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UNION



**GREENER
FUTURE**



FOODWORKER
AUTUMN 2022



COP27

SHARM EL-SHEIKH
EGYPT 2022

**WE MUST STOP
GLOBAL WARMING
COP27**

SETTING THE SCENE

What was agreed at COP26 last year?

FOR THE FIRST TIME, fossil fuels got a mention at COP26.

Participants agreed to accelerate the phase-out of coal power and of fossil fuel subsidies. Countries also updated their own plans to cut their carbon emissions, but many of them are still not aligned with what the *International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)* says is necessary in order to keep the world below 1.5°C of warming.

All the countries in attendance agreed in the **Glasgow Climate Pact** to amend their plans in the twelve months following COP26 if they were not 1.5°C-aligned, so in theory they should all be arriving in Egypt with ambitious emissions reduction plans. *Though the reality is most of them will not have achieved this.*

137 world leaders representing 91% of global forest cover committed to halt and reverse forest loss by 2030. A significant number of companies and banks also promised to achieve deforestation-free supply chains by 2025, but this was just a voluntary pledge with no penalties should they fail to live up to their promises, which we don't believe will result in those businesses putting into practice the pledges they have signed up to.

Richer nations agreed to provide \$100bn per year to help fund emissions reductions in poorer nations by 2023 at the latest. There was also commitment to double the level of funding given to countries to help them adapt to a warming climate by 2025, compared to 2019 funding levels. However, there was no agreement on a plan for how to deliver this funding.



What will be discussed at COP27 this year?

If COP26 was focused on the 'what', COP27 looks set to focus much more on the 'how'. This year's COP president, Egypt, has said that it wants to move from negotiations and planning to *implementation*, which is a positive step forward.

However, many of the commitments made at last year's COP were relatively vague, with no firm plans for how they would actually be achieved. We expect this year's talks to hone in on the precise details of how to make these promises a reality though if previous COPs are anything to go by, countries will be reluctant to agree to firm plans with concrete milestones, as opposed to 2030 goals which they may be able to wriggle out of later.

Climate finance will be a key topic of discussion this year, with Wednesday 9 November designated as **Finance Day** in the COP27 schedule. Climate finance has been a long-running issue throughout previous COPs. The pledge of \$100bn per year to poorer nations mentioned in the section above was initially promised in 2009, to begin by 2020. So, Egypt, and other less developed countries, will doubtless be keen to firm up details on this to ensure the deadline doesn't slip once again.

Lastly, there is always the risk that this year's COP will be overshadowed by other world events. With war ongoing in Ukraine, energy and food crises, and access to Covid-19 vaccines still a major dividing line between more- and less-developed nations, attendees may be focusing their diplomatic energy elsewhere.



What are contentious issues at this year's COP?

- The debate around **climate finance** is likely to be a contentious one, as richer and poorer nations tend to have very different visions as to what this should look like – for instance, how much should be for *emissions reductions* versus helping countries to adapt to a warmer climate.
- **Debt relief** is a major issue. In 2019, 44 African countries spent \$75bn just on debt interest payments, far exceeding the level of climate finance they're expected to receive any time soon. Payments for loss and damage, also referred to as '*climate reparations*', may also prove divisive.
- Endorsed by a large number of developing countries, one idea that the nation's most responsible for the climate crisis should pay **compensation** to the nations which are suffering its worst impacts. Unsurprisingly, the idea is highly unpopular amongst highly industrialised countries and was firmly rejected at COP26 but may see a resurgence at COP27.
- The fate of **natural gas** will also be a live issue. Egypt is the second largest gas producer in Africa, and is among several African states being courted by European countries for their gas reserves in the wake of the invasion of Ukraine.
- It may prove difficult to reach an agreement to reduce fossil gas production, even though that's exactly what's needed in order to meet our climate goals – and even though African civil society has also **united against fossil gas**.

material adapted from *Campaign Against Climate Changes* website

THEMATIC DAYS AND VISION OF COP

COP27 IS BEING HELD in the Sharm El-Sheikh International Convention Centre (SHICC) in Egypt from the 6th to the 18th November – one of the largest and most innovative conferences centres in the Middle East and Africa.



But what is the purpose of this years COP?

According to the website, the following *goals and visions* are due to be considered, alongside a number of *themed days* to discuss in more detail specific areas and topics related to climate change and its impact

Egypt: Goals and Vision

Inclusive, rules-based and ambitious, substantive outcomes, commensurate with the challenge based on science and guided by principles building on agreements, decisions, pledges and commitments, from RIO 1992 to Glasgow 2021.

They are seeking to accelerate global climate action through emissions reduction, scaled-up adaptation efforts and enhanced flows of appropriate finance. They recognize that **'just transition'** remains a priority for developing countries worldwide.

Mitigation

We must unite to limit global warming to well below 2°C and work hard to keep the 1.5°C target alive. This requires bold and immediate actions and raising ambition from all parties – in particular, those who are in a position to do so and those who can (and do) *lead by example*.

COP27 will be a moment for countries to fulfil their pledges and commitments towards delivering the objectives of the **Paris Agreement** to enhance the implementation of the Convention.

This year should witness the implementation of the **Glasgow pact** call to review ambition in Nationally Determined Contribution (NDCs), and create a work program for ambition on mitigation.

Adaptation

Extreme weather events from heatwaves, floods to forest fires have become an everyday reality of our lives.

World leaders, governments and state parties to the convention have reiterated their commitment at COP26 for enhanced global action on Adaptation in the COP26.

The **Global Goal on Adaptation** was one of the significant outcomes of COP26. We must ensure that COP27 makes the crucially-needed progress and urge all parties to demonstrate the necessary political will if we are to capture and assess our progress towards enhancing resilience and assist the most vulnerable communities

Beyond the global goal on Adaptation, COP27 should witness enhanced global agenda for action on adaptation, confirming what we agreed on in Paris and further elaborated in Glasgow pact with regard to placing adaptation at the forefront of global action.

Finance

In COP27 it is essential that we make significant progress on the crucial issue of climate finance while moving forward on all finance related items on the agenda.

The importance of *adequacy* and *predictability* of climate finance is key to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, to this end there is a need for enhanced transparency of finance flows and facilitated access to meet the needs of developing countries specially Africa, Least Developed Countries (**LDCs**), and Small Island Developing States (**SIDS**).

Existing commitments and pledges, announced from Copenhagen and Cancun, through Paris and all the way to Glasgow, require follow up in order to provide clarity as to where we are and what more needs to be done.

Progress on delivery of the annual USD \$100 billion will build more trust between developed and developing countries, showing that actual commitments are being fulfilled.

Collaboration

Enhancing and facilitating agreement in the negotiations is of the utmost importance for the Presidency of COP27 to achieve tangible results in a balanced manner. The advancement of partnership and collaboration will help deliver our four goals and ensure the world is adopting more a resilient, and sustainable economic model where humans are at the center of climate talks. The UN negotiations are consensus-based, and reaching agreement will require inclusive and active participation from all stakeholders.

We are working tirelessly to ensure adequate representation and participation from all relevant stakeholder in COP27, especially vulnerable communities and representatives from countries in the African region whom are increasingly affected by the impacts of climate change. We need to turn the Glasgow outcome into action, and commence with its implementation.

Ensuring humans are at the center of climate talks is imperative.

Governments, the private sector and civil society need to work in tandem to transform the way in which we interact with our planet. We must introduce new solutions and innovations that help alleviate the adverse impacts of climate change. We also need to replicate and rapidly upscale all other climate-friendly solutions towards implementation in developing countries.

COP27
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Thematic days

Each of the following days will have a number of specific sessions to discuss in depth the relevant topic:

- 9th *Finance day*
- 10th *Science day and Youth day*
- 12th *Agriculture day*
- 14th *Gender day and water day*
- 15th *Society day and Energy day*
- 16th *Biodiversity day*
- 17th *Solutions day*

A few examples are included but you can find out more information by visiting the website:

www.cop27.eg/#/

Youth & Future Generations Day

Ensuring that the voice of Youth and Future Generations is heard loud and clear is one of the objectives of the COP27 Presidency.

Having heard the priorities and concerns of Youth representatives over the past few months, it has been decided to hold a stand-alone day to engage Youth and ensure that their perspectives are taken on board and reflected across all areas of the climate agenda.

The day will provide an opportunity to showcase Youth success stories and challenges and will allow for interaction with policy makers and practitioners as well as a dialogue with the High-level Champions and non-party stakeholders.

Gender Day

The role of women in dealing with all aspects of the climate change challenge is central, crucial and indispensable.

Women continue to bear a disproportionate burden from the adverse impacts of climate change, and despite some progress having been made over recent years, the gender perspective needs further work to be fully integrated into the processes of formulating and implementing policies and actions on the ground.

The Gender Day aims to bring this issue to the forefront and to provide a platform to discuss existing challenges and to share success stories from around the world with a view to increasing awareness and sharing experiences and promoting gender sensitive and responsive policies, strategies and actions. The day will shed light on the woman's role in adapting to climate change.

Decarbonization Day

Since the adoption of the Paris Agreement and all the way to Glasgow in 2021, several energy intensive sectors and companies have come forward with plans and policies and actions aiming to reduce their carbon footprints and to gradually move towards decarbonization.

Technologies are emerging as potential solutions to reduce carbon in the atmosphere. The day would provide an opportunity to discuss such approaches and policies, and to showcase technologies with an aim to encourage and facilitate the much-needed transition and paradigm shift towards a low carbon economy.



Women continue to bear a disproportionate burden from the adverse impacts of climate change

GLOBAL DAY OF ACTION DURING COP27

12th November 2022

ALMOST A YEAR ON from COP26 in Glasgow, and climate disasters are multiplying, *yet governments have failed to deliver on any of their promises at COP26*, either on improving their inadequate plans to cut emissions, overdue funding for the Global South, or on compensation for loss and damage.

This year, world leaders will meet in Egypt for COP27.

The Egyptian government, host of the annual UN COP Climate Talks this year has detained tens of thousands of people for simply expressing their opinions, joining opposition groups or attempting to organise protests and strikes. With no possibility of real protest in Sharm el Sheikh resort where the negotiations will be held, Egyptian activists called on civil society to protest around the world on 12 November, rather than to travel to COP27.

Here in the UK we know that our government's policies are driving climate breakdown, inequality and injustice, here and around the world:

- While people are being forced to choose between heating and eating, energy companies are making record-breaking profits.
- A push for North Sea drilling and even fracking will do nothing to lower bills, but will wreck attempts to tackle our emissions.

Mass mobilisations around UK

Organised by the **Climate Justice Coalition**, UK Protests were held in:

London, Edinburgh, Newcastle, Blackpool, Sheffield, Birmingham, Bristol, Plymouth, Swansea, Belfast and Derry

visit: www.climatejustice.uk



WANTED!

– A DEBATE ON CLIMATE POLICY IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

ON 8TH OCTOBER, OUR COLLEAGUES in **Campaign Against Climate Change** held a day's conference titled '*Urgent action, long term solutions: cost of living, climate and industrial action*'. One of the sessions, for which I was Chair, had the title '*Winning climate arguments in trade unions*' and included excellent contributions from **Sam Mason** (PCS and Trade Unions for Energy Democracy), **Mel Mullings** (RMT) and **Suzanne Jeffery** (Chair, CACCTU). There was also a great contribution from **Pablo John**, a GMB worker and a member of *GMB for a Green New Deal*.

as everyone knows it will, the change will be done to you not by you.

What the current polarisation within the trade union movement also speaks to is the difference between being a *leader* and being ordinary members. In the case of General Secretaries, there are probably very few who do not recognise the imminence of climate breakdown and its likely impact on their members' jobs.

But can they really come out and say that those jobs are at risk of becoming obsolete and we have to change, AND to propose policy out of that recognition? That's a lot to ask when your job



"There is a growing feeling among ordinary members in every high-carbon industry that their jobs are unsustainable in the long term and that 'something' will change"

At such a critical moment for the country we desperately need a sensible, well-thought-out debate about how trade unions deal with the climate crisis and serve the long-term interest of their members. This means recognising first that what many *Greener Jobs Alliance (GJA)* supporters will see as a worrying trend towards *regressive* policies (support for *fracking, oil and gas drilling, more nuclear*) is a response to the fact that we have a government that is promoting those very industries and therefore that's where the jobs would be.

My own counter to that would be that, as climate catastrophe approaches, those industries become increasingly untenable and our energy strategy will have to change and change more abruptly and dramatically the longer we leave it. But it is difficult to sustain that argument when union leaders only have to look around to see that their members' current jobs are 'real' while the point I've just made is 'notional'. The ask of those trade unions would be, even while supporting 'regressive' policies, at least come to the table to talk about the future, and what the workforce will look like, or else when the catastrophe strikes,

description is 'to protect members' jobs'.

And yet, there is a growing feeling among ordinary members in every high-carbon industry that their jobs are unsustainable in the long term and that 'something' will change. Many, when asked, acknowledge this as reality and are accepting of it. Their main concern is about *planned transition*, the availability of training and reskilling, and about job security.

That's why we, unions and their members, have to demand a prominent voice in planning and designing what, for example, the energy system of the future will look like, to ensure those safeguards are there.

The idea of this article is to solicit blogs from others that express all sides of the debate. Leaving aside the 'Theatre of the Absurd' that constitutes our current government, *this is the discussion workers need to have to ensure job security for the long term future.*

Tahir Latif
Secretary
Greener Jobs Alliance

MESSAGING THE MOMENT

HOW TO TALK ABOUT THE COST OF LIVING AND CLIMATE CRISES AT THE SAME TIME

PEOPLE IN THE UK face worsening financial strain.

They are also more concerned than ever about the climate crisis.

While the crises share the same root causes and solutions, we're seeing a rise in potent and persuasive narratives that pit tackling climate against tackling the cost of living crisis.

Evidence and logic point to moving away from unaffordable oil and gas. But to make this happen facts need to be woven into a clear and compelling story that effectively connects the climate and the cost of living crises. A story that's repeated again and again.

This is essential if we're to build and maintain strong support for an affordable, clean energy future – as well as immediate financial relief.

These recommendations can help you communicate the crises' connected causes and solutions to broad public audiences. The messages can be adapted to different mediums, messengers, campaigns and content. They're based on research carried out in August and September 2022.

Three Powerful Stories

The UK's potential

Connect the crises' causes and solutions explicitly

Now is the time for our islands, with their huge potential for wind, wave and solar power, to show the world how to tackle the cost of living crisis and the climate crisis at the same time.

Talk about how the UK can lead the way, based on our geography

Say that clean energy is effective and popular – it is!

Both of them have the same root cause: expensive oil and gas. And both have the same solution – affordable, clean energy that's become more and more effective and popular over the last few years.

Be clear what costs more, **after** setting the scene with a bigger picture story

Connect the present and the future by talking about our children's future

Our Children's Future

We all want our children to be secure and comfortable this winter, and in the future.

Be explicit about the role of oil and gas

But reliance on oil and gas is driving up our bills, making it harder to provide for our children today, while worsening climate change and threatening their future.

The only way to be free of unpredictable energy prices permanently is to move away from expensive gas and oil and towards cheaper and cleaner renewables.

Be clear what costs more, **after** setting the scene with a bigger picture story

Stability and Freedom

Be explicit about the role of oil and gas

We need to be set free from unstable energy prices for good by turning to affordable, clean power and the certainty it can give us.

The only way to be free of unpredictable energy prices permanently is to move away from expensive gas and oil and towards cheaper and cleaner renewables.

Use language of freedom and stability to talk about a clean energy future

Be clear what costs more, **after** setting the scene with a bigger picture story

DOs and DON'Ts

DO

- ✓ **Begin with a big picture principle:**
The UK's potential, our children's future or freedom and stability.
For example:
"To protect our children now and in the future, more and more people want the UK to be on the path to affordable, clean energy for all."
- ✓ **Focus on and repeat what's true**
For example:
"Our islands have incredible potential to be free of expensive oil and gas for good. Wind, wave and solar energy power are cheaper and cleaner than oil and gas"
- ✓ **Bring the conversation to our narrative terrain, instead of engaging with the frames set by others.**
Pivot to ensure that you're always establishing one of the three big picture principles.
- ✓ **Know that most people are already with you.**
They care about climate change and the cost of living crisis. So opt for a "we all already know" tone rather than the "we have to convince you" tone.
For example:
"Most of us are worried about the cost of living and the climate. That's why so many people want the freedom and stability that only clean energy can give us."

- ✓ **Use down to earth, straightforward language**

DON'T

- ✗ **...assert solutions and benefits without first establishing the bigger picture**
For example:
"The cost of onshore wind has reduced by 40% in the last decade, while oil and gas have gone up by 40% in the same time period."
- ✗ **...focus on and repeat myths, even if you're attempting to rebut or correct them**
For example:
"We keep hearing that we need more gas to shore up our supply and bring down the cost of energy, when in fact renewables are nine times cheaper than gas at the moment"
- ✗ **...engage with the idea of trade-offs and "tough choices" on these issues - or attempt to disprove this framing with facts.**
For example:
"Even if you're a climate denier you should support renewable energy because it's a sound economic investment at this difficult time"
- ✗ **...slip into jargon**
"Achieving net zero in the UK through renewable energy would cost 2% of GDP, but will have a net benefit of 4% GDP"



MESSAGING THE MOMENT CONTINUED

Answering common questions

In order to keep reinforcing our stories, we'll often need to pivot the conversation. Here are some ideas for how to do this in response to common questions.

“But renewables can't do everything, can they?”

Our islands have incredible potential to show the world how to be free of expensive oil and gas for good. Wind, wave and solar energy are more affordable, effective and reliable than fossil fuels*.

The cost of living crisis and the climate crisis have the same root cause: expensive oil and gas. And the same solutions - affordable, clean energy and better insulation for our homes so we can be warmer, and waste less of the energy we produce.

“Of course we need to be thinking about the environment, but right now we must do whatever it takes to get bills down. Doesn't this mean shoring up our own supplies of oil and gas as well as renewables?”

We need to be set free from unstable energy prices for good by turning to affordable, clean power and the certainty it can give us. The only way to be free of unpredictable energy prices permanently is to move away from expensive gas and oil and towards cheaper and cleaner renewables*.

If we don't tackle the root causes **now**, we'll be in the same situation again, and again.

“What do you say to claims that this is utopian nonsense or bourgeois environmentalism and that we need to get real and practical?”

People in the UK want to be able to heat their homes and feed their children this winter, and they want their children to have a future. More than 80% of us are worried about the climate and want more action to address it.

People know that it's our reliance on oil and gas that's driving up bills and worsening climate change. The cost of living crisis and the climate crisis have the same root cause: expensive oil and gas. And the same solution – **affordable, clean energy**.



Trade Union Clean Air Network Charter



Trade unions need a response to the public health emergency and also the occupational health emergency of air pollution. Over 40,000 people die each year in the UK where the outdoor air that they breathe is a major contributory factor. Thousands of people will also die because of occupational diseases caused by air pollution at work. Pollution arising from work and travel to work are health issues for which employers take little responsibility. There is hardly any recognition of this in national and local authority strategies. This is an issue for workers and their families at all stages from before birth to old age and particularly damaging the growth and development of babies and children. This charter provides a framework for unions to campaign for the health and environmental concerns of workers. We call on the Government to:

- 1. Introduce a New Clean Air Act that enshrines the right to breathe clean air.** It must set stringent legal limits for ambient air quality, which reflect WHO (World Health Organisation) guidelines. There should be recognition that air pollution is an occupational health issue. Employers must be required to make Environmental Impact Assessments on the pollution related to their work activities. They should have a duty to present strategies for minimising and eradicating pollutants within the workplace and in the wider community.
- 2. Update Health and Safety Law** - The COSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) Regulations and related guidance should be amended to reflect new research on indoor and outdoor air pollution. This includes amending Workplace Exposure Limits to place duties on employers to monitor and adopt control measures for diesel and other toxic vehicle emissions not currently covered by HSE (Health and Safety Executive) EH40.
- 3. Ensure effective enforcement** – Strict enforcement by relevant agencies of the occupational and environmental legislation with the power to hold public bodies and employers to account. Representatives of the trade union movement must have seats on the relevant agencies.
- 4. Involve the workforce** – Air quality measures for indoor and outdoor occupational air pollution must be subject to the consultation requirements of the SRSC (Safety Reps and Safety Committees) Regulations. Measures should cover both employees and others, and especially the needs of vulnerable occupants of buildings, including in particular children and young people. Employers should be required to raise awareness and support workforce training on risks and control measures. Workers may need access to independent advice on exposure levels and health effects.
- 5. Protect jobs** – Government and employer clean air strategies will have implications for jobs and employment. The application of Just Transition principles, including consultation and negotiation with appropriate and industry unions, must include full equality impact assessments, to ensure positive and fair outcomes for all workers.
- 6. Rapidly expand clean and inexpensive public transport systems alongside investment in active transport to increase levels of cycling and walking** – Cleaning up air in the UK will require significant public expenditure. Government should drive the policies to ensure that those least able to afford it are not expected to pick up the bill, and to subsidise measures for less polluting forms of energy and transport. Including affordable public transport. This will encourage more integrated and more active forms of transport.

For more information contact: [gjacomsg@gmail.com](mailto:gjacoms@gmail.com) or janet@gmhazards.org.uk 6.3.2019

GO GREEN AT WORK: THE UNION EFFECT

GROWING AWARENESS of the impacts of climate change on our daily lives has spurred union reps and members to find ways to 'green' their workplace. Workplaces and work-related travel burn energy, use up resources and create waste, so they are a great way to start. Union environmental reps (green reps) have worked with members and managements on a wide range of green workplace initiatives.

Here, we outline the main issues at stake and how unions are getting involved.

Climate change and workplace action

Climate change is happening. The scientific evidence for the warming of our climate system is indisputable.

Global warming is an existential threat to the planet, with the amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere as a result of our continued consumption of fossil fuels – coal, oil and gas – pushing up global temperatures.

A motion passed at TUC Congress 2019 stated: *"The Earth's temperature has already risen by one degree above pre-industrial levels. The autumn (2019 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) IPCC report warned that we only have 12 years to keep global warming to a maximum of 1.5 degrees."* The TUC campaigns alongside the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC – see www.ituc-csi.org) for a fair, ambitious and binding UN climate change treaty with a 'just transition' at its heart.

This motion was the latest of a series of calls at TUC Congress to recognise the immense threat climate change poses to working lives and the UK economy.

Congress has supported calls for massive investment in all forms of low-carbon or carbon-free energy including renewables, new nuclear, and coal and gas power supported by carbon capture and storage (CCS) technology. An active, government-led industrial strategy is essential to drive investment in the green economy and create economic growth and skilled employment for the long term.

There is a clear consensus among economists that failing to act now on climate change will mean far more costly actions later.

Now is the time to invest in green energy, low-carbon technologies, energy efficiency at home and at work and new skills, and to get going on green workplace projects.

The five years to 2019 were the hottest on record, and the period from 2010 to 2019 was the hottest decade since records began. CO₂ concentrations are now the highest they have been for at least 800,000 years – based on data from the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S).

It is critical that the UK moves towards a low-carbon economy – and fast. Half of UK carbon emissions are produced by work activity – in our energy-intensive industries, power stations and manufacturing plant. But all workplaces have a 'carbon footprint'. So they are an excellent place to start tackling climate change.

Organisations are far better placed than individuals to install cost-effective green measures and agree collective ways to change our behaviour at work – such as through recycling schemes.

To ensure that the transition to a low-carbon economy is socially just, union reps have a key role to play in securing consultation and the active participation of their members in climate change initiatives at work. This is why trade unions and the TUC have prioritised 'greening the workplace' activities.

Cutting carbon, not jobs

We have just lived through a decade of austerity, and the current coronavirus pandemic will usher in more economic hardship. Unions are under pressure to focus on priorities like saving jobs and cutting costs. But with many employers facing tight budgets in the coming years, union action to green the workplace can help ensure that financial savings from resource and energy efficiency ease the pressure on other costs and helps to protect jobs. The need to strengthen the link between sustainable workplaces and sustainable jobs has never been more urgent.

Women and climate change

Globally, climate change disproportionately affects women. UN figures show that 80 per cent of those displaced by climate change are women. Women are also more likely to rely on public transport and are less likely to have been given opportunities to acquire the skills needed for a green transition.

At the 2020 TUC Women's Conference held at Congress House in March, the TUC Women's Committee released a statement addressing the issue, which included the following words:

"Women and our unions must be at the heart of measures to address the climate crisis.

A transition to a green, net-zero carbon future can only be fair and just if it addresses the unequal impact of climate change.



This article is drawn from material in THE TUC WORKPLACE MANUAL

We need investment in vital services like greener public transport, in skills and in supporting transition for affected industries. New green jobs must be good jobs. We must recognise the impact on women across the world and, in particular, on those in the global south.

And we need a voice in how we mitigate the impact of climate change, too. Our fire services and local authorities have faced huge cuts over the past ten years, but they are on the frontline supporting communities hit by extreme weather."

The **UN Climate Change Learning Partnership** has produced a free online course called *Gender and Environment* that explores the issues.

www.unclearn.org/courses/open-online-course-on-gender-and-environment/.

The union environmental or 'green' rep >

Just as unions and employers work together to improve health and safety in the workplace through safety committees, union environmental (or 'green') reps can be elected to champion environmental issues. They can raise awareness and ensure that green issues are included in the negotiating or bargaining agenda at work.

The main concern of a union green rep is to agree a joint approach to 'greening the workplace'. The starting point, as always, is talking to union members about their ideas to change the way they work and the resources used.

The rights of green reps

In workplaces across the UK, unions have been extending consultation to cover a widening environmental agenda.

Technically, there is no legal right for a union to elect a specifically green rep with the same facility time and support that other reps have. But through discussion with employers, union reps are reaching agreements to extend the scope of union activities to cover environmental issues such as energy use, recycling and green travel plans.

This new area of work can be covered by shop stewards, health and safety reps or formally recognised union green reps – some of whom may be new to union activities. In other words, the law is lagging behind best practice.

Of course, we know that facility time for union reps has been under attack, especially in the public sector. Despite this, the TUC and its affiliated unions are campaigning for better rights for union green reps to help them influence the environmental agenda at work, just as for health and safety reps.

The TUC would like to see legal rights to paid time off to carry out these functions and to attend training. But even without these new rights, many trade unionists have decided to just get on with the job and have negotiated new rights to be involved in environmental issues, for employers to formally recognise the role of union green reps and for voluntary agreements on facilities and facility time.

Reps have also negotiated the creation of new joint environmental committees. In most workplaces the bargaining agenda is decided through negotiation, not by law, so there is no reason why environmental issues such as energy saving or green travel plans should not be formally included in the bargaining agenda.

Fighting for a 'just transition'

Climate change is affecting our quality of life whether we live in developed or developing nations. As trade unionists, we must speak out for workers everywhere in the fight for social and environmental justice.

The TUC and its affiliates are calling for a just transition to a low-carbon economy. In July 2019, the TUC published a statement called *A Just Transition to a Greener, Fairer Economy* which set out in detail what we are asking for. The statement called for:

- investment in the new economy, to develop the energy, manufacturing and transport networks needed for a green economy: we called for a cross-party commission, made up of unions, workers, employers and consumers to drive progress
- a voice for workers at the bargaining table – this is crucial: there are no climate deniers in the trade union movement, but workers are much more enthusiastic about the drive to a 'net-zero' carbon economy if it is something done in partnership with them than if it is implemented by politicians and managers above their heads, with unions having no say in the process

- investment in the skills needed so that workers in today's fossil fuel sectors will be in a position to take on new roles in greener companies in the future
- new jobs to be good jobs: however sceptical some may be about jobs in sectors like oil and gas, those jobs are often on terms negotiated by trade union officials, so they are well-paid and highly skilled – jobs in new sectors of the economy need to live up to this high standard.

The TUC statement is here:

www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/A_Just_Transition_To_A_Greener_Fairer_Economy.pdf

Unions

There are many benefits to unions and workers if environmental issues are included in the collective bargaining agenda.

You can use the following arguments in favour of unions pursuing a just transition:

- The bottom line is that making workplaces sustainable saves money and protects jobs. Energy inefficiency in businesses and organisations means that extra costs are passed on to consumers and service users. Trade union members are being hit with a double whammy.
- Working practices may need to be adapted to cope with more frequent experience of higher temperatures. Dress codes, uniforms and equipment all need to be suitable for workplace conditions under a changing climate, and shift patterns and breaks may need to be reconsidered by employers and renegotiated.
- Extending the union consultation agenda helps reps anticipate future changes and priorities, increasing awareness of external pressures on an organisation, for instance any non-compliance with environmental regulations, or financial penalties and fines it may face.
- Changes in working procedures need to be assessed for their environmental impact. By working closely with branch reps and members green reps can identify any concerns that are at odds with other employee interests and ensure change is fairly negotiated.
- Cost savings can be fed into staff bonus schemes or ring-fenced for investment in environmental improvements.

- Recruitment spin-offs can result from union involvement in the environmental agenda, bringing new members and reps into the union. Young people are particularly concerned about climate change. Campaigning on this issue, as well as being important in its own right, helps us to demonstrate that trade unions will take on the concerns of the next generation.
- Environmental improvements can maximise natural daylight, improve heating and ventilation controls and improve air quality, making workplaces healthier, safer, less stressful and more comfortable places in which to work.
- Involving staff in environmental decisions can improve engagement. Many employers have their own 'environmental champion' schemes, but workers are often unaware of them, or see it as just another level of management. Union environmental reps, by comparison, are answerable to union members, and happily work with green champions to help make the workplace more sustainable.
- Encouraging employers to focus on green issues can lead to the creation of new green jobs and skills.

Employers

Businesses also face numerous pressures and incentives to go green. These include:

- economic competitiveness and reducing overheads: with energy prices being unpredictable, cutting expenditure is a priority: sound environmental management lowers energy bills, landfill costs, water bills, transport costs and the costs of consumables, hardware and repairs
- reducing insurance premiums: in some sectors, such as the chemical and pharmaceutical industries, environmental audits are needed before insurance companies will provide cover: with extreme weather events now the 'norm', companies face a loss of business and increased insurance premiums
- attracting customers and green investment: customers, businesses in supply chains and governments all prefer companies with a clean and green record.

Climate laws and targets

There is also a growing body of legislation relating to climate change.

This includes:

- **The Climate Change Act 2008:** this established a target for the UK to reduce its emissions by at least 80% from 1990 levels by 2050. This target represents an appropriate UK contribution to global emission reductions consistent with limiting global temperature rise to below 2°C. The short-term target was a binding 34% cut in carbon emissions by 2020.
- **Carbon Budgets:** to ensure that regular progress is made towards this long-term target, the 2008 Act also established a system of five-yearly *carbon budgets*, currently stretching out to 2023–2027, to serve as stepping-stones on the way.
- **UK CO2 emissions:** in 2017 the UK emitted 367 million tonnes of CO2. The government has committed to reaching a 'net-zero' carbon economy by 2050. To do this, it will need a *whole economy approach*. All sectors should be thinking about how they can reduce emissions.
- **Committee on Climate Change (CCC):** this is an independent, statutory body established under the Climate Change Act 2008. Its purpose is to advise the UK government and devolved administrations on emissions targets and report to parliament on progress made in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for climate change. Its key strategic priorities are to give genuinely independent advice to government on setting and meeting carbon budgets and preparing for climate change; and monitor progress in reducing emissions and achieving carbon budgets. (see www.theCCC.org.uk)
- **UK energy market:** industry and energy companies are covered by energy market legislation designed to incentivise energy efficiency, tax energy use and encourage investment in low-carbon energy. Details of the various taxes, levies and exemptions can be found here: www.gov.uk/green-taxes-and-reliefs/capital-allowances-on-energyefficient-items
- **Climate change and Brexit:** environmental laws, as well as environmental taxes, may change now that the UK has left the European Union.

The TUC wishes to see a level playing field between UK and EU environmental regulations. We also wish to ensure high environmental standards included in any trade deals signed between the UK and other sovereign nations. Employers and unions should keep an eye on the precise environmental rules that emerge after the transition period is over and the UK is no longer covered by EU legislation.

Making the case for trade union involvement

Most businesses could easily save between 10 and 20 per cent of their energy costs through simple low cost or even cost-free measures. But, to do this, workers on the shop floor should be involved. Staff will not be able to deliver changes if they don't understand and support the reasons why they are being introduced.

Points to consider are:

- Union environmental reps can play a key role in securing workplace consultation and the active participation of union members in environmental initiatives at work. Union communication networks and consultative arrangements can offer ready-made links with employees on the ground that employers find hard to reach.
- Unions have the confidence of their members, so union involvement in environmental projects will reassure employees that their interests are being taken into account and that the latest green campaign isn't just 'greenwash' – that is, only pretending to be genuinely concerned about the environment.
- Setting up joint management and union environmental committees and negotiating framework agreements with employers can embed workforce engagement on carbon reduction and environmental sustainability into the way organisations work. Obtaining senior management buy-in is crucial to making a difference.
- If an organisation manages its environmental performance via an environmental management system (EMS), union involvement will strengthen the EMS and can form an important part of the evidence employers use to gain accreditation.

Unions are best placed to:

- monitor the effectiveness of environmental policies and provide staff input
- gain staff support for changes to workplace practices
- use existing union structures and procedures to influence and develop members' thinking and actions
- raise staff awareness and encourage behavioural change improve operational procedures.

First steps in greening the workplace

A good place to start is the TUC's guide for green reps, *Cutting Carbon, Growing Skills*

www.unionlearn.org.uk/publications/cutting-carbon-growing-skills-green-skills-just-transition

Other actions and points to consider:

- Check your union website: is there an environment page? If yes, check for resources.
- Has your union got a policy on green reps? If yes, have any attempts been made to get recognition at a local or national level?
- Get in touch with your union – some provide their own environmental training for reps.
- Map your union organisation and potential activists.
- Consider organising a green event in your workplace. Talk to the union learning rep and take up opportunities to link events with training initiatives like continuous professional development (CPD) programmes.
- › Run an environmental survey to get staff opinions and identify staff concerns on environmental issues. This will highlight ideas and solutions, give staff ownership of the project and raise the profile of the union's environmental work.

Climate and Employment Proof our Work (CEPOW)

Every year, the ITUC organises Climate and Employment Proof our Work (CEPOW) day. The idea of CEPOW is to promote a conversation between unions and employers in the workplace about the organisation's climate footprint.

In 2019, ITUC Learning Services designed a short, on-line quiz made up of questions about lower carbon practices in general and that could be applied to individual companies in particular. For more information about CEPOW, see here:

www.ituc-csi.org/cepow

Appointing a green rep

Finding people to take on the role of a green rep needs planning and publicity, but where individuals have expressed an interest there should be a discussion around what they are willing and able to do and arrangements made for training and facilities. Initially, the person may want only to be a point of contact for the union on environmental issues. This may involve distributing leaflets and reporting any concerns. Over time, and as new reps gain confidence, this role can

be expanded. Recruiting new reps to take on the green rep role will avoid overburdening existing union reps.

Negotiating on a green agenda

If your employer has no local or national agreement on union environmental reps (check with your union), you'll need to convince them that green reps have a role to play. Consider:

- checking for any existing environmental policies in your organisation
- finding out if existing policies make reference to staff engagement or involvement
- identifying a range of points that could be put to management to illustrate why involving the union is the best way to achieve better environmental standards, highlighting how unions can help the employer to manage risks
- using examples of where union involvement has improved environmental and business performance – if you can't find anything for your industry or company, take a look at the case studies in *Cutting Carbon, Growing Skills* and contact your own union for examples of best practice.

Establishing a green committee

You may decide you would prefer to set up a 'green forum' to meet management. This may be a sub-committee of an existing structure like a health, safety and environment committee, or a separate arrangement.

Either way you will need to consider:

- **Membership:** the management side should be represented by a senior manager and include roles like facilities, purchasing and any staff with a specific environmental management role

The staff side should consist of union reps from recognised unions. Additional involvement may be needed on an ad hoc basis, for example, the HR department or specific staff who deal with particular aspects of policy and implementation.

- **Conduct:** establishing procedures on how the committee will function. For example, frequency of meetings, who will chair the committee and its relationship to other bodies.
- **Terms of reference:** this should outline the range of issues to be discussed.

Negotiating a joint environment / climate change agreement or policy

Some unions will be able to negotiate a climate change agreement. Any agreement or policy should cover the main issues, such as waste management, but make sure it also cross references any other more detailed policies which exist that may include specific targets and action points. For further advice on climate change, contact your union or check out your union's website.

More information

The TUC's energy and climate change webpage features reports and posts on green issues. See

www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/industrial-strategy/energy-and-climate-change

TUC (2007)

Go Green at Work – the original textbook for green reps tackling workplace challenges

www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/extras/gogreenatwork.pdf

TUC (2019)

A just transition to a greener, fairer economy

www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/just-transition-greener-fairer-economy

TUC Education runs courses on trade unions and the environment. See www.tuc.org.uk/training

CASE STUDY: BFAWU work with Greggs to go green

THE BAKERS FOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS' UNION (BFAWU) has been working with high street baker Greggs to train staff and raise environmental awareness.

Sarah Woolley, the BFAWU general secretary, has been leading the union's work to 'green' workplaces where they have members.

Sarah explained why the union is getting involved with the green skills agenda: "After moving the climate change motion at TUC Congress in 2017 we approached a number of employers about our plans to initially extend the health and safety reps role to incorporate an environmental aspect – with a view to work towards green reps in the future when we had a training programme in place."

"Greggs bit our hands off. We explained that our health and safety reps would initially become SHE reps (safety, health and environment) and they jumped at the chance to work with us to make that happen."

Greggs were very keen to work with the union on this agenda and offered to produce some training that was relevant to the company as well as being acceptable to the union.

Sarah said: "We really are pushing at an open door. Greggs have had a SHE department for years and really were waiting for us to catch up – it's usually the other way around. It's refreshing to have an employer engage so much and it not be a fight!"

Sessions were trialled with reps before rolling out the training. The first training session looked at carbon footprints, with further ones covering waste management and energy use.

Sarah feels this is just a start and said: "It would be fantastic if other employers would engage in this way. We now have a template of how the sessions can be run; they would just need tweaking to make relevant to specific employers."

"The format Greggs has used is great. They have included us in the discussions, and to a point the development, though they have taken the lead with that. They have made the sessions short, informative and engaging. There really is no reason why other employers can't work with us to do the same – many are doing some great things around the environment!"

Beyond the work with Greggs, BFAWU has been collating green surveys that were completed at their annual conference and various regional meetings. Sarah said this has shown there is an interest from reps/members for the union to develop a role for green reps.

In the meantime, the union has produced a Green Future newsletter which is full of best practice, ideas that can be done at home or at work, interesting articles and links to more information and online resources.

Back at Greggs, the reps who have attended the sessions have given very positive feedback, mainly about being more aware of their own behaviour and how they can make a difference in their shops or at home.

Reproduced from the TUC's guide for green reps, *Cutting Carbon, Growing Skills*



BFAWU'S COOL IT CAMPAIGN



THE RECENT RECORD-BREAKING temperatures has been a real eye opener about the importance of planning in our industry for what is now predicted as becoming the normality due to climate change.

We have been calling for maximum working temperatures of 30°C [27°C for those doing strenuous manual tasks].

Health, Safety and Environment workplace committees should be putting in weather-based plans in good time.

Hot Weather plans should be discussed November/December for the following year and **Winter plans** around July/August.

“What can we do with the weather its going to happen we can’t control it” Is that something you have heard from management? We believe the following or minimum requirements your employer should put in place

- A **Thermometer** must be provided so that workers can check the temperature in any workplace inside the building. The availability of thermometers is covered by regulation. [We also advise Safety representatives take temperature checks in relation to accidents or incidents in the workplace].
- Workers should be aware that employers have a **duty of care**, and a legal obligation to protect their health, ensuring working temperatures are reasonable, comfortable, and safe.

- **Temperatures exceeding 24°C** present a serious risk of *sunstroke*, *heat stress* and *sunburn*. Working in hot weather can also lead to dehydration, tiredness, muscle cramps, rashes, fainting and, in the most extreme cases, *loss of consciousness*

Employers must work with union health and safety reps to introduce measures to protect their staff the following our *minimum* requirements,

Outdoor work

- Avoiding outside tasks between **11am – 3pm** when temperatures (and risks) are highest.
- Provide **sunscreen** and advice on the need for protection (available in other languages for migrant workers).
- Allow staff to take plenty of breaks and provide a supply of **drinking water**.
- Provide *canopies* or *covering* over open areas and *shaded areas* for breaks.
- Provide lightweight **protective clothing**, including *hats*.

Driving

- Any driver suffering from heat-induced fatigue is a risk to themselves and other people.
- Vehicles used for long journeys should be temporarily taken out of use if they cannot sustain a reasonable temperature

Indoor work

Indoor workplaces could also become dangerously hot, and TUC advice is that nobody should be working indoors where temperatures exceed 30°C. At 24°C employers must take action to cool the air, and other measures including:

- Using fans or other mechanisms (including adequate ventilation) to cool the air.
- Relaxing dress codes and uniform policies.
- Allowing rest breaks and adjusting shifts to avoid travelling in peak heat.
- Moving workspaces away from windows and other heat sources, using blinds to block out sun.
- Providing cool drinking water.

Maximum temperatures

Employers must ensure working temperatures are ‘reasonable’. The TUC believes employers must act when indoor temperatures exceed 24°C, with 30°C an absolute maximum.

SPF is PPE

Sunburn and complications from UVA radiation are a risk to health – outdoor workers are three times more likely to develop skin cancer than the general working population.

Sunscreen creates a barrier between the worker and the risk and should be considered PPE. Employers should provide sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30, free of charge to all outdoor workers.

The right to refuse

Section 44 of the Employment Rights Act 1996 provides workers protection from detriment (i.e. dismissal, disciplinary or a pay cut) if they withdraw from and to refuse to return to a workplace that is unsafe. Workers are entitled to remain away from the workplace if – in their opinion – the prevailing circumstances represent a real risk of “serious and imminent danger” which they could not be expected to avert. The TUC says workers should seek advice from their union before using their rights under Section 44.

How does our Government compare with others,



US regulations say working temperatures should not go beyond 24°C



Spain guidelines: working temp must not go beyond 27°C indoors or 25°C for physical activity



In Germany, 26°C is generally considered the maximum for indoor work



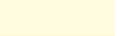
In China, when temperatures reach 37°C, outdoor work is banned during the hottest three hours of the day and at 40°C it must stop altogether.



In the UAE, outdoor work is banned entirely between the hours of 12:30 and 15:00

Cool It! continued

One consequence of working in high temperatures might be dehydration. Check yourself – if you are dehydrated a simple **Pee flow chart** can help protect you.

	Good
	Good
	Fair
	DEHYDRATED
	DEHYDRATED
	VERY dehydrated
	SEVERELY dehydrated

Use the above urine colour chart to check for signs of dehydration.

- Healthy pee is 1–3,
- 4-7 **must** rehydrate.

Other symptoms of dehydration include

- pain when urinating (UTIs)
- dry mouth, lips or eyes
- thirst
- dizziness
- headaches
- tiredness
- lack of concentration

If dehydration is left untreated, it can become severe. Severe dehydration is a medical emergency and requires immediate medical attention. Symptoms of severe dehydration include:

- feeling unusually tired (lethargic) or confused
- not passing urine for eight hours
- a weak pulse
- a rapid pulse
- fits (seizures)
- a low level of consciousness

If severe dehydration is not treated immediately it can lead to complications such as secondary UTI symptoms (e.g. E. coli bloodstream infections similar to sepsis) and falls due to dizziness. Severe dehydration can be life threatening, particularly for older people.

Reproduced in part from the BFAWU Campaign Leaflet

Cool It! Campaign

GREEN REPS TRAINING

There are lots of training opportunities out there if you are wanting to be a Green Rep. **Greener Jobs Alliance** have *three* free online short courses designed to start you off:

A Trade Union Guide to Just Transition

Social justice must be at the heart of the development of a net-zero carbon economy. The course covers:

- The meaning and history of the term 'just transition'
- Why it should be a priority issue
- UK and international policies and case studies
- Ideas for developing an action plan

It is aimed at trade unionists and anyone wishing to improve their understanding of why just transition should be central to climate change policy.

<https://greenerjobsalliance.co.uk/courses/a-trade-union-guide-to-just-transition-background/>

Climate Change Awareness

This short introductory course is aimed at trade unionists and anyone wishing to develop their understanding of the issues around climate change. The course is divided into 4 modules containing background information, short videos, graphs and illustrations.

- Module 1: **Climate Change Explained**
- Module 2: **International Responses**
- Module 3: **Trade Union Responses**
- Module 4: **Getting Involved**

At the end of each section, there are references and links to additional materials if you want to go further. There are no formal tests and you can work through the materials at your own pace but there are optional quizzes to check your understanding at the end of modules 1, 2 and 3.

<https://greenerjobsalliance.co.uk/courses/climate-change-explained/>

Air Quality – a trade union issue

This free online course is made up of 3 modules:

- Module 1: **The Causes and Health Impacts of Air Pollution**
- Module 2: **The Law and Government Policy**
- Module 3: **Trade Union Responses and Campaigns**

<https://greenerjobsalliance.co.uk/courses/air-pollution-a-public-health-emergency/>

The TUC are introducing Green Reps courses – you can find your local one here.

The Welsh TUC have also produced this fantastic guide:

www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-09/greenerworkplaces%20toolkit.pdf

FutureLearn also have a number of free short courses around different aspects of climate change – they can be found here:

<https://www.futurelearn.com/subjects/nature-and-environment-courses/climate-change>

BFAWU

We have the foundations for our own Green Reps training course that we will look at piloting in 2023 if there is enough interest.

Let us know at green@bfawu.org if you have completed any of the above courses or are interested in a BFAWU specific one!



WORK YOUR BRAIN

WORDSEARCH

How many words can you find?

A	G	X	T	G	I	P	E	G	T	M
Q	B	L	Y	C	R	A	N	E	H	L
H	S	A	O	N	N	Y	F	N	L	T
P	R	E	N	U	A	I	E	Y	E	D
F	C	X	H	D	T	P	D	G	L	G
S	E	R	O	S	O	B	O	R	I	S
D	L	T	O	P	I	N	O	D	E	N
E	U	A	L	L	K	F	M	E	I	R
P	R	O	C	L	A	I	M	E	M	O
P	I	B	M	O	O	O	R	U	N	H
H	T	I	W	T	R	A	T	S	O	T

SUDOKU

Fill the 9×9 grid with numbers so that each row, column and 3×3 section contains all of the digits between 1 and 9

					9	7		8
5				6				9
	4			1	7			
	9	2	3		6			4
	5							2
							9	
			9			8		
	2							
		6		5		4	7	1

difficulty: *medium*

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Prizes to be won!

These puzzles are designed as a piece of fun to keep your brain active and perhaps while away a bit of time on your break. There are, however, prizes to be won!

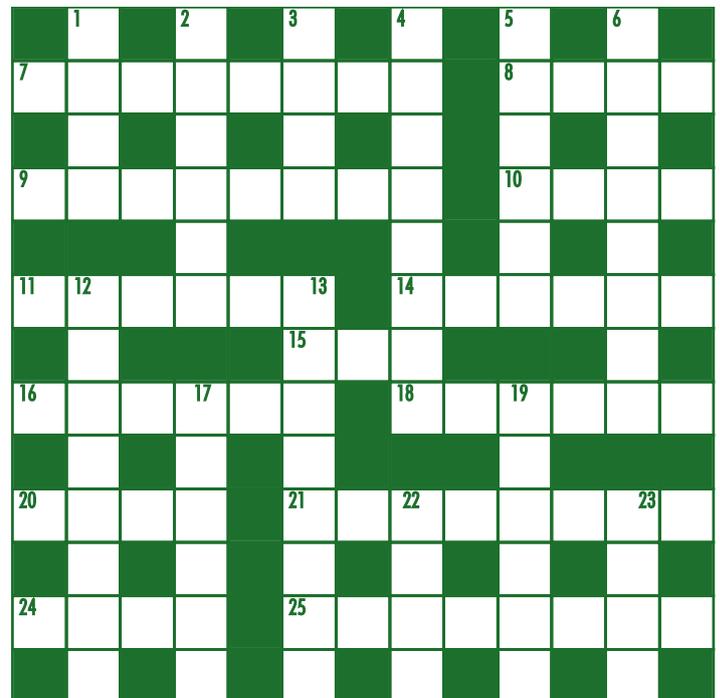
If you have completed a puzzle, take a picture of your answer and mail it to us at BFAWU Head Office:

foodworker_puzzles@BFAWU.org

We will check each entry and will contact you by email if you have won a prize.

Entries must be received by **15th January 2023** and winners will be announced in the next Foodworker.

CROSSWORD



Across

- 7 Broad-brimmed straw hat (8)
- 8 Tiered shelves (4)
- 9 Forced high notes (8)
- 10 Helps (4)
- 11 Midday nap (6)
- 14 Polar top layer (3,3)
- 15 Chatter (3)
- 16 Third sign of the zodiac (6)
- 18 Flexible pipework (6)
- 20 Scheme (4)
- 21 Kind of soup (8)
- 24 Autocratic ruler (4)
- 25 Exceptionally tense (8)

Down

- 1 Roster (4)
- 2 Mistreats (6)
- 3 Baby's bottle feature (4)
- 4 Driver (8)
- 5 Lubricant (6)
- 6 Polluted precipitation (4,4)
- 12 Put on a pedestal (8)
- 13 Excited (8)
- 17 Discount (6)
- 19 Explosions (6)
- 22 Secret look (4)
- 23 Way out (4)

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JOIN THE BAKERS, FOOD AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION

Application forms from any Shop Steward or, to find out more, complete the form below

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

BAKERS, FOOD & ALLIED WORKERS UNION

FREEPOST RTKG-RJRE-CJAT
 Stanborough House
 Great North Road
 WELWYN GARDEN CITY
 AL8 7BR

I would like to know more about the benefits of belonging to the Union:

Name (Block letters)

Address

..... Postcode

Contact Phone Email address

Where employed at present

Occupation

Signature..... Date

Please complete details above and hand to your local representative, Branch Official, Regional Office (for addresses see above) or send to Head Office at the FREEPOST address shown.