamic of cheaper, more efficient technology only takes hold if there is rapid large-scale development. So, this relies on other countries investing on a bigger scale. So much for “world leadership”. The bulk of decarbonisation, particularly for a wealthy sophisticated country like the UK, has to take place by 2030, not kicked down the road for later. It's important to get this right and do it properly, but it's equally important to do it fast.

Labour's pledge to invest £28 billion a year for ten years by the state is a more solid prospect, giving a clearer long-term framework for investment and therefore a multiplier effect. Though it falls short of both Green Party and TUC proposals, an agreement across opposition parties that investment on this scale is the least we need could be the basis for an alternative government after the next election; by which time the crisis will have intensified.

*Paul Atkin*



## 4. Green Jobs Report

### On October 25th the Environmental Audit Committee published the [Green Jobs report](#).

The Greener Jobs Alliance provided verbal and written evidence to the enquiry. We support the recommendations but feel they fall short in some crucial areas. The report is divided into 5 sections. Below we identify the main points.

#### 1. Green jobs ambitions

**Recommendation:** *'We recommend that, by the end of 2021, the Government set out how it will measure progress towards its green jobs targets; this should include its definition of 'green jobs', and how it will measure the number, type and location of these over the 2020s, for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating the impact of its policies'* (Page 10)

**Comment:** The GJA stressed the importance of adopting a wide definition of what constitutes a green job. Several other contributors considered social care a green job, with the Greener Jobs Alliance noting that 'jobs in the care and emergency sectors will be essential to deal with climate mitigation measures like health impacts, floods, and other extreme weather events'. (Page 8)

#### 2. Jobs and Skills

**Recommendation:** *'We recommend that the Government, in its response to this report, set out its arrangements for cross-departmental delivery of green jobs and skills ambitions, identifying:*

- a) each department's responsibilities;
- b) how it will monitor and co-ordinate delivery across departments; and
- c) how it will collaborate with the devolved administrations and local authorities' (Page 13)

**Comment:** Our view is that this must be linked to placing legal duties on employers to assess skills requirements to deliver net-zero strategies. Unless this happens, we will continue to be faced with the disconnect between the demand for and supply of green skills. The Government has pledged to set up a delivery group is to *'include representatives from industry, the skills sector and other key stakeholders.'* Unions are not mentioned and it remains to be seen if they will be offered a seat at the table

#### 3. Goals and a just transition

**Recommendation:** *'We recommend that a just transition plan:*

- a) be published by the end of 2021;
- b) assess regional as well as sectoral impact, to ensure regional skills transitioning plus employment and pensions support is in place; and
- c) include a strategy for maintaining public support for net zero' (Page 33)

**Comment:** The report says that public engagement is important but there is no reference to the need for union and worker engagement. It is the reason why the GJA has called for a [legal framework](#) to underpin this.

#### 4. Education and Skills pipeline

**Recommendation:** *'We recommend that environmental sustainability be included across all primary and secondary courses delivered through the National Curriculum and across A Level courses. Teachers should be supported to deliver this, with teacher training and continuous professional development. We recommend that the Department for Education consult all relevant stakeholders during the 2021/22 academic year on the delivery of this recommendation'* (Page 40) and *'We recommend that a module on environmental sustainability be included in every apprenticeship and T Level course. The Government should consult with stakeholders during the 2021/22 academic year on how to implement this'* (Page 43)

**Comment:** This would be a step forward, but an Apprenticeship and Vocational Training strategy needs to be far more comprehensive than the development of a module. Unions will need to demand a far ambitious programme if the yawning skills gap is going to be overcome.

#### 5. Diversity, inclusion, and access to green jobs

**Recommendation:** *'By the end of 2021, the Government should set out its ambitions for improving diversity and inclusion in the green workforce and set out how it will measure diversity and inclusion in green jobs, for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating progress towards its aims.'* (Page 53)

**Comment:** In the GJA submission to the enquiry we said: *'The fairness and social justice requirements of a just transition provide an opportunity to address diversity issues in skills and jobs. For example, many apprenticeship schemes do not have adequate representation of women, BAME and other disadvantaged groups. The Skills Audits advocated in this response must identify this and have actions in place to address it.'*

#### Conclusion

Implementation of the EAC recommendations would be a big step forward. Even so it is still a missed opportunity and yet another example of where engagement with workers and their unions has been left out. As the GJA submission said: *'There can be no just transition without the effective engagement of the trade union movement. This engagement must take place at all levels of economic activity. GJA has been calling for the statutory recognition of Green Reps. This should put them on an equal footing with union health and safety reps including rights to facility time and training.'*

[GJA submission, January 2021](#)

Graham Petersen

## 5. COP26: Global Day of Action November 6

There are now over fifty mobilisations across the UK registered on the COP26 coalition website almost stretching from John O'Groats - Inverness furthest north - to Penzance. With the decision to decentralise mobilisations due to the ongoing Covid crisis, there is a real sense of building for something bigger than we could have anticipated a year ago despite the huge numbers expecting to converge on Glasgow.

An impressive fourteen trade union blocs have been confirmed: Glasgow, Carlisle, Leeds, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool, Bangor, Cardiff, Nottingham, Birmingham, Cambridge, Bristol, London, and Weymouth. Trade union speakers will be prominent at these and many of the rallies.

The Glasgow demonstration will be the biggest undoubtedly and preceded by a climate strike on 5th November to be addressed by the young Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg. Platforming industrial disputes will be central to the rallies, forging the links between industrial struggle and the struggle for climate justice. The Glasgow GMB waste and cleansing worker dispute has been spotted by Thunberg who has personally called on them and all striking workers in Glasgow to join the climate strike. GMB Glasgow have responded with their own message of welcome and solidarity.

This recognition of the inextricable link between climate justice and justice for workers is a big step forward, and why we need to ensure that trade unionists have a visible presence on the demonstrations. The trade union blocs will march behind the message of Climate, Jobs, and Justice and unions are encouraged to bring their branch, regional or other banners.

As we saw from our last COP26 coalition trade union caucus meeting, there is a real anger growing towards the treatment of workers, particularly where just last year many being hailed as heroes in the height of the

Covid crisis have been kicked in the teeth with paltry pay offers. But whether this is fire and rehire practices, pay, outsourcing, redundancies at GKN automotive where Unite members are fighting to save jobs by repurposing production for electric vehicles, or the PCS/UVW Royal Parks dispute where largely BAME workers are fighting for equality, the Global Day of Action provides an opportunity to amplify these and our international solidarity with all workers.

There will also be a range of other activities taking place around the COP which are of interest to trade unionists. These include events at the People's Summit taking place from 7-12 November such as Climate Crisis, Austerity and the global working class, one of many which will be accessible online.

November 6th will be the biggest opportunity since before the Covid pandemic hit to show our collective working class strength on the streets and demand a workers justice transition across towns, and cities in the UK, and globally. We may not be able to climate strike together but we can march and demonstrate together. All out for the Global Day of Action!

### Links:

COP26 Coalition general and action:

[COP26 Coalition](#)

We Make Tomorrow trade union specific:

[WorkersClimateAction \(wemaketomorrow.org\)](http://wemaketomorrow.org)

Sam Mason



## 6. Building a Workforce for the Climate Emergency - New Report



At this year's COP26 talks, Boris Johnson will claim the UK government are global climate leaders, pointing to government targets of 78% reduction in emissions by 2038.

But even the government's own Climate Change Committee has raised alarm that in the defining year for the UK's climate credentials there is a huge gap between rhetoric and action. Only a fifth of the targeted emissions reductions would be achieved with current government policies.

Time is running out. There are alternatives to this failure. Climate Jobs; Building a Workforce for the Climate Emergency, the new report by CACC Trade Union group (CACCTU), aims to be a contribution to the alternative we need to fight for.

In this report which builds on and develops the One Million Climate Jobs (2014), key themes emerge if we are to be able to meet huge emissions reductions needed within the next decade.

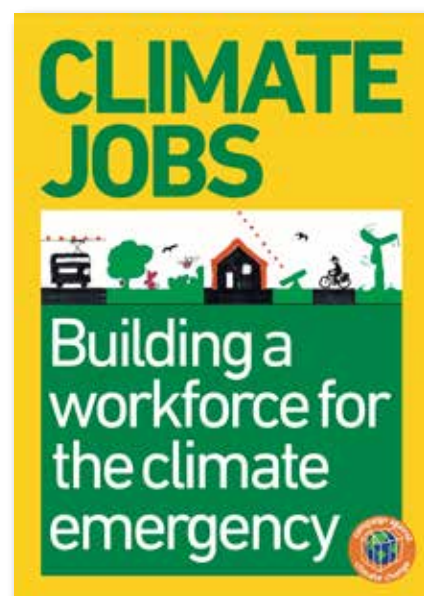
- All sectors of society and the economy need to change. But the changes needed are ones which could will improve our lives, ensuring warm homes, a fully integrated public transport system and a restoration of nature. Most importantly, investing in these jobs would give us a fighting chance for a safe climate and ecology now and in the future
- It outlines the type of workforce needed for the Climate Emergency to transition our energy system, to retrofit buildings, in industry, in agriculture and restoring nature and in ensuring we have a circular economy reducing resource and energy use across our society.
- Crucially it argues that to deliver this we need to break from failed reliance on the market to deliver decarbonisation across the economy. Instead a huge expansion of public ownership and public sector jobs is needed with a focus on achieving the huge changes need to tackle the climate crisis. This is required across the economy from transport and energy to food, homes, industry, education and more.

We argue strongly against the vision of a low carbon future which is *"business as usual but electrified"*. Solutions to the climate crisis need to challenge and reduce existing social and economic inequalities not reinforce them. This also means scrutinising the technologies being promoted over others by government and industry. Technologies that lock in continued fossil fuel use and mitigate the greenhouse gases rather than end fossil fuel use may simply offshore continued ecological, climate and social impacts in other parts of the world.

These will neither address the urgency of the crisis or build the global solidarity of working people we so urgently need. Building a Workforce for the Climate Emergency is part of a global transition for working people rooted in social, economic and climate justice. We cannot afford not to invest in millions of climate jobs which transition the economy to zero carbon.

Longer than the 2014 One Million Climate Jobs report and in full colour (essentially a small book) it can be read online (or hard copies ordered for £5, or £3.50 each for bulk orders of more than 10) at <https://cacctu.org.uk/climatejobs>

Suzanne Jeffery



## 7. Education International Report card: Government must try harder

Education International's [report card](#) on the extent to which quality education is a thought-out part of government NDCs makes grim reading for the DFE. The UK is placed 42nd out of 73, with no mention of Climate Change Education in its NDC at all.

The 6 criteria assessed were,

1. Governments ensure quality climate change education for all.
2. Every student leaves education climate-literate and equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to tackle climate change, adapt to uncertainties, and take part in building a more sustainable future.
3. Quality climate change education is based on science, and addresses the ethical, cultural, political, social and economic dimensions of climate change.
4. Teachers are trained and supported to provide quality climate change education.
5. Climate change education should pursue climate justice; teaching how different groups, like women and girls as well as indigenous peoples, are differentially impacted by climate change.
6. Schools and learning environments are transformed, to support quality climate change education.

This is poorly developed everywhere, as Education seems to be disregarded as a motor for climate transition and not recognised as a precondition for it - as if we don't have the skills to do the work, or understand why we are doing it - we are snookering ourselves.

Education International gives governments and unions three challenges each.

### Government should

- Fund, resource, and strengthen education systems as a climate relevant sector.
- Prioritize as a climate strategy quality Climate Change Education that is based on science, oriented to climate action, and takes an intersectional approach to climate justice.
- Involve teachers and educators as key stakeholders in climate policy and decision making.

### Unions should

- Identify the barriers and capacity needs of the education workforce and the education system to address the climate crisis.
- Contextualize NDCs and other climate policies into the learning needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized students.
- Develop mechanisms, like the EI CCE Ambition Report Card, to hold local, national, regional, and global decision makers accountable for CCE policy and implementation.

*Paul Atkin*



Photo: Youth from the Vashon Green School at Vashon DivestTheGlobe Action at Chase Bank DSC\_2588 [www.flickr.com/photos/backbone\\_campaign/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/backbone_campaign/)



## 8. Education Unions set challenge for DFE

In a letter to Nadim Zahawi sent on Oct 22, *Kevin Courtney and Mary Bousted: Joint General Secretaries, NEU*, *Patrick Roach: General Secretary, NASUWT*, *Jon Richards: Assistant General Secretary, UNISON*, and *Jo Grady: General Secretary, UCU*, put the following to the DFE:

*We believe that there are four key announcements that should be made before the COP or at it by the UK government, without which any other initiative, however good in itself, will be seen as window dressing for a lack of strategic urgency.*

- A comprehensive review of the entire curriculum, so that it is preparing and mobilising our whole society for a sustainable future. The “asks” from Teach the Future summarise how this could be done.*
- As an interim measure, the government should support Jim Knight’s Private Members Bill, restoring sustainability as a pillar of the curriculum.*
- A comprehensive plan to decarbonise the entire school estate by 2030, as part of an overdue refurbishment and repair programme.*
- A detailed policy on green travel for students, staff, and parents should be developed.*

The strategy due to be announced by the DFE sustainability unit on November 5th should be judged against this benchmark.

*Paul Atkin*

### 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.

## 9. SOS-UK COP26 pledge: Commit to Climate Education

In alignment with our **Teach the Future** asks, the work of **Mock COP26**, **Teach the Teacher** and the Education/Environment Ministers’ summit at COP26, **SOS-UK** have launched a **COP26 Educators’ Commitment to Climate Action** – calling for educators and education institutions to pledge their commitment to progress climate learning.

This is aimed at all levels of formal education, from primary through to secondary, college, university and adult learning. It is calling for teachers, educators and educator/teacher trainers, as well as education managers/leaders to pledge their commitment to embed climate learning in their education provisions.

We are reaching out to you to **pledge**, help cross-promote and if you wish, add your logos as supporting organisations/partners to our pledge web page.

For more information on SOS-UK events and action at COP26 see: [www.sos-uk.org/post/join-us-at-cop26](http://www.sos-uk.org/post/join-us-at-cop26)

*Meg Baker*



Students bring teachers up to speed

## 10. Statistics of the Month

85%

decline in solar energy costs in ten years (*IEA*)

0.01%  
- 0.09%  
pa

How much UK transport and ) construction companies spend on research and development facilitating decarbonisation (*Onward*)

### Future Items

- The Report on the GKN “Lucas Plan” dispute has been held over.
- Watch out for the special **Heat, Buildings and Insulation** edition of the Newsletter; which will be out at the end of this week.

## Building the Greener Jobs Alliance

In addition to all our campaigning activities, at the GJA we are also seeking to improve our communications and services. First, our currently creaking website is about to undergo a much needed overhaul, thanks to our website guru Wendy Mayes. Our plan, which we hope to implement by the autumn, should give us a much more flexible and responsive web presence, much more scope for updates and current news, and the ability to carry regular blogs from members or guests, while still carrying the course modules and newsletters that are the backbone of the website.

We've also produced a new GJA constitution which will be available on the new website, to update our membership, our purpose and aims, and how we operate independently of the policies of our constituent membership. It's also our aim to review our list of supporters and seek to engage more often and more directly so that we can build campaigns and alliances directly to support our primary objective of supporting the development of climate jobs for workers across the whole economy.

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