

Climate emergency – model motion

This (branch/region/trades council/union/conference) notes the urgent need for action on the climate emergency, both in response to existing negative impacts such as extreme weather, fires, droughts, floods and loss of habitat and species; and to avoid the catastrophic and irreversible climate damage which people increasingly realise the world is on course for, after the 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report.

We recognise that big business, the military and the richest individuals are responsible for the vast majority of climate change, yet the global working class and poor are disproportionately at risk. A just transition (that protects the lives, livelihoods and rights of the poor and disadvantaged) to a decarbonised economy is not only right, but is the only way the movement against climate chaos will secure the mass support needed to win, and avoid a rich minority protecting themselves at the expense of the planet and the vast majority of people.

We congratulate the school students striking around the world for real climate action and welcome the decision of the TUC to support them and call for a solidarity stoppage. We note that many workers did strike on 20 September 2019, despite Britain's repressive legislation, by campaigning to pressure employers not to apply sanctions to climate strikers.

We resolve to:

1. Publicly state our support and solidarity with the climate strikers and the wider movement for rapid and effective climate action
2. Invite climate strikers to speak at our meeting
3. Educate our members about the climate emergency
4. Give practical support to the climate strikes, without adults taking it over. This will include asking schools, local authorities and academy chains to commit to imposing no sanctions against striking students, promoting the strikes on social media, encouraging members to attend, taking our flags or banner if agreed with the strikers. If requested, it could include co-hosting events, providing sound systems, staging and stewards, using our public liability insurance, help with press releases or police liaison.
5. Support workers joining climate strikes, including on 29 November 2019, and maximise member involvement
6. Work with other local labour movement and environmental organisations to arrange discussions locally and within workplaces about practically how workers and unions can learn from 20 September, join climate strikes or show solidarity
7. Call on employers and local authorities to declare a climate emergency and involve workers and communities in planning, implementing and monitoring to rapidly achieve zero carbon emissions, including ending investments in fossil fuels
8. Call on employers to recognise union green/environmental reps and give them work time for their activities
9. Create climate action groups at workplace level and within union structures
10. Call on unions and the TUC to back the climate strikes, call and build action
11. Call on our union to carry out a major exercise to understand the potential positive and negative impacts of the climate crisis and responses to it on employment
12. Campaign for a legal right to strike and to repeal all legislation that makes it harder to strike over climate
13. Discuss what climate-related demands to include in collective bargaining, including ones which could be the basis of a lawful "trade dispute" under current legislation and to call on our union to produce guidance on this
14. Ensure that unions are visible as relevant and useful organisations within the climate movement and that participants are encouraged to join a union
15. Demand massive public investment in the jobs required to address climate emergency, including massive improvements in renewable energy, housing and public transport
16. Send this motion to our local trades union council, up through our union structure, and to the local Labour Party