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### 1. Editorial – Please spare us another 'world beating' claim

On 21 July, Prime Minister Johnson announced a £350m 'green funding package' to support efforts to drive down carbon emissions from heavy industry, construction, space and transport. He said it would 'fuel a green, sustainable recovery from the Covid-19 crisis. He added, 'We've made great strides towards our net zero target over the last year.'

Meanwhile, out in the real world, the Committee on Climate Change says meagre progress has been made over the last year to build the foundations for the transition to a net zero emissions economy. As we report below, exhausted from trying to get the Prime Minister to act, the government's independent advisers have now resorted to direct appeals to Ministers.

On 8 July, the Chancellor announced a £3 billion 'green stimulus' package. But our analysis (thanks to Paul Atkins NEU) reveals that the package provides a fraction of what's required for a national home insulation programme. It is far less than for new road building, and is dwarfed by similar efforts in France and Germany.

Johnson's latest £350m pledge comes in small packages that innovators must bid for. Many of the projects are, of course, essential for a green future: £10m for work on more efficient electric motors; developing recyclable steel; innovative, greener materials in heavy industry; clean hydrogen power that doesn't rely on methane for the hydrogen; and scaling up carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology. But competitive bids for small innovation packages is no substitute for government-led equity stakes in key businesses and technologies.

Ministers Gavin Williamson MP (Education) and Alok Sharma MP (Business and Energy) have each had letters from the GJA asking how they intend to ensure green skills are mainstreamed into their departmental strategies.



Photo: Adam <https://www.flickr.com/photos/555991475@N08/>

### The Future We Choose

GJA contributed to the new UCU's wall chart illustrates climate activism and the cross-border solidarity we need to achieve climate justice.

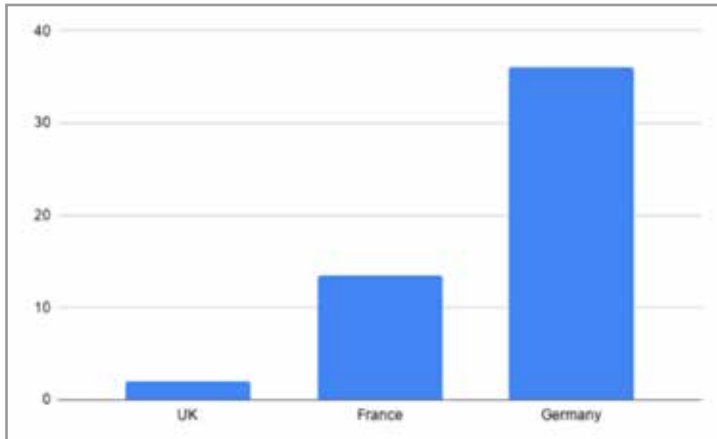
A full size, hi-res version is available here:

<https://bit.ly/300j3Ak>

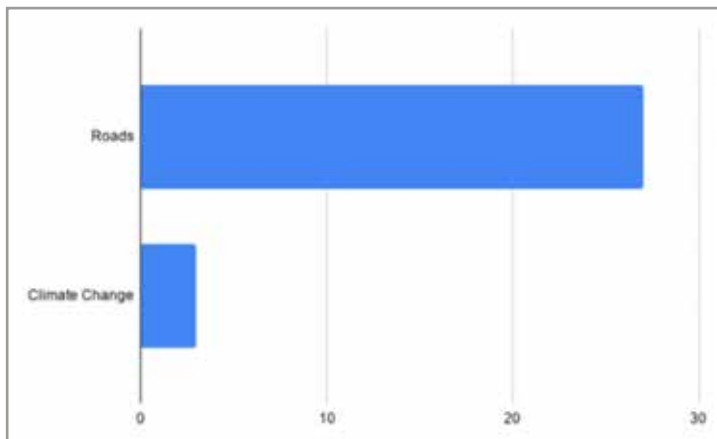


## 2. July Budget: peanuts for 'green recovery'

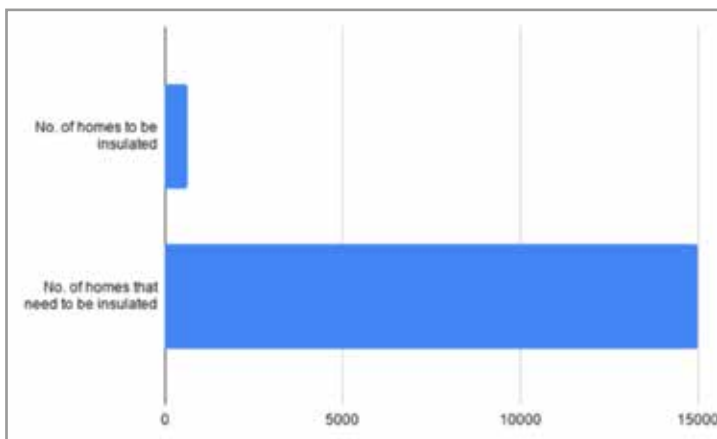
The government is 'incapable and unwilling' to face up to the climate emergency, according to an analysis by Paul Atkins for the GJA. The July Budget set aside just £3 billion for green buildings, energy efficiency upgrades and habitat restoration in support of a 'green recovery' – a policy that has overwhelming public support. But Johnson is investing 35 times more on HS2.



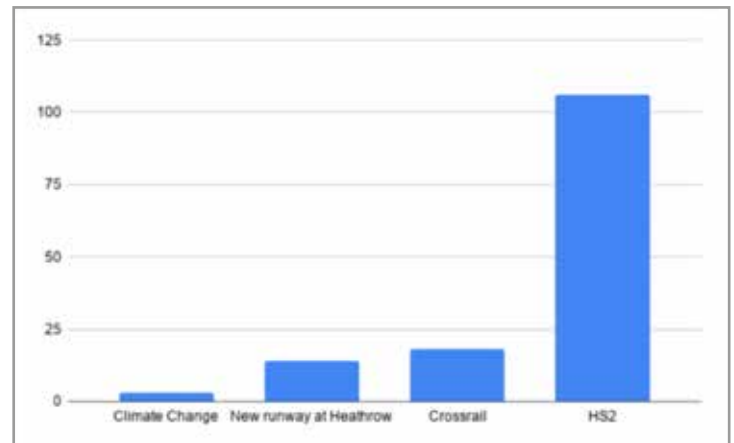
By contrast, more than £26 billion is going into new road building:



The Chancellor announced plans for retrofitting just 650,000 houses, out of the 15 million that need upgrading:



The £2 billion allocated to homes energy efficiency is well below levels in comparable countries:



The full analysis is available at: <https://bit.ly/3jG26mQ>

## 3. GJA demands action on green skills

The independent Committee on Climate Change (CCC) says that far more ambitious 'reskilling and retraining programmes' are essential to support the transition to a low carbon economy. Its advice prompted the GJA to call on Ministers to mainstream green skills in their departmental strategies.

The committee has aimed this report at Ministers and their departments. They must 'seize the opportunity to turn the COVID-19 crisis into a defining moment in the fight against climate change... Limited steps have been taken over the past year to support the transition to a net-zero economy... but much remains to be done.'

So the GJA contacted Ministers Gavin Williamson MP (Education) and Alok Sharma MP (Business and Energy), asking how they intend to ensure green skills are mainstreamed into their departmental strategies. The GJA has been calling for this over a decade. We now want to see clear evidence that this is being adopted in a way that will drive the delivery of a net-zero carbon economy.

The government is legally obliged to take account of the committee's advice. It's green investment priorities for Ministers include:

1. Reskilling and retraining programmes
2. Low-carbon retrofits and buildings that are fit for the future
3. Tree planting, peatland restoration, and green infrastructure
4. Energy networks
5. Infrastructure to make it easy for people to walk, cycle, and work at home.
6. Targeted science and innovation funding



The CCC urges the Business Secretary to think about how his Department will plan a 'just transition' for workers transitioning from high-carbon to low-carbon and climate resilient.

Actions required of the Business department include:

- Work with other government departments (DWP, DfE and the Home Office) to develop a strategy for a NetZero workforce for a 'just transition,' and integrate relevant skills into the UK's education framework.

- 'Actively monitor the risks and opportunities arising from the transition.'
- 'Roll-out plans for training and skills, with buildings and manufacturing being priority areas.'

Our letter the Minister seeks clarification 'at the earliest opportunity of the timescale for putting this strategy in place by 2021.'

#### GJA letters:

##### Letter to Gavin Williamson

Training and skills: Implementing the Committee on Climate Change Report

##### Letter to Alok Sharma

Training and skills: Implementing the Committee on Climate Change Report

#### CCC official advice to government:

<https://bit.ly/2EjGah6>

#### 4. 'A million new jobs needed', TUC

'The UK needs to urgently move towards our net zero-carbon target, to tackle persistent regional inequalities, and to repair our public services,' says the TUC. Over 650,000 people have lost their job since the lockdown began. Vacancies are at a 20-year low. Unemployment could reach 11% of the workforce by autumn. 'Without further bold action by government, the economic slow-down poses huge risks to jobs and livelihoods,' says the TUC. Its report, *Rebuilding after recession*, sets out an investment plan with the potential to support 1.24 million jobs, help the transition to net-zero, and strengthen public services.

Working more closely with government during the pandemic, the TUC is calling for **Sectoral recovery panels** of unions, employers and government, tailored to the needs of each sector. The government should take an equity stake in businesses in exchange for them committing to fair pay plans, pay their taxes in the UK, and promote decent jobs. Workers who lose their jobs must be protected with 'a new government funded jobs guarantee, with increased training rights'. Universal credit must be reformed 'to prevent people spiralling into debt.'

Over 735,00 jobs could be created in housebuilding and home energy efficiency. Yet the Chancellor's June budget offered just £3 billion to decarbonise public buildings and cut emissions from Britain's poorly insulated homes. Only £50m was set aside for councils to pilot green retrofits for social housing. But the German government has already committed ten times that to tackle the climate crisis and create jobs. Ed Miliband, the shadow business secretary, said: "We have consistently called for a recovery which has energy efficiency at its heart and will welcome any measures which achieve that. This needs to be part of a much broader and bigger scale strategy for getting on track for net zero.'



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





**TUC's job creation plan** - direct jobs and in supply chains:

- 735,000 - housing construction and energy efficiency retrofits
- 127,000 - rail upgrades
- 103,000 - cycle lanes and pedestrianisation
- 59,000 - electrifying transport
- 98,000 - energy, waste, and manufacturing infrastructure upgrades
- 81,000 - reforestation, land and agriculture improvements
- 42,000 - broadband upgrades

Public benefits within two years:

- An additional 40% of social housing retrofitted for energy efficiency\*
- Domestic clean manufacturing protected and boosted
- New social housing construction in line with Shelter demands
- Rural electric vehicle charging roll-out covering 56% of rural businesses
- Plastic recycling infrastructure to end plastic exports
- Flood Defences in line with Environment Agency needs

*\*EPC Band C: Energy Performance Certificate, Band C, ensures a property achieves around two-thirds of the maximum energy savings it could make:*

[www.energykey.co.uk/epc.html](http://www.energykey.co.uk/epc.html)

## Sources

TUC report "[Rebuilding after Recession - a Plan for Jobs](#)"

Research: [Transition Economics modelling report](#)  
Here's Frances O'Grady [writing about it in the Indy](#)

## 5. No-deal Brexit threat to manufacturing

Manufacturing lobby group, Make UK, says that seats won by the Tories in the 2019 election (so-called 'red wall' seats) are most at risk if Johnson's Brexit talks collapse. Industrial areas in the north of England, the Midlands and Wales have the strongest trade links with the EU, exacerbating the damage to jobs and growth if talks fail. Almost two-thirds of exports from Wales, the north-east of England and Yorkshire and the Humber went to the EU, while the contribution of manufacturing to the economy overall in these regions was higher than the national average.



## 6. Give young people and planet hope – Steve Turner, Unite

The future of UK manufacturing depends on 'Getting apprenticeship cash working and giving our young people and planet proper hope of a brighter tomorrow,' says Steve Turner, Unite's Deputy General Secretary. Commenting on the Chancellor's failure to release funds from the apprenticeship levy in the mini-Budget (8 July), Turner said that over £3 billion is 'standing idle in the Treasury. Employers see the levy as a tax, or can't access it to fund recognised apprenticeships for either their workforces or those of their supply chain partners.'

'For all this fanfare of kickstarting the economy with jobs for the young, so much more could be achieved by simply putting the billions of pounds currently sitting there doing nothing to good use. Take Rolls Royce. Why can't a world-beating aerospace firm reskill its workforce and apprentices to repurpose production to produce tomorrow's greener, cleaner technologies instead of panic-sacking 3,000-plus skilled workers?'

Yet, said Turner, there was 'no commitment in the Chancellor's statement to manufacturing the green buses, heat pumps, electric vehicles, the glass, the turbines or batteries that we so desperately need to 'build back better' than before. These technologies will

create the opportunities to grow our economy while supporting our kids to make the things we need here, rather than simply importing from overseas.'

'The £3bn in energy-efficient measures announced last week are measly compared with £36bn and £13.5bn that Germany and France are investing.'

Source: <https://bit.ly/2OUrhDX>



**Angela Rayner: 'We must work with unions.'**



'We must rebuild the trade union movement to help secure a victory next time,' argued Labour's Deputy Leader, Angela Rayner at the TUC's webinar Organise 2020 [www.tuc.org.uk/Organise2020](http://www.tuc.org.uk/Organise2020) (9-11 July).

Unions pledged to push for membership growth and greater cooperation. Rayner emphasised the importance of Labour listening to, and working with, the unions. Membership has risen for the third year in a row, up by 200,000 members since 2017. There are now 6.4 million union members across the UK.



## 7. Unions call for 'Retraining Revolution'

Funding for a 'Retraining Revolution' is vital to support a green recovery. On 3 July, three organisations, led by Jo Grady, General Secretary of the UCU, with the Association of Colleges and the NUS, have written to Gillian Keegan MP, Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, calling for new resources 'for a major new investment in further education to close the skills gap that is rapidly widening across the low carbon sectors. New and updated skills are urgently needed for us to transition to net-zero and to adapt to climate change, and we believe that now is the time to act.'

*The GJA is working closely with the UCU, NUS and others because, without new retraining resources, even the limited funding and ambition around energy efficiency launched by the Chancellor, Rishi Sunak, will not deliver. We are also working with community organisations to develop a co-ordinated retraining strategy at local authority and regional level.*

Retraining Revolution letter is available here:

<https://bit.ly/2OYH8kl>

### Green New Deal bargaining guide

On 24 June, UCU and [Students Organising for Sustainability \(SOS-UK\)](#), launched a [Green New Deal for colleges and universities](#) to coincide with the ITUC's [Global Day of Workplace Action](#). The initiative calls on staff and students to pressure their college or university to help tackle the climate emergency. Over the summer, a new reps' training programmes will help ensure that the union starts the next academic year with a strategy for each workplace.

And to assist branches to formulate their claims, UCU and NUS produced a Green New Deal bargaining guide, which the GJA helped to draft, launched at a webinar on 16th July. The Webinar included Quinn Runkle, Director of Education at SOS-NUS and GJA Chair, and Graham Petersen, GJA Secretary. The new guide for UCU staff and students will help them to push climate issues onto the bargaining agenda.

The webinar link is available here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e235LdPJ0il>  
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1152881831748554>

Further information on the Guide here:

<https://bit.ly/39smumx>

## 8. Canadian unions demand Green Youth Job Guarantee

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) is calling on local and territorial governments to establish a Green Youth Jobs Guarantee for young people under the age of 25, including:

- a good-quality offer of employment; and
- continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.



This could include Green Youth Corps projects providing decent jobs in renewable energy, land remediation and restoration, climate adaptation, building retrofits and sustainable transportation. Additionally, it should include green skills training and learning opportunities. 'The Green Youth Corps would target marginalized, low-income and at-risk youth in urban centres, as well as in rural and isolated communities,' the CLC says.

### Adapting Canadian Workplaces

<https://adaptingcanadianwork.ca/>

## 9. COVID-19: Unions demands new WHO action on airborne spread of virus

A letter signed by over 200 scientists from around the world has urged the World Health Organisation (WHO) to recognise that Covid-19 can also be spread by fine droplets in 'aerosol' or 'airborne' transmission, and to revise its workplace guidance accordingly. From early in the coronavirus crisis, ITUC, global unions and national unions have urged WHO to act on worrying evidence of airborne/aerosol transmission. A wide range of workplaces and occupations are affected, not just the health and social care sectors. A new precautionary approach is necessary, unions have claimed.

Now the letter by 239 scientists, published on 6 July in the journal *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, reinforces the union concerns. The new evidence for airborne transmission is 'beyond any reasonable doubt':

*'There is significant potential for inhalation exposure to viruses in microscopic respiratory droplets (microdroplets) at short to medium distances (up to several meters, or room scale), and we are advocating for the use of preventive measures to mitigate this route of airborne transmission.'*

*'Studies by the signatories and other scientists have demonstrated beyond any reasonable doubt that viruses are released during exhalation, talking, and coughing in microdroplets small enough to remain aloft in air and pose a risk of exposure at distances beyond 1 to 2 meters (yards) from an infected individual.'*

WHO has repeatedly denied that there is evidence of this mode of transmission, instead saying the risk was limited to droplet transmission from close contact with infected individuals, and has based its recommendations on worker protection accordingly.

This has meant WHO has only recommended the

higher quality protections, particularly use of N95/FFP3 or better respiratory protection, for a small proportion of almost entirely health care staff in involved in particularly hazardous procedures.

WHO's refusal to accept the airborne risk as also informed its advice on physical distancing, recommending 'at least 1 metre' when another UN agency, the International Labour Organisation, recommends a far more protective 2 metres. Yet studies have shown some of the highest rates of Covid-19 have been in occupations WHO classifies as medium or low risks, including transport, construction, security and food processing workers.

In response, the Trade Union Clean Air network (TUCAN) intends to conduct workplace air monitoring pilots in the Autumn with the particulate matter equipment we have acquired. Get in touch if you want to get involved with this initiative.

**Source:** Lidia Morawska, Donald K Milton. [It is Time to Address Airborne Transmission of COVID-19](https://doi.org/10.1093/cid/ciaa939), *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, ciaa939, 6 July 2020 <https://doi.org/10.1093/cid/ciaa939>

**Related media coverage:** [New York Times](#). [CNN News](#). [LA Times](#).



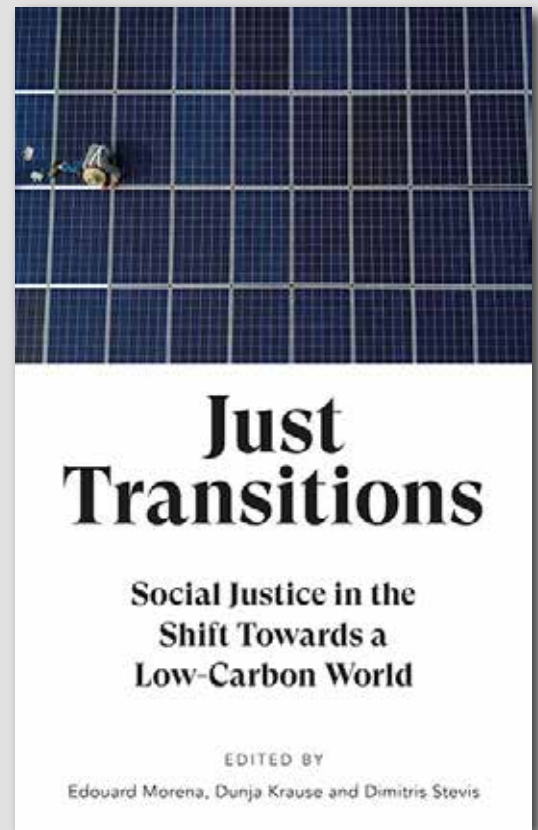
## 10. Just Transitions: 'one concept, different meanings'

A new book by US academic Dimitris Stevis brings together a compelling history of just transition, from its early origins among chemical workers in the US demanding clean working conditions, to the United Nation's 'Just Transition' climate conference in Katowice, Poland (December 2018), when the UN finally let workers' issues enter the mainstream.

Yet, on closer scrutiny, Dimitris writes, 'rather than providing a clear sense of how just transition can be achieved, the conference exposed the gap between policy makers' narrow understanding and the everyday experience of working people and frontline communities.'

Just transition is about far more than union rights and investment in new green jobs to replace polluting plant closures. Just transition is about addressing the equity and social justice dimensions of climate change. This is illustrated with contributions from the ITUC, US, Canada, Australia and elsewhere – for just transitions is 'one concept with different meanings.'

*Just Transitions: Social Justice and the shift towards a low carbon world, Pluto Press, 2020.*



### 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.