

CLIMATE JOBS



Building a
workforce for
the climate
emergency



Campaign against Climate Change
Trade Union Group

cacctu.org.uk

Warm homes, health workplaces: Climate Jobs in buildings

Some background

- To decarbonise the energy system, we need to roughly **double electricity generation** whilst using **only genuinely renewable** sources.
- This also means **cutting overall energy demand by about half**.
- In 2019, energy used in homes (including from generation of electricity) contributed 21% of UK GHG emissions. Almost two-thirds of this is from burning fuels directly for heat and hot water.
- We also need to reduce as far as possible the **daily and seasonal peaks** in demand, through a combination of methods including **overall demand reduction and load spreading**.
- Homes in particular are a major source of peaks and troughs in demand.
- **Insulating** homes, installing **heating technologies which use minimal electricity** (eg heat pumps, solar collectors), **on-site generation** (eg solar pv) and **on-site storage** (insulated tanks, thermal stores, batteries) contribute both to cutting overall demand and to reducing peaks in demand.

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Headline figures:

- Heating UK homes uses **300-370 TWh** per year.
- We can cut this by about **half in 10 years**, and far more after that.
- This will need an additional **2m workers** by the end of the first ten years – **most requiring training**.

Key issues in retrofit

- Proper **skilled assessment of every building** and a whole-house plan is vital – no “one size fits all!”
- Thorough **training, accountability and monitoring of standards is essential** – without this many retrofits fail
- Need to **build supply chains** for sustainable **low-carbon insulating materials** - breathable and non-toxic! Supply chains for components such as windows, heat pumps etc must also be built.
- Solutions based on “**incentives**” to home owners and small grants to local authorities **have failed**
- The **construction industry** is in chaos with **poor employment standards** and **limited training pathways**.



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Proposals

- A mass retrofit programme with **unionised direct labour** as the **central employment model**, as part of a **National Climate Service**.
- To be managed by **well-funded local authorities**, and in collaboration with local training providers
- Initial projects that can **enable training, learning and development** of local supply chains
- Two-phase approach for most homes, to allow for growing a skilled workforce, and **most rapid emissions savings**.
- Ultimately to **retrofit all homes** and other buildings to the **highest attainable standard** and with **appropriate on-site generation**.
- This can give us a **95% reduction in emissions** from buildings in use. We must also attend to embodied energy and embodied emissions in buildings – through choice of materials, recycling and renovating rather than demolishing.



To download a copy of the booklet and the online technical companion:

cacctu.org.uk/climatejobs

To order hard copies of this booklet for your trade union branch, workplace or community group, email:

climatetradeunion@gmail.com

£3.50 each for orders of ten copies or more (e.g. £35 for 10 plus postage and packing)

Individual copies £5 plus P&P

Affiliate to the Campaign against Climate Change:

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