



# tubeworker

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## Support the 20 September climate strike

# WE NEED WORKERS' CLIMATE ACTION



**School students who have been striking to demand radical action on climate change have issued a call for workers to join them in their next strike on 20 September.**

Climate change is one of the most serious issues facing our society. Scientists calculate that we now have around a decade to take action to avert ecological catastrophe. Failure to do this could lead to droughts, floods, extreme heat, food scarcity, and more, affecting millions of people.

As public transport workers, we work in an industry that needs to be radically expanded to give people a meaningful alternative to high-emissions forms of transport such as cars.

71% of greenhouse gas emissions since 1988 have come from just 100 corporations. Confronting climate change means confronting capitalism's drive for profit. As workers, whose labour powers the economy, we have a unique potential power to challenge the rule of profit and change the way our society is organised. The *Evening Standard* estimates that a single day's strike on the Tube "costs" the London economy £300 million.

School climate strikers know that they need organised labour to act with them if we are to win real change. Their call for workers to join their 20 September strike is a challenge to all of us to step up to the plate and play a role in saving our planet.

Currently, there are real obstacles our employers and the state have set up to prevent workers taking effective action. For example, anti-union legislation

prevents us from striking over "political" issues, meaning we couldn't hold legal strikes over the issue of climate change in and of itself. Balloting laws make the process of organising a strike bureaucratic and long-winded. Our unions need to renew their efforts to challenge and defeat such anti-union legislation.

We also need to think creatively about how we can support the 20 September call. Two unions, the University and College Union (UCU) and the Bakers' union, have officially declared their support for the 20 September strike, with UCU encouraging its members to organise mini walkouts. Some branches of Unison in local government and education are also planning action.

### CLIMATE STRIKE

**Simply walking off the job en masse is not feasible for us (yet!), but we can still act in support of the climate strike on 20 September. Here are three suggestions from us here at *Tubeworker*:**

- Even a small workplace action, such as getting everyone together in the mess room to take a photo holding signs/placards supporting the strike, could have an important symbolic impact.

- Workers at Zone 1 stations could attend the school strikers' rally, which will take place in central London.

- If we are in a position to call strikes in any of our own ongoing disputes - such as the fight against Transformation, the pay fight, or the ABM cleaners' dispute - we should consider coordinating action on 20 September. We should also highlight the environmental aspects of our existing demand. The demand for a reduced working week has many resonances in this regard: for example, more time away from work can help reduce emissions by reducing the need for daily commutes. Longer holidays for all workers also mean less pressure to use short-haul air travel and could allow us to use international rail travel instead.

- Longer term, we should look to build disputes which use environmental issues as a workplace organising tool. For example, air quality is a significant issue affecting Tube workers. We should seek to organise a dispute demanding TfL, LU,

and the Mayor take further action to improve air quality in and around Tube stations. Workers striking over environmental issues in the workplace could then coordinate with school students striking over the general issue of climate change.

To organise any of this needs an urgent discussion in the workplace about climate change issues, how they affect us, and what we can do about them. It also needs us to ensure these issues are being discussed seriously within our unions.

**Without working-class direct action against climate change, we have no future. With such action, a better future is possible.**

### A workers' climate plan for transport?

**To avoid climate catastrophe, we need to demand radical measures from our government, such as public ownership of all energy generation.**

But workers can also propose plans for our own industries and workplaces, like Lucas Aerospace workers did in the 1970s when they proposed to repurpose their factory to produce sustainable, socially-useful technology rather than military hardware. As part of a workers' climate plan for transport, we could demand:

- Expansion of projects to use waste heat/energy generated by the Tube to power or heat homes
- A specific energy contract to ensure electricity powering the Tube is generated from renewable sources
- TfL to audit its vast property portfolio and end the practise of selling off buildings and land to luxury developers; ensure all buildings are sustainably powered; invest in parkland projects
- Restore the government subsidy
- Democratic workers' and passengers' control of transport.

## TAMPONGATE

Did you know your period costs you less if you work in a head office building?



For those of us that need to purchase sanitary products whilst at work, it has come to light that machines provided in female staff toilets charge different rates depending on where you work.

For example, if you work at Palestra it costs 50p compared to on tube stations where the cost varies between £1 and £2.

We want our unions to fight for free sanitary products in all workplaces!

## SCORECARD STRESS

LU has changed the old station scorecard measure of “gateline availability” to “gateline integrity”. Scores for each individual gate will now be calculated.

The company wants to reduce the time gates are left open; the solution to that isn't some new scorecard measure, it's more staff!

The main effect of this new scorecard measure will be to stress out the staff who are trying to cover all areas of the station simultaneously.

Instead of being praised for their efforts, they will be nagged by management for poor gateline scores.

## GONE AWAY, WON'T PAY?

Cleaning agency APG no longer exists. APG's agency cleaners have been transferred to the main contractor, ABM.

That sounds good until you hear that APG neglected to pay its workers outstanding holiday pay before it disbanded. Cleaners are owed hundreds of pounds. ABM says, 'It's nothing to do with us. Cleaners need to speak to APG'. But APG has gone!

So where is a cleaner to turn? To the RMT of course! Sub-contracted companies and agencies dodge paying cleaners' wages too easily. Cleaners need to be directly employed by LU.

## WIN AT HEATHROW

After the local RMT branch resolved to ballot both station staff and Night Tube drivers to stop lone working at Heathrow, management made a number of concessions.

Lone working will end at Terminal 5, and management have committed to covering all duties on the roster.

This is a real win for the workers involved, and one that only came about because they were prepared to take industrial action.

## TRANSFORMATION BALLOT HALTED

RMT's ballot of workers in engineering, signals, and other departments to fight Transformation job cuts has been halted.

The result was due on 16 July, but the union pulled the ballot before the announcement. The official reason is that RMT plans to expand the number of workers balloted.

Large ballots are difficult to win, but as the recent example from the fleet dispute against extended train prep shows, it can be done.

The ballot should be resumed as soon as possible.

## SAFETY OVER SPEED

At Farringdon, trains driven in ATO leave the station at 15mph. Trains reach 30mph within station limits.

A faster line speed means a more frequent service, which is London Underground's priority.

Drivers are asking for trains to pull in and out of crowded stations like Farringdon at a slower speed to minimise accidents arising from overcrowded platforms.

Safety has to take priority over the frequency of the service.

## OXO GAS INCIDENT

Our thoughts are with all those affected by the CS gas attack on a Victoria Line train between Green Park and Oxo.

Fortunately no-one seems to have been seriously injured. It's a further indication of the kind of incident that can occur on a major transport system, and why we need to ensure our stations and trains are always properly staffed.

## NO DELAYS IN PAY BALLOT!

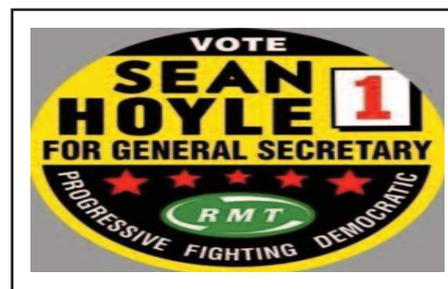
Tubeworker believes we should've been balloting over pay and conditions long before now.

Months of “negotiations” have gone precisely nowhere, with the bosses continuing to plead poverty despite handing themselves hefty pay rises.

If we want to win demands such as a shorter working week, equal staff travel facilities, and the consolidation of the CSA grades on stations, we need action.

Our unions must ballot without delay.

**Two workmates killed in South Wales: why is track working not safe? More: [bit.ly/otr-sw](http://bit.ly/otr-sw)**



## What is Tubeworker?

Tubeworker is a rank-and-file socialist

bulletin, published at least monthly, written by Tube workers, for Tube workers. It is published by the socialist group Workers' Liberty, but is produced in editorial meetings open to all workers. Supporters from outside London Underground can help with public distribution.

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