

# Time for change

Labour has swept to power on a wave of disillusionment and anger at the Conservative Party. It's an opportunity to fix much that has been broken in this country, to build a fairer society, and also to take urgent action on the existential threat of climate breakdown, which is already causing destruction around the world, hitting those who have done least to cause the crisis hardest.

## We need to invest in the future

For decades the level of public investment in the UK has been significantly lower than that of comparable countries. The Labour government has promised to deliver tangible improvements to people's lives; to repair the damage to public services caused by austerity; and to get the UK back on track to address the climate crisis. These are all essential, but if public spending continues to be constrained to austerity levels, it is hard to see how these aspirations can succeed.

## We need a workforce for the climate emergency

Any credible strategy to tackle the climate crisis needs to also be a jobs strategy, as set out for example in the Campaign against Climate Change's 2021 report, **Climate Jobs: Building a Workforce for the Climate Emergency**. There are jobs to be created around the country - in insulating homes and installing heat pumps; in public transport; in renewable energy; in a zero waste economy, repairing, reusing and recycling. And in the rural economy, where farming is already being hit by climate breakdown.

The climate crisis demands a rapid transition away from fossil fuels and no new oil and gas exploration or infrastructure – therefore Labour's commitment to issuing no new licences is an essential starting point. A just transition plan, shifting to renewable energy that can give this country genuine energy security, is not just needed for the climate, it is vital to protect these workers and communities. Jobs in North Sea oil extraction have already halved in the past decade, a trend which will inevitably continue as reserves decline.



**Campaign against Climate Change Trade Union Group**



Photo:  
Steve  
Eason

## Public ownership and coordination for people, not profit

The transformation that is needed cannot be left to the market, nor can solutions be limited to those which are acceptable to industry lobbyists. There is widespread support for public ownership in key sectors such as energy and transport. Our proposal of a National Climate Service would create and coordinate directly employed public sector jobs to cut emissions across key sectors of the economy, with national planning and coordination of strategy and workforce training, and local delivery.

People in this country need genuinely affordable housing, including social housing - that is also energy efficient and cheap to heat. They need accessible green spaces and clean air in our cities. We can have communities well connected by public transport and safe for cycling and walking. We don't have to choose between the environment and the needs of working people.

## Trade unions have a key role to play

Ultimately we need a radical plan for jobs that is also a plan for the climate and for the common interest of the working class. Trade unions must be proactive in campaigning for positive solutions, and also clear-sighted about the risks and limitations of some technologies favoured by the fossil fuel industry, such as carbon capture and storage, burning imported wood or fuel derived from waste plastic. The opportunity presented by a new Labour government can only be realised if they are challenged to do what is needed, not just what is palatable to big business and its allies in the right wing media. Trade unions are in a key position to do this.

**The Campaign against Climate Change trade union group** works for the urgent action we need to avoid catastrophic climate change: developing understanding of why climate justice is a class issue; identifying and sharing effective solutions; informing debates about 'false solutions' which have negative impacts, and working with other campaign and civil society groups to build a stronger movement.

**Find out more: [cacctu.org.uk](http://cacctu.org.uk)**

**Please join us in our work – let's plan for a future which doesn't cost the earth.**

