



STUC Energy Conference 2023

The STUC's Energy Conference in March 2023 brought together trade unionists, policymakers, and relevant stakeholders to consider how to tackle bills, climate and jobs crises by ensuring a just transition and building trade union power.

The third panel titled, 'Organising for change: What can we do now?' brought together expert speakers who have been organising for a new energy system to tackle rising energy bills, deliver an energy transition and retain jobs and economic benefit in communities. Discussion focused on how workers across Scotland could organise to change our current energy system.

Participants then broke into breakout groups where they reflected on the panel and explored organising initiatives they were already involved in and what they thought was possible in their communities.

Condensed notes from the third panel's breakout groups are below.

Breakout 3: Organising for change – what can we do now?

What is happening right now?

- Railways: the sustainability group, electrification
- Bus services: organising for better bus service, some re-municipalisation of busses, increased technology around battery operation
- Living Rent: program for community power, encompasses the climate crisis as an issue
- Unite's courses on electric vehicles, solar panels, Unite exposing profiteering in energy companies

- Unison introducing environmental reps in branches, green network
- Just Stop Oil: Summer of activity. Activity in Scotland in May, non-violent direct action. JSO has a desire to speak with unions, they have a trade union liaison group
- Prospect: pushing for green reps in all the branches
- RMT: industrial disputes offshore on the rise
- Training on climate hazards in the workplace and climate resilience (ran by UNISON and STUC)
- Increasing political education around unions with young people and climate activists – starting to tie together workers’ rights, housing, climate and cost of living

What resources, capacity and tools do we need?

- ‘Just transition’ education – how to develop a just transition strategy in your sector, courses, case studies of success stories, infographics, help developing specific asks for workplaces
- Resources to call out greenwashing: audits of what has been said, done, cut, etc.
- Build on union learning reps
- Create micro asks for trade union reps in smaller unions: passing on resources, petitions, etc. So that smaller unions don’t need to create all new material themselves
- Create spaces in the trade union movement like the ‘climate cafes’ - which leave room for hopes, fears, ideas and learning across generations
- Collecting case studies of issues that people have organised around that could fit into the category of climate action or just transition
- Create standardised courses on just transition and the climate emergency that can be delivered to branches and interested workplaces across Scotland
- Semi-regular ‘just transition bulletin’ with policy developments, campaigns, anything else that people might like to know about
- Statistics and infographics on Scotwind
- A change on the education side: geologists are still being trained to dig up oil, for instance
- A change in supply side strategy by the Scottish Government
- STUC could provide: a timeline of what needs to happen and by when, collect industrial examples of just transition, share work being done so we aren’t repeating mistakes, coordination between activities and actions, coordination between trade unions and climate activists, visit different sites and workplaces, replicate the ‘Our Power’ report in different sectors – starting with transport