

# A better recovery for Yorkshire

**A plan to get Yorkshire growing out of  
the crisis – and stop mass  
unemployment**



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## **About the TUC**

The Trades Union Congress (TUC) exists to make the working world a better place for everyone. We bring together more than 5.5 million working people who make up our 48 member unions, and represent 600,000 workers across Yorkshire & the Humber. We support unions to grow and thrive, and we stand up for everyone who works for a living.

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Summary

## Key recommendations

The pandemic alone did not cause this economic crisis. It was made worse by a decade of austerity and the government's failure to strengthen the UK's economy. Choosing the wrong approach to recovery now risks embedding low growth, long-term unemployment and all the social ills that go alongside.

We need an investment for growth approach, with unprecedented state intervention, to support employment that is accessible, sustainable and fair. Without this, there will be no sustainable recovery.

An investment for growth approach means taking action on the five key recommendations we have identified.

### Recommendations

- **Recommendation One: Make Yorkshire a Fair Work region** through a fair work charter, a jobs guarantee, setting conditions for business support, and using the convening power of metro mayors to achieve genuine social partnership through regional sectoral forums
- **Recommendation Two: A worker centred transition to a low carbon economy** through a regional Just Transition Commission to coordinate investment, learning skills agenda, a ReAct style redundancy response programme, procurement rules to support local manufacturing, and regional leadership on the COP targets
- **Recommendation Three: A 21st century public transport network for Yorkshire** led by investment in mass transit systems for our city regions, public control of our buses, local procurement for low-carbon vehicles, and reimagining our travel modes to Europe through night trains and sea links
- **Recommendation Four: An equal and racially just recovery** led by new rules on procurement and commissioning, equality and racial justice scrutiny boards for local authorities; and support for power, privilege and discrimination training for businesses and the wider workforce
- **Recommendation Five: Find Yorkshire's new place in the world** through building our relationships with our border regions, a rights-based approach to newly devolved trade powers and establishing an independent presence for our region in Brussels.

## The situation we face

Coronavirus has transformed the lives of people across Yorkshire and the world. Responding to the health crisis has required significant restrictions on everyday life, and dramatic economic measures from the government. The impact of the virus has been compounded by the fragility of our health and social care services and by pre-existing inequalities in living and working conditions.

Significant flaws in how our economy is organised have been exposed by the crisis and addressing these will be key to rebuilding a stronger and fairer post-virus economy with greater resilience for the future.

Without action, we risk a deep and systemic recession driven by unemployment, and compounded by low pay, household debt and poverty, poor infrastructure, and lack of investment. There has been a 60 per cent monthly increase in the UC claimant count in Yorkshire from April to May 2020, and TUC research estimates that 18 per cent of young workers in the region are at high risk of unemployment. We anticipate unemployment figures will rise as the economic pause continues.

This situation is underlined by a weak economic base, with pay in Yorkshire down £5 a week compared with 2010 according to TUC research, and unsecured debt per household up to £14,540 in the third quarter of 2019, which is up £430 on 2018. Childhood poverty has increased by 4.2 per cent across our region since 2014.

The RSA's analysis for jobs at risk further exposes the vulnerability of Yorkshire's economy, with three of the top twenty local authorities with the most jobs at risk being in our region.<sup>1</sup> Our region's lack of resilience should be of deep concern, as the coronavirus pandemic is not the only threat we face. Climate change and Brexit both pose significant challenges to our economy recovery.

The state's action in response to the crisis has been educative. Intervention of a speed, scale and novelty previously considered impossible has become commonplace.

The TUC has outlined a series of national policy recommendations where it believes the UK government can and must act to recover the economy.

**This report is focused on where our region can act without dependence on national government. We have an opportunity in our region to lead the way towards a fairer, greener, more sustainable recovery, with workers taking a fairer share of the wealth they create.**

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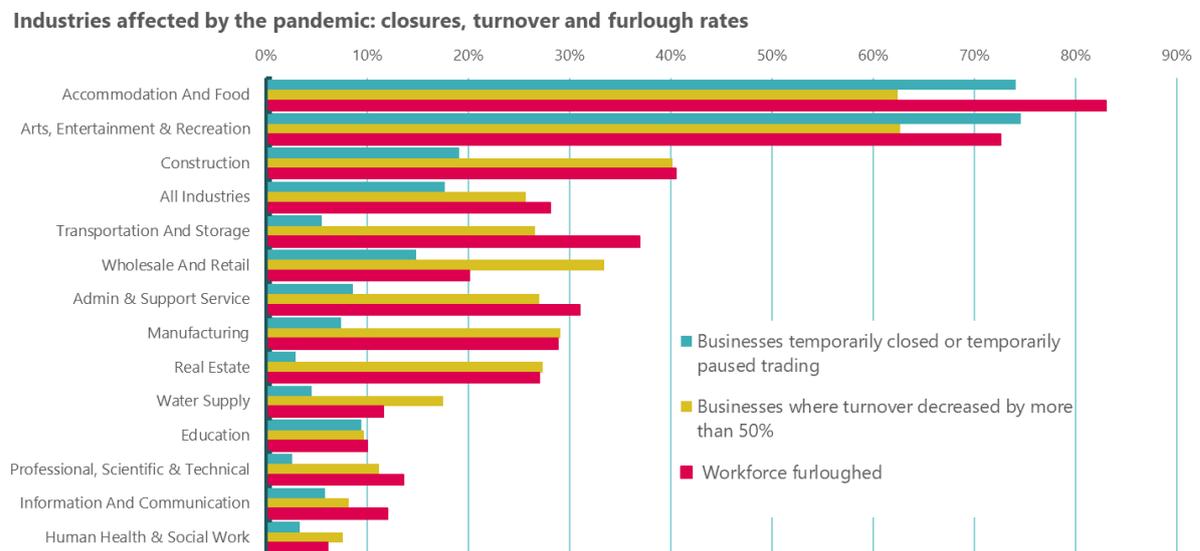
<sup>1</sup> Wallace-Stephens, F. et al, (2020), *Which local areas are most at risk in terms of impacts of coronavirus on employment*, RSA

However, in Yorkshire we are not known for sitting back and letting things happen without a say. The TUC in Yorkshire & the Humber believes that there are a number of interventions that local and regional politicians can make to intervene in and support regional economic recovery.

**This report is focused on where our region can act without dependence on national government. We have an opportunity in our region to lead the way towards a fairer, greener, more sustainable recovery, with workers taking a fairer share of the wealth they create.**

We must make full use of the powers available to us especially under the newly agreed devolution deals for South and West Yorkshire.

**Figure 1 - industries affected by pandemic**



This is an extraordinary moment in our economy and society. Extraordinary in its danger and in its possibility.

It is clear that an unemployment crisis is looming unless we take action now. To avoid a recession that will disproportionately hurt our region, compounding the exposure of Yorkshire’s industrial base to the Paris climate targets, and the risks our economy faces due to Brexit, we must act decisively and quickly.

**This is an extraordinary moment in our economy and society. Extraordinary in its danger and in its possibility.**

A return to austerity is unacceptable, repeating the mistakes of widening inequality and suppressing growth in our region’s economy. The last decade shows the failure of austerity in its own terms. It

repeatedly did not deliver economic growth or reduce national debt, while creating a weakened economic and social fabric exploited in deadly fashion by the virus.

Instead, we must intervene to kickstart a fair and sustainable recovery for Yorkshire & the Humber. Our communities deserve world class public transport; access to world class jobs and education; and the greenest and most successful economy around.

**Acting together; unions, regional government and business; we can and must achieve this.**

Yorkshire is stronger by union. Let us prove it.

## Recommendation One

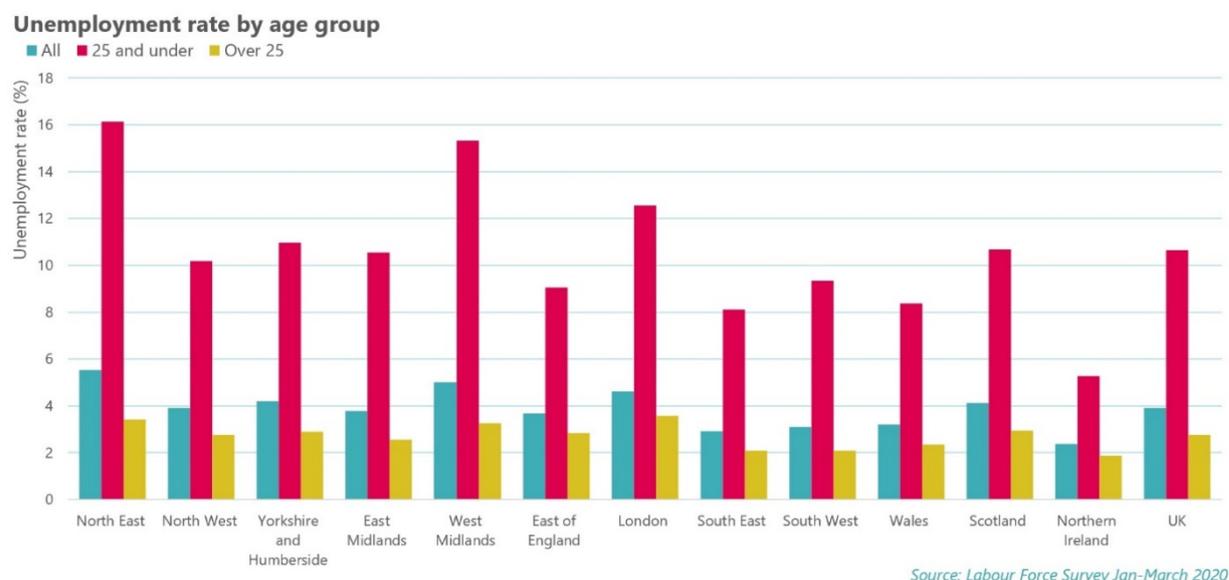
# Make Yorkshire a Fair Work region

Delivering decent jobs means ending low pay, giving workers a stronger voice and tackling discrimination, disadvantage and insecurity at work. But we also need the development of new business models based on fair employment practices. This requires rebalancing the UK's corporate governance regime away from shareholder primacy to support a long-term, sustainable approach to company success.

We need business models based on fairer employment relationships. A fairer share for workers of the wealth they create, with the real living wage as the standard and a renewal of collective bargaining across the region.

But fair work also means making employment a priority for the region. The economic shock of the coronavirus pandemic means that state intervention, at both a local, regional, and national level, will be needed to support employment through the recovery.

**Figure 2 - unemployment rate by age group**



After a decade of austerity where youth unemployment consistently averaged between 12 and 20 per cent, we must support young workers in avoiding long-term unemployment. This state support should provide employment that is socially useful and additional to the economy.

We must recognise the risks of mass unemployment that parts of our region face. Recent analysis from the RSA shows that York and North Yorkshire are not only the most highly exposed areas in our region to job losses, but are some of the most exposed areas in the

country.<sup>2</sup> Of the 10 most-at-risk LAs in our region, seven are in North Yorkshire or York, and all are areas where the local economy relies heavily on tourism.

**RSA data showing % of jobs at risk per local authority**

Local authority: district/unitary (as of April 2019)	% jobs at risk	Rank (most at risk – of 370 LAs)
Richmondshire (N. Yorks)	35%	1
Scarborough (N. Yorks)	33%	6
Ryedale (N. Yorks)	32%	8
Craven (N. Yorks)	30%	26
Hambleton (N. Yorks)	29%	35
Calderdale	27%	92
York	27%	94
Harrogate (N. Yorks)	27%	100
East Riding of Yorkshire	27%	101
North Lincolnshire	27%	113
Selby (N. Yorks)	26%	137
Barnsley	26%	161
North East Lincolnshire	26%	178
Rotherham	26%	185
Doncaster	25%	200
Kirklees	25%	217
Kingston upon Hull, City of	25%	217
Wakefield	25%	228
Leeds	24%	312
Bradford	24%	317
Sheffield	23%	330

In recognising this risk, where over a quarter of jobs are at risk across the region, we must necessarily recognise the imperative for state intervention to support employment levels through this dangerous economic period. This will only happen if employment is supported by local, regional and national government. What's more it will only be an effective stimulus to the economy if it leaves room for disposable income, achieves a work/life balance, and

<sup>2</sup> RSA (2020)

does not discriminate by gender or race. In short it must be fair and sustainable employment to be effective.

Our recommendations below are designed to achieve this.

## Implement a Fair Work Charter [R1.a]

Yorkshire & the Humber is home to some truly world-class businesses that are investing, innovating, growing, and evolving all the time. Many of them are matched by our fantastic public and third sector organisations, who, despite years of government austerity, continue to provide sound jobs that are well-paid and secure – with opportunities for progression.

But we shouldn't pretend all is rosy.

The overall economic productivity of the region lags behind the rest of the UK and London – and further behind our international competitors. At the same time, our public and third sector organisations are grappling with numerous social issues that are wide-ranging and increasingly complex.

Rising in-work poverty and insecure employment, which prevent people fulfilling their potential, getting a home and providing a secure start for their children – are factors linked to these problems. In Yorkshire & the Humber, 23.4 per cent of all children are living in poverty – a figure much higher than the national average of 18.6 per cent – and higher than other cities and city regions in the north.

We believe that a Fair Employment Charter is one means to begin to address these challenges. It has been proven time and time again that fairly paid employees, with security of employment, will be happy employees, and happy employees will be productive employees – contributing to competitive, successful and growing organisations.

**It has been proven time and again that fairly paid employees, with secure employment, will be productive employees.**

A Fair Work Charter should set out conditions for employers to meet in order to be accredited. The Liverpool City Region provides a good model for this, setting out three themes for what a Fair Work employer should look like.<sup>3</sup> These themes are:

1. Fair (are staff paid fair wages, do they have a fair contract?)
2. Inclusive (does the employer promote equality in the workplace and recruitment?)
3. Just (do staff have the right to a voice at work? Is there access to workplace justice/Are unions granted access to the workplace? Is the employer working towards zero emissions and climate justice? Is the employer committed to racial justice?)

We call on our city regions and local authorities to implement a Fair Work Charter scheme for employers to enrol in, based on these principles, in consultation with trade unions and employers.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/fair/](http://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/fair/)

Such a charter can demonstrate that by working collaboratively with our businesses, public and third sector organisations, and trades unions on an agenda of fair employment practices and driving social value, we can develop inclusive growth that benefits everyone.

## **Business support must be conditional on union access and fair work [R1.b]**

The collective economic and social shock that we are experiencing demanded swift, unprecedented intervention in order to shore up the economy from collapse. Central government immediately understood the need to consult trade unions on a rescue package, and the resulting state intervention was crafted in collaboration between business and unions led by the TUC.

As lockdown was implemented, it was right to deliver immediate economic support to businesses across the economy in as simplified manner as possible. But this approach is not sustainable in the long term, and taxpayers money should be used to deliver a fair economic recovery.

Financial support packages for business that are administered by city regions or local authorities must now set conditions for access to that money.

As a minimum, these conditions should include:

1. union access to any workplace that has accessed funding
2. cooperation with union H&S reps and their safety recommendations (in particular regarding novel coronavirus)
3. paying the real living wage for all staff, agency staff, and contractors
4. automatic enrolment in an occupational pension scheme
5. commitment to enrol in the Fair Work Charter
6. commitment to racial justice through equality monitoring
7. progressing towards zero-carbon use and supporting climate justice

These conditions should cover business support loans, grants, access to innovation funding, or similar bids or projects.

Defining, delivering, and monitoring these conditions will take work and time, but they are vital to ensuring our recovery is fair and sustainable. Liverpool City Region has taken the

**Empanel a task and finish group, of business, unions and local government, to deliver this Fair Work agenda.**

step of empanelling a task and finish group of union, business, academic and local authority representatives, with administrative support from the combined authority, in order to deliver this project.

Longer term, issues like union access will be the hardest to monitor and facilitate. Access should mean more than saying that unions are welcome. Unions need to be linked up to workplaces in order to ensure workplace justice and worker voice, and this is where the

TUC, as the regional convening centre for trade unions, could play a role in supporting a Combined Authority, perhaps through a funded officer role.

Further best practices in developing frameworks to deliver this socially just and inclusive funding could be taken from Wales. The Welsh government operates an Economic Contract and Calls to Action, which businesses need to address in order to access Welsh government financial support, including through the new Economy Futures Fund.<sup>4</sup> This fund consolidates various previous funding schemes.

Under the Economic Contract, businesses seeking Welsh government investment need to demonstrate commitment to 'four pillars of social justice'. These are growth potential; fair work; promotion of health, skills and learning in the workplace; and progress in lowering carbon footprint.<sup>5</sup>

We recommend exploring similar delivery mechanisms to disburse business support funding in a socially just and inclusive way. Any mechanism should have reference to the recommendations of the Welsh government's Fair Work Commission, regarding the definition of Fair Work.<sup>6</sup>

## **Delivering Fair Work through procurement, commissioning & investment [R1.c]**

Anchor employment institutions play a key role in driving up pay, terms and conditions across a local economy. They hold this role because of the impact their procurement and commissioning procedures have through the wider economy. Institutions such as local and combined authorities should use this leverage to deliver fairer work for Yorkshire.

The experience and evidence of the Fair Work Wales commission provides a useful framework to think about how to deliver fair work through commissioning and procurement.

**Public money should be provided only to organisations fulfilling or working towards our definition of fair work.**

We echo their recommendations that public money should be provided only to organisations fulfilling or working towards fulfilling our definition and characteristics of Fair Work (organisations meeting the Fair Work Yorkshire standard). Inward investors should be Fair Work organisations.

What this means in principle is reflected in our recommendations for the Fair Work Charter in R1.b, in particular union access to workplaces, and this is the key driver in achieving higher wages, safer and more dignified work, and greener business processes.

As we face the steep climb of a recovery, we must recognise the value of large infrastructure and capital investment projects in delivering fair and sustainable economic

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<sup>4</sup> <https://gov.wales/over-200-companies-sign-economic-contract-first-year>

<sup>5</sup> Fair Work Wales – Report of the Fair Work Commission (2019) pp.42-43  
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-05/fair-work-wales.pdf> part 4-5

<sup>6</sup> Fair Work Wales Commission Report (2019)

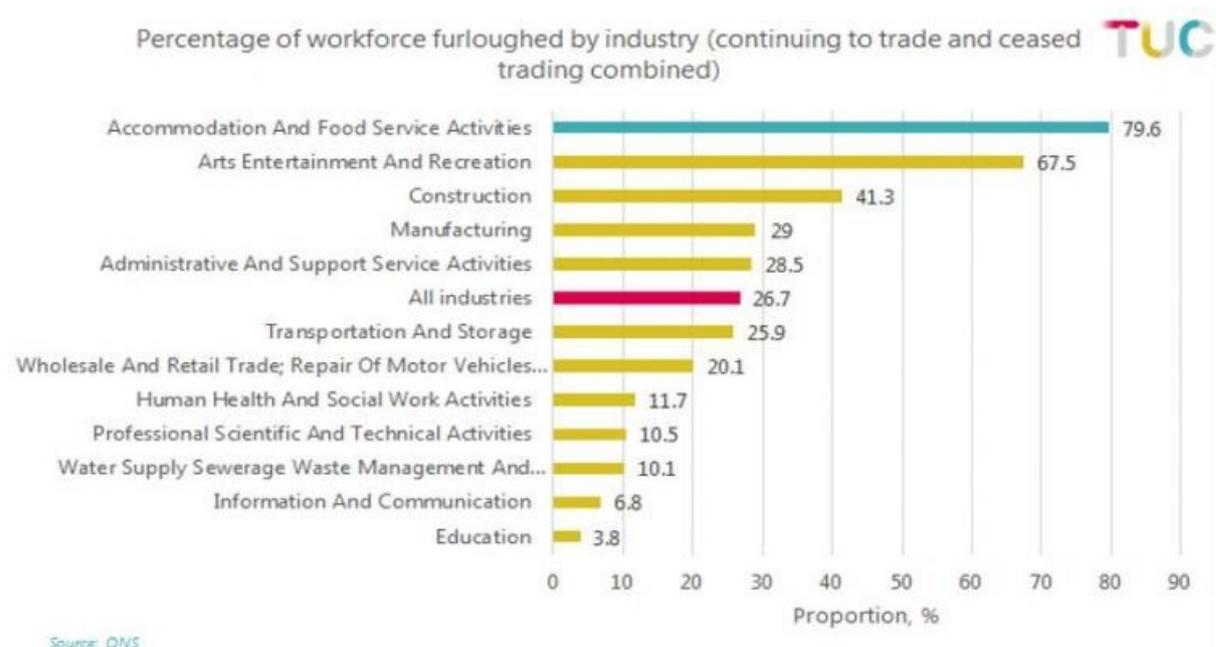
growth. In particular, these projects can contribute to developing adult skills provision and apprenticeships, and wider confidence and investment in the regional economy. We must not squander the potential of these public works programmes by repeating the mistakes of the past.

We further recommend that infrastructure projects and large capital investment projects should be Fair Work Yorkshire projects. The focus and priorities of public sector contracting in local and combined authorities should shift towards social value, including Fair Work.

### A regional jobs guarantee [R1.d]

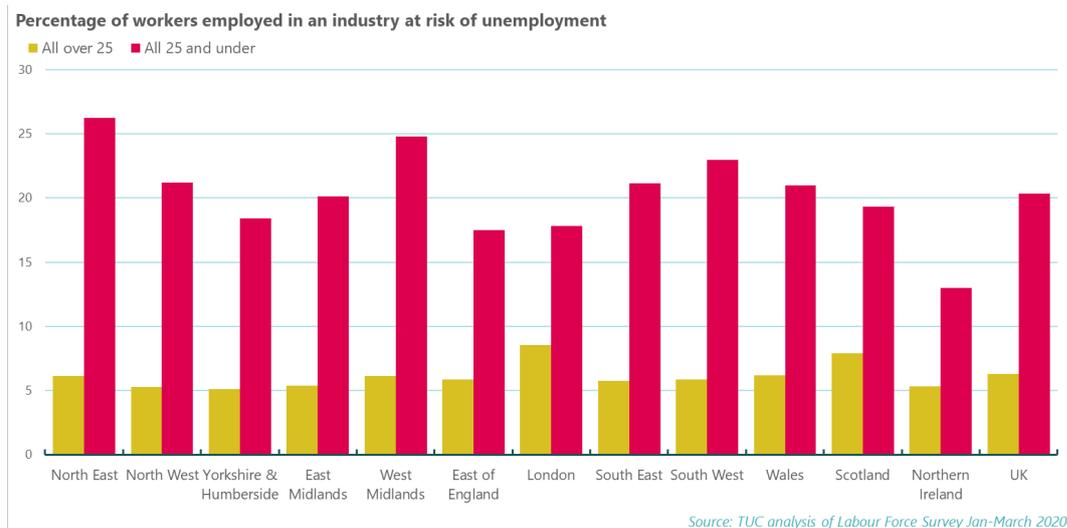
The Job Retention Scheme has prevented many people from falling into unemployment. But those who do lose their jobs, particularly young people, will face long term damage to their employment prospects.

**Figure 3 - workforce furloughed by sector**



Recent TUC analysis shows that across the board in Yorkshire & the Humber, young workers are three times more likely to work in sectors where jobs will be at high risk in the coming recession, compared to those aged 25 and over. The unemployment figures for Q1 of this year already show this trend.

**Figure 4 - workers employed in at risk industries**



Indeed, we saw a similar pattern during the 2008-9 financial crisis. But in previous downturns we could expect young people to find work in low paid, precarious jobs in these sectors, as part of a (deeply unequal) recovery. The current public health crisis will mean significant employment gains in hospitality, tourism, accommodation and food sectors will be unlikely in the immediate term. We should expect higher levels of longer-term unemployment among young workers, unless we act to stop it.

The TUC believes that our region needs a job guarantee scheme to help prevent long-term unemployment.

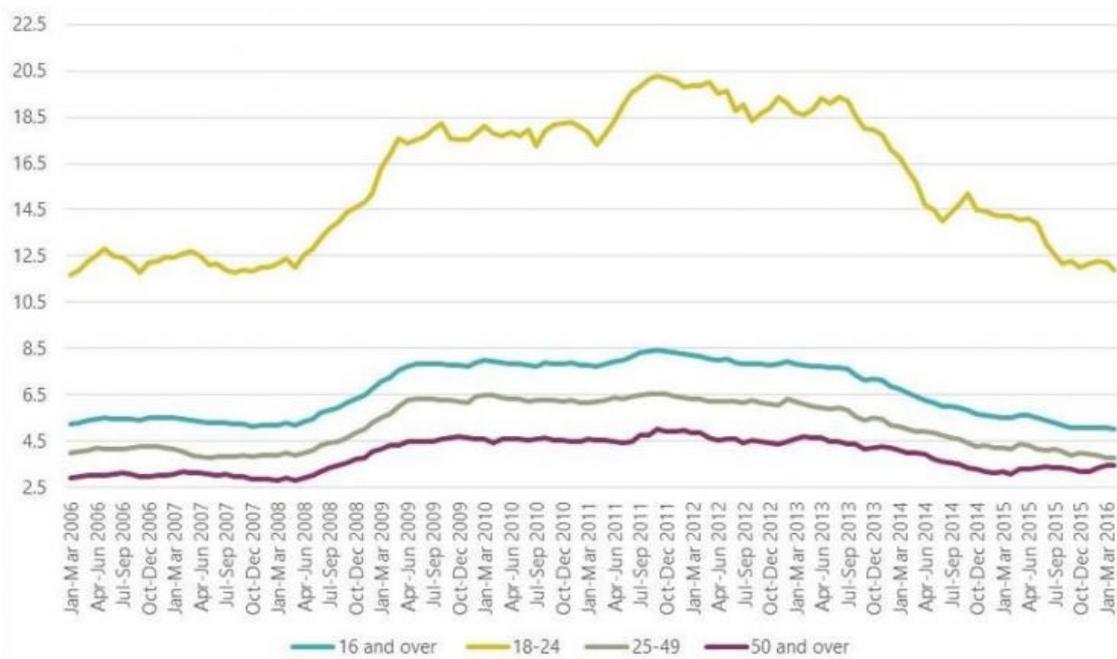
This scheme should build on best practice from the Future Jobs fund and similar schemes across Europe, and offer a guaranteed job, paid at least at the real living wage or the union negotiated rate for the job. We believe that the scheme should aim to offer a job guarantee to as many people as possible who face long term unemployment. But it should prioritise:

- people aged under 25 who have been unemployed for three months
- people aged 25 and over who have been unemployed for six months

Jobs should be provided for six months, with a guarantee of accredited training.

The Jobs Guarantee should be delivered at regional level, in partnership with unions and business.

**Figure 5 - unemployment rates 2006–2016**



A jobs guarantee scheme, while one solution to mitigate against long-term unemployment during a recession, can be an opportunity to help create good, secure jobs across our region, ensuring more people have access to decent pay and secure livelihoods in a job that provides meaning both for them and for the wider community.

The TUC believes a jobs guarantee scheme should deliver good quality jobs that:

- are paid at least the national living wage rate, or the union negotiated rate for the job
- ensure the worker gets the skills they need to move into permanent work
- offer a secure contract lasting no less than six months, as above
- support dignity and equality at work, free from discrimination
- adhere to health and safety law
- ensure access to trade unions.

These criteria ensure that a publicly funded job guarantee scheme provides secure, meaningful and sustainable work for individuals at risk of unemployment. Evidence from the Future Jobs Fund shows that participants and employers will value a “proper” job, with a good wage, opportunities to gain new skills and an employer reference, over other government employment schemes offering lesser pay, terms and conditions and opportunities –such as workfare, which trade unions oppose.

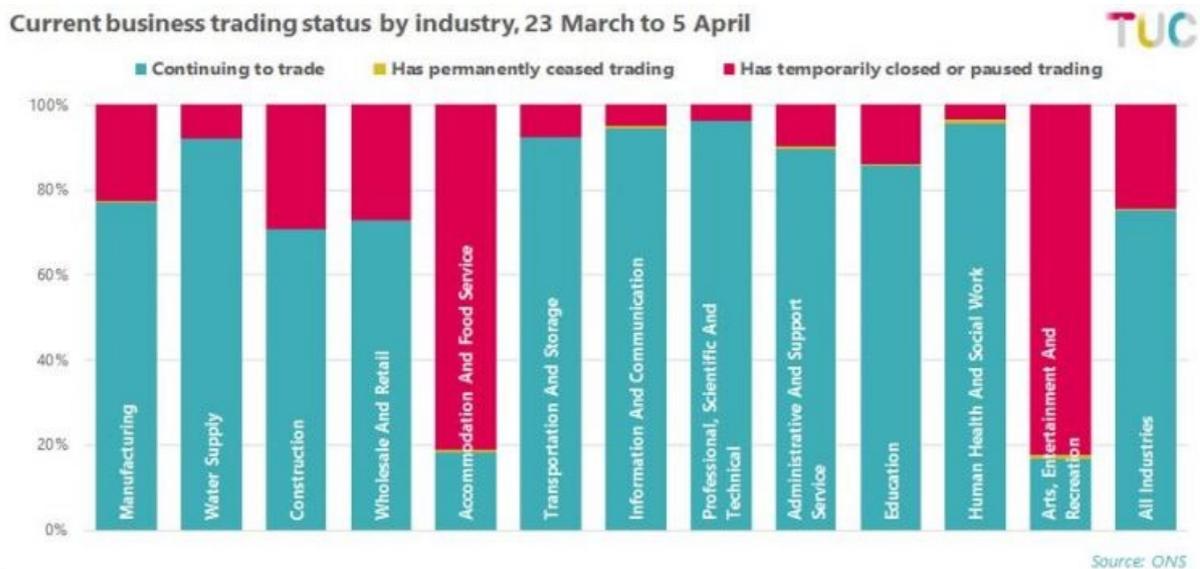
Trade unions recognise the urgency in addressing the climate crisis on a global and national level, and the need to move to a low-carbon, green economy. Along with our proposals for a robust just transition programme, trade unions believe that the creation of guaranteed jobs should be both designed and delivered in ways that adhere to principles of

long-term sustainability, reducing carbon use and minimising long-term environmental damage where possible.

## Support businesses to work safely [R1.e]

In May the national TUC outlined safety recommendations necessary for a safe return to work. We insisted on coronavirus health & safety assessments signed off by one of our 10,000 trained health and safety representatives. We also made demands for changes to public transport networks to ensure safety through social distancing.

**Figure 6 - businesses closed or paused trading**



However, as we work towards a full reopening of the economy, we must recognise that some industries will struggle more than others with the new and necessary safety measures. Theatre, cinemas, the arts, leisure and hospitality face significant challenges due to the nature of their business models.

City regions and local authorities must be prepared to support this sector in exploring new and safe ways to continue to trade and employ staff.

We recommend learning from the best practice of Liverpool City Council, which has made available a £450,000 transformation fund, to allow restaurants to purchase equipment and adapt their premises for outdoor trade.<sup>7</sup> This is accompanied by a programme of road closures and pedestrianisations, to create more space and improve the environment for outdoor restaurant trade.

This programme could easily be replicated and expanded in Yorkshire, using the same principle of business bidding to the funding pot, but allowing a wider section of business, such as theatres and cinemas, to make adaptations to their premises or business models to allow for outdoor performances. Such a scheme should prioritise SMEs and local businesses, who are more likely to struggle with these adaptations, and who are also more likely to keep money in the local economy.

In addition, access to this funding must be predicated on the recommendations in R1.a and R1.b, in particular union access to workplaces. This funding should also require

### **Case study - the hospitality industry in Yorkshire**

**The highest proportion of workforce being furloughed was recorded in the accommodation and food service activities industry; a sector made up of 1.7 million workers. The industry has been hit hard by coronavirus and its impact will be long lasting. Hospitality employs 210,000 people in Yorkshire & the Humber, making up 8 per cent of the region's workforce, and ranking as the sixth largest sector employer.**

**The risks to this sector should be seen as a risk for the entire region. Mass unemployment in hospitality will touch all parts of the Yorkshire & the Humber, but it will acutely affect areas like York and North Yorkshire, where tourism, wholesale a retail account for 25 per cent of the county's employment. Workers in these jobs are traditionally low paid, and they will have little to no financial resilience to sustain economic shocks, such as redundancy.**

**Sources: UK Hospitality Workforce Commission 2030 report, North Yorkshire County Council**

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<sup>7</sup> [www.liverpoolbidcompany.com/450000-outdoor-spaces-plan-to-aid-liverpools-covid-19-recovery/](http://www.liverpoolbidcompany.com/450000-outdoor-spaces-plan-to-aid-liverpools-covid-19-recovery/)

businesses to have completed a coronavirus specific health and safety risk assessment, as outlined in our Safe Return to Work report, and for this risk assessment to be registered on the TUC's COVID secure workplace registry <https://covidsecurecheck.uk/>

## **Establish sectoral forums to embed social partnership in the economic recovery [R1.f]**

The principle of Social Partnership runs like a vein through our proposals. This is because it is essential to delivering a truly fair and sustainable recovery.

When businesses partner with unions, it delivers higher wages, happier and better skilled staff, as well as greater loyalty to the company. These are the foundation stones of a successful economic recovery, and they are all underpinned by workers having a voice in their workplace.

### **The principle of Social Partnership runs like a vein through our proposals**

The TUC believes that regional leaders in Yorkshire & the Humber should lead the way in the national recovery effort by embedding and institutionalising the

dialogue between workers and business at all levels of recovery planning.

We recommend establishing regional sector forums based on the industries most critical to the region's recovery or those most at risk from recession. These forums should be convened by regional leaders, and be composed of union and industry representatives. They would be advisory, and provide general frameworks and guidelines for business in our region to use, as well as support the recovery work of city regions, LEPs and local authorities.

The TUC believes we should also see these social partnership principles duplicated in city region boards, as well as the region's LEPs, taking best practice from the Sheffield City Region LEP's decision to be the first in the country to appoint a union representative to its board.<sup>8</sup>

### **We recommend establishing regional sector forums based on the industries most critical to the region's recovery**

Embedding social partnership in this way will ensure we do not repeat the mistakes of the last economic crisis, and that we can build a better recovery which ensures workers share in a greater portion of the wealth they create, and that we are not left behind in the transition to a green economy.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/national-first-as-lep-appoints-trade-union-representative-to-the-board/>

## Recommendation Two

# **A worker-centred transition to a low-carbon economy**

### **Case study – the Humber’s ‘Green Jobs Estuary’**

**The Humber has been christened the ‘Green Estuary’ due to its potential for high quality climate friendly jobs. The Siemens Gamesa Green Port Hull blade factory produces wind turbine blades for the North Sea wind farm. Unite, GMB and Prospect all organise at this plant, and the LEP new Energy Strategy forecasts the potential for an additional 20,000 green jobs in the estuary by 2030. The strategy includes a series of projects ranging from large-scale industrial carbon capture schemes to a wave of new mini-solar farms being developed on brownfield sites in towns and villages. If they all become reality by 2032, the region's energy sector will employ 20,570 people having attracted £6.7bn worth of investment into the economy.**

**But without coordination between government, unions and industry, this risks being a huge opportunity lost. Despite being located just off our coast, the only component of the Dogger Bank Wind Farm project being produced in Hull are the blades. The majority of the manufacturing content currently planned for the project will be made in places like Indonesia, whilst Scunthorpe steelworks sits 45 minutes down the road.**

Yorkshire faced significant industrial challenges before the coronavirus pandemic hit. The necessity of meeting the Paris climate targets remains urgent. Our region remains the most dangerously exposed to the climate crisis, with 28,000 jobs directly linked to carbon intensive industries, and many more thousands in related supply chains.<sup>9</sup>

**We should recognise this economic recovery as an opportunity to kickstart our own low carbon transition.**

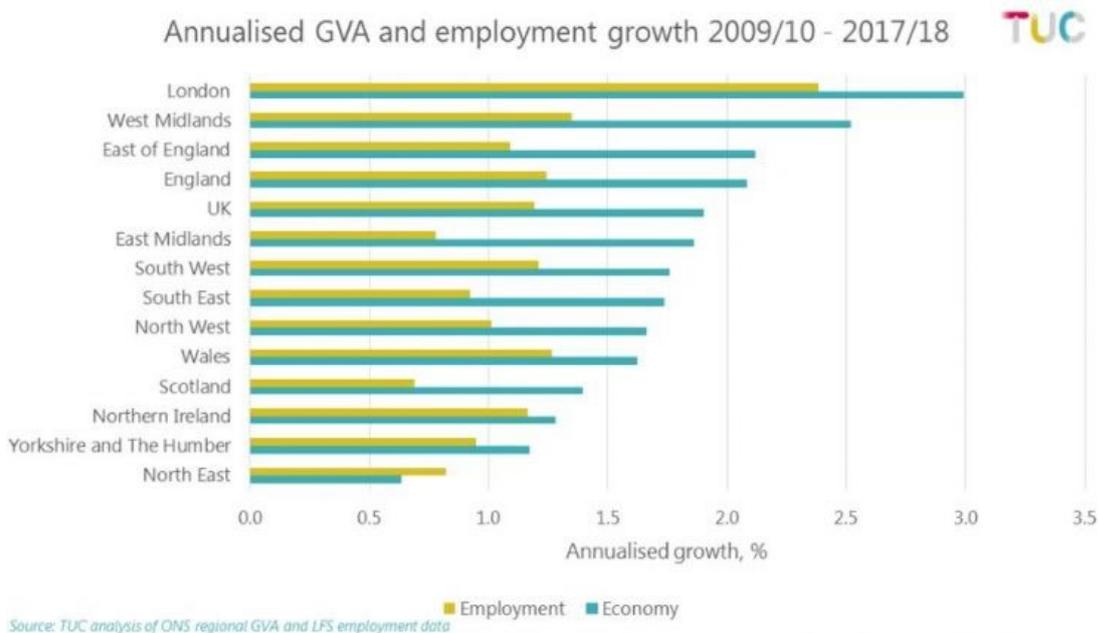
The closure of Kellingley colliery must remain as an example for how not to close down carbon intensive industries. Almost everything about the closure of the mine was done in the wrong way. Company and

government support for retraining workers was minimal, there was no economic planning for the future of the community. The people who depended on that mine were abandoned. It was they, not corporate directors, who paid the price for closing the business.

In these circumstances the union was faced with impossible odds. It exemplifies how an imbalance of power between employer and union can and will lead to worse outcomes for workers, communities, and local economies. It cannot be allowed to happen again.

We should recognise this economic recovery as an opportunity to kickstart our low-carbon transition.

**Figure 7 - gross value added by region**



<sup>9</sup> <https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/low-carbon-task-force-yorkshire-and-humber>

As new research from Oxford University sets out, investment in the move to a net zero-carbon economy delivers significant benefits in terms of jobs, finding that 'green projects' can lead to higher levels of job creation than traditional stimulus packages.<sup>10</sup>

Indeed, economic growth in our region since the financial crash has lagged behind the UK average, at just over 1 per cent.

The potential for green growth as a driver for the economic recovery in our region is significant. Regional leaders can play a key role in supporting this green recovery.

The region's plans for a recovery must therefore set out how it will:

- chart a path towards a net-zero economy that delivers a just transition for workers across the economy
- rebuild the UK's industrial capacity that will be necessary to deliver this transition, including by investing in the skills of the workforce
- use this programme to deliver economic growth and renewal for our abandoned communities,[revise this] that rest on the failed de-industrialisation policies of the past.

To do this regional leaders should:

**Set out a recovery programme of measures that deliver benefits both in terms of reducing carbon and increasing jobs, overseen by a new regional Just Transition commission. [R2.a]**

Oxford University research suggests that good candidates for this package would include delivering net-zero buildings, energy storage, clean industry, investments in clean transport and greenhouse gas removal mechanisms – including carbon capture and storage.<sup>11</sup>

Devolved regions in West & South Yorkshire have received significant powers around housing, public transport, and green innovation funding that they could exploit to deliver these outcomes.

Such a programme should be overseen by a Yorkshire Just Transition commission, bringing together workers, business and government, to ensure that it delivers decent jobs, and to chart the path towards a long-term energy transition.

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<sup>10</sup> *Allan. J et al.*, (May 2020) A net-zero emissions economic recovery from Covid-19 at [www.smithschool.ox.ac.uk/publications/wpapers/workingpaper20-01.pdf](http://www.smithschool.ox.ac.uk/publications/wpapers/workingpaper20-01.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> *Allan J et al.*, (2020)

## **Work with trade unions to ensure that every investment programme comes with a union-backed plan for decent jobs attached. [R2.b]**

When the Olympics were planned, government and the Olympics Delivery Authority worked with trade unions on a framework agreement that ensured that the project would deliver good quality local jobs and skills programmes.

We need similar framework agreements for our region's recovery plan, which set out how contractors will work with trade unions to deliver local jobs and apprenticeships, for every infrastructure project backed by regional or local authority investment.

And local government, especially where devolution has extended powers around international trade, should make sure that complex supply chains cannot be used as a way to deny workers' rights. Procurement and contracting processes should be jointly monitored by unions, LAs/CAs, and business over the lifetime of a project, to ensure employment abuses, such as unpaid wages or holiday pay, by any contractor, are addressed.

## **Support workers to get into new green jobs, with a new regional jobs guarantee and a dedicated retraining fund for green skills [R2.c]**

The TUC has called on national government to introduce new rights to retrain and more flexibility for apprenticeships to better serve the needs of employers and employees. At a regional level we should explore how we can better deliver adult skills training to plug gaps in our industrial skills base, and better support a green recovery.

We recommend that city regions use their newly devolved adult skills powers to support new vocational training programmes geared towards green investment, and jobs that can be done in all of our communities. Trade unions and business are best placed to know where the gaps in our knowledge, skills and recruitment bases are. City regions, LEPs and LAs should take advantage of this and convene social partnership panels to advise on skills priorities for the region, and how best to deliver for our new green industries.

With the devolution of the adult skills agenda, city regions could take best practices from Wales, and explore if this new skills offer could be delivered effectively in partnership between trade

unions and devolved government. A regional Future Skills Fund, supported by local authorities or city regions, could support retraining by coordinating skills investment between LEPs and unions. The role of a regional Just Transition Commission here would be to identify the future skills needs, and work with city regions to support inward investment. The TUC and unions would be well placed to help deliver this skills agenda.

**A regional Future Skills Fund, coordinated by business and unions, could be the best use of the adult skills agenda.**

## ReAct style redundancy retraining programme for Yorkshire [R2.d]

Acknowledging that jobs will change as we transition to a low carbon economy is key to ensuring a transition that works for working people. We can achieve this by learning from the mistakes of Kellingley, where little to no support system was in place, and exploring best practices in how to deliver a system to transition workers to new, greener jobs.

We recommend using the ReAct Wales redundancy programme as a model to support industrial transition to better, greener jobs. Intervening as early as possible after a redundancy reduces the risk of deskilling and long-term unemployment, whilst providing a clear, supported pathway to new skills and career options in the green economy. We also believe that city regions should be proactive, rather than wait for redundancies, and we recommend that they take best practices from the former ProAct scheme in Wales, which provided a wage subsidy for employers to train staff during quieter business periods. This scheme could be adapted to allow employers to retrain existing staff or hire new staff to train in new green jobs, making the transition cost more manageable.

### Case study – Wales’ ReAct Redundancy programme

**The ReAct programme has been running in Wales for 18 years. It provides funding for employers to train and hire individuals who have recently been made redundant. It enables early intervention to avoid deskilling and embedding unemployment, as studies show the longer a person remains unemployed, the less likely they are to find work. It also lowers initial staff costs, and allows businesses to upskill their workforce for free.**

Trade unions and the TUC can play a role in supporting this transition, by establishing an early warning system for redundancies, where we can assist the city region or local authority to deliver information about the redundancy support programmes available. This will allow as much time as possible for new employers to seek to take up staff on redundancy notice, ensuring a smooth and clear transition for the worker.

## Build Yorkshire manufacturing supply chains, by increasing the requirement for regional content in any investment programme [R2.e]

When city regions and local authorities invest in new infrastructure, they should ensure that this investment is used to build local supply chains. For example, two of the UK’s three bus manufacturing plants are based here in Yorkshire, but new vehicles commissioned for our bus networks are not consistently ordered from these manufacturers.

The Siemens' wind turbine project in Hull is a key example of a green investment project which has huge potential for economic renewal of the region. Unions such as Unite, GMB and Prospect have been working closely with Siemens to deliver high skilled, well paid jobs available to local communities. But the rest of the Dogger Bank Wind Farm project will be manufactured abroad. The key issue is a lack of an enforceable target for local manufacturing content. Whilst households pay the regressive renewable energy levy, we should benefit from the investment and production of this infrastructure project.

We need to see action between local government, unions and the LEP to ensure a much higher level of local content is incorporated into the project. And where this isn't possible, we need to ensure supply chain compliance with good labour standards.

We recommend the four local authorities in the Humber estuary convene the LEP and trade unions to engage in a strategy to support more local manufacturing benefits from the project (in particular more local content production), delivering more green, unionised jobs. Where this is not possible, we call on this social partnership body to demand enforcement of ethical supply chain rules for the project, including high labour standards. As we face the reality of a trading future outside the EU, Hull's status as a port city will put it at the forefront of the fight against poor labour standards and unethical supply chains.

Likewise, investment in a mass transit programme for West Yorkshire could support the AMRC manufacturing hub in Sheffield, or the new Siemens' train manufacturing hub in Goole.

What's more, in addressing the ongoing public health agenda, local authorities and city regions can support local manufacturing by connecting manufacturers willing to produce PPE with NHS & social care bodies who need them. This should be aimed at supporting long term security of supply for sectors who have struggled to safely equip their workers due to shortages, and should be considered in the context of the local authority duty for emergency planning.

**Convening unions and business as part of a regional industrial strategy could address the lack of institutional coordination that has held us back.**

The key barrier to achieving these outcomes is lack of institutional coordination. Convening trade unions and business in Social Partnership as part of an industrial infrastructure and investment framework for the region would be a big first step in developing a coherent regional industrial strategy.

## **Demonstrate regional leadership ahead of COP26 [R2.f]**

The UK will be hosting the delayed global climate talks in November 2021. Yorkshire city regions and local authorities have 18 months to demonstrate regional leadership on climate change and just transition through action on housing, transport and industrial transition. We have a huge opportunity to showcase how best to deliver a just transition to a low carbon economy in the UK and globally.

## **Planning for sustainable communities [R2.g]**

City regions will receive new powers around housing and planning, and these cannot be seen in isolation from climate change. Coordinated planning around housing should seek to build better, more sustainable communities. That means greener homes, with better access to public services, urban centres, and job opportunities.

Housing planning is a huge opportunity to support working people in the fight against poverty. Setting conditions for constructors around high-quality insulation will lower our dependence on fossil fuels for heating, and help reduce fuel poverty.

Accessibility should mean ensuring public services are closer to home, be they schools, council services or similar. But it should also mean building new public transport infrastructure. Such investment should be purposefully integrated into the wider network, and not just an add on bus route. Reducing our dependence on car journeys can only be achieved through high quality public transport, and this must be reflected in our housing planning.

Finally, the new public agenda around active travel should also be reflected in planning sustainable communities. Reducing tree cover, or failing to introduce new tree cover, discourages people from walking and cycling, which has knock on effects for public health and pollution. Any new planning for sustainable communities should include preserving tree cover, as a core principle of supporting working people to live healthier lives.

Where local authorities are not incorporated into a city region, we recommend they use their existing planning powers to replicate these principles of accessibility and sustainability. Local authorities can adopt new rules for procurement and commissioning to achieve this.

### Recommendation Three

## A 21<sup>st</sup> century public transport network for Yorkshire

A high capacity, high frequency, integrated public transport system is a *sine qua non* of a fair and sustainable recovery. And it is something that Yorkshire does not have.

Workers need to be able to commute to work, access job opportunities, and interact with their local economy as easily as possible. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's 2018 report on transport poverty shows that the existing bus system in the Leeds City Region excludes poorer neighbourhoods from access to job opportunities.<sup>12</sup> Given the West Yorkshire bus network is the most dense in our region, we can be sure that this problem is replicated across our region.

### **Our broken bus network faces a crisis point as we recover from the pandemic.**

Our fragmented, almost broken bus network faces a crisis point as we recover from the coronavirus pandemic. Ridership is down due to safety concerns, and

private operators are already looking at which routes to cut. Given that the poorest workers in our economy are four times more likely to use the bus as any other form of public transport, it is no surprise the communities that most depend on their local bus services are communities that do not turn a profit for the multinationals that run our bus services.

The renationalising of Northern rail speaks to the dysfunction of our regional rail system, working neither for passengers nor profit. We need to see the local connectivity benefits of HS2 & HS3 prioritised for our communities. A better recovery has to be supported by higher speed links between our principle urban areas.

The lack of a mass transit system for our largest city and urban area has led to an overreliance on private car use, congestion and dangerous air pollution, and a poorer quality of life for all of us who live within the M1/M62 corridor. Ultimately this has hampered West Yorkshire's development. We need serious commitment to building a light rail network to serve the whole of West Yorkshire, as well as significant expansion of the Sheffield tram network.

Finally, the Humber estuary serves not only as a green powerhouse, but as our gateway to the world. Hull's status as a port city, with regular connections to mainland Europe, should be used to our advantage. We need to see an expansion of services, connecting more parts of Europe to our region. But instead of this we see profit yet again put before people, with worrying cuts to passenger ferry services.

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<sup>12</sup> Crisp R et al., (2018) *Transport related barriers to employment in low-income neighbourhoods*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation

The TUC believes we need a radical overhaul of our region's public transport system, to support our economic recovery. But reimagining our transport system shouldn't just stop at light rail and buses. In order to tackle the climate emergency, we need to rethink our travel habits, acknowledge that we need to bargain for better annual leave entitlements to account for slower travel, and consider whether introducing regional night trains in the style of the Nightstar programme, or reintroducing passenger ferry services, to other parts of the continent, can support a green recovery. Without this willingness to think big about our transport needs, the recovery will be hampered, and working people will suffer the most.

### **Public control of our bus network [R3.a]**

Yorkshire's private buses are failing us. Prices are sky high, but services are cut threadbare. Passengers can't rely on a regular service to get them where they need to be. All the while, private operators can cut services and isolate communities at will. We believe this has to change.

We recommend that our two city regions, and all local authorities, use the powers available to them under the 2017 Bus Services Act to begin the franchising process. Franchising the bus network will allow local and combined authorities to take control of the networks, setting timetable, prices and routes, and making innovation such as smart ticketing easier, as well as making flat fares a possibility.

We already know that private operators are considering which routes to cut in order to save money following the pandemic. We also know that ridership is a virtuous circle. If you invest in routes, and if passengers can rely on a bus to get them to work, they will use the service. We argued this in our 2019 submission to the South Yorkshire Bus Commission, and we eagerly await their report.<sup>13</sup>

In the meantime, public support for private operators should be made conditional on fare transparency, safety measures for passengers and staff, and development of the electronic ticketing system.

### **Use mass transit as a public works opportunity [R3.b]**

Light rail across the North has suffered particularly during this crisis. Some networks have hit as low as 5 per cent of normal patronage during the crisis. Tram networks are the arteries of successful urban transport networks and investing in them is essential to building a better transport system. Economic support for existing networks and for networks in development is needed to support the transition back from private vehicle use to public network use.

The recovery should seek to utilise existing investment commitments and accelerate their delivery. An example of this could be the mass transit system committed to by government in the West Yorkshire devolution deal. Planning for this should accelerate in order to provide a large public works programme with significant employment opportunities, green

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<sup>13</sup> Lewis. G, (2019) TUC written evidence to the South Yorkshire Bus Commission

investment, and reliable public transport to create greater access to employment opportunities.

Likewise, the potential to boost connectedness, reliability, and inward investment to Sheffield through an expansion of the Supertram network should be considered a high priority for the new funding & powers to be devolved to the Sheffield City Region.

Innovations such as the tram-train are commonplace in Europe and provide a cost-effective way of expanding a tram network. Sheffield City Region should look to expand their tram-train programme to serve more communities and lead the rest of the UK in innovative public transport solutions.

These projects could be large investment programmes with high skilled jobs, training and apprenticeships available. It would be an infrastructure investment programme that is visible, affordable, and with the green agenda at its heart.

**Building a mass transit system could be a huge employment and investment opportunity.**

But it is important that the investment and infrastructure touches all parts of the City Region, and not just serve the urban centre. Repeating the mistakes of previous plans in West Yorkshire, which focused solely on the Leeds urban area, risks alienating workers across our region and limiting the economic potential of the project as a tool for the recovery.

Decisions on how this project should be embarked upon, as well as investment, procurement and commissioning, should be made in social partnership with unions and business. Leading with these best practices on a project of this size is crucial to embedding fair work practices through the wider economy.

#### Recommendation Four

## **An equal and racially just recovery**

Covid-19 has had a clear, disproportionate impact on different groups. Immediate steps must be taken to address the adverse impact on people with protected characteristics. Equally importantly is co-ordinated longer-term action to ensure that inequalities are not increased and entrenched by employers' responses to the pandemic and the expected economic downturn.

The impact of coronavirus on BME people has laid bare multiple areas of systemic disadvantage and discrimination. The fact that BME people are more likely to live in overcrowded housing, have poorer health outcomes and be concentrated in insecure work is well documented. Numerous reports over the years - some commissioned by the government itself - have recommended action to tackle discrimination and entrenched disadvantage. If these recommendations had been acted on, perhaps BME people might be facing a different situation today.

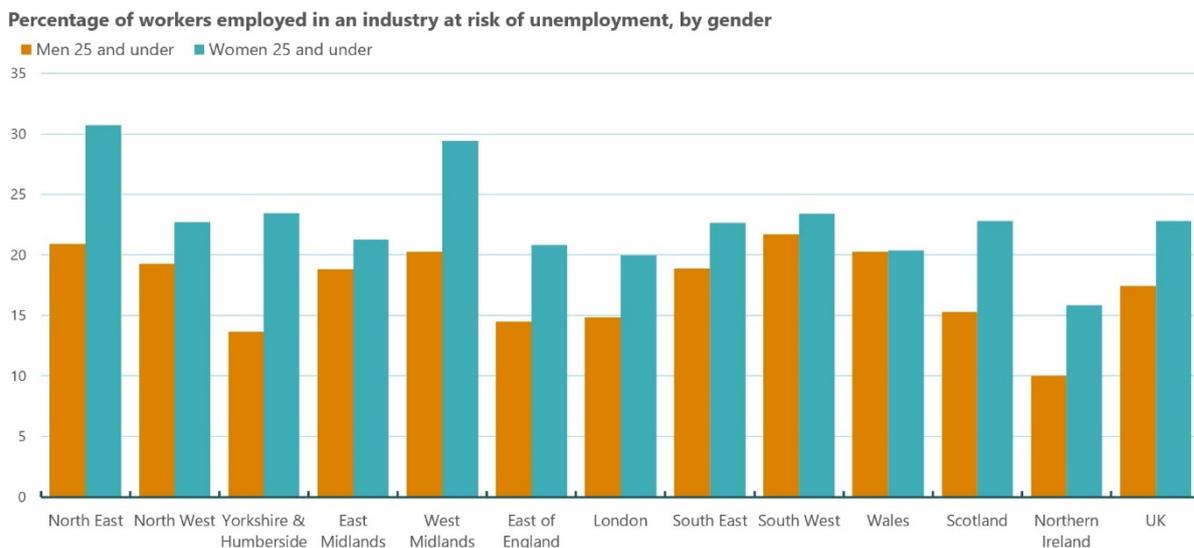
In addition, the health, social and economic impacts of Covid-19 are highly gendered. The economic and health impacts of this crisis are most acutely affecting key workers and those employed on insecure contracts in shutdown sectors. These workers are more likely to be women.

Women are the vast majority of those working on the frontline of this crisis:

- Of the 3,200,000 workers at highest risk of exposure to Covid-19, 77 per cent are women
- Women comprise 77 per cent of healthcare workers, 83 per cent of the social care workforce, and 70 per cent of those working in education.
- Mothers are more likely to be key workers than fathers or non-parents: 39 per cent of working mothers were key workers before this crisis began, compared to 27 per cent of the working population as a whole.

Recent TUC analysis shows that young women in our region will be disproportionately affected by unemployment, with 23 per cent of women aged under 25 at risk of unemployment. In hospitality, one of the most exposed sectors to a recession, 19 per cent of all women's jobs could be at risk in Yorkshire.

**Figure 7 - jobs at risk by gender**



Source: TUC analysis of Labour Force Survey Jan-March 2020

These factors risk embedding deep inequities for young women workers, especially in parts of our region such as York and North Yorkshire, which rely heavily on tourism and hospitality. Such a pattern is not unusual in a recession. It is well established that women, through part time, precarious and low paid work, in addition to caring responsibilities, bore the brunt of the austerity agenda which compounded the 2008-9 financial crisis. With young women in our region overly exposed to the consequences of this latest downturn, we cannot afford to repeat past mistakes.

Finally, the risks for disabled people are also acute. Disabled people and those with long-term health conditions tend to have lower real incomes and higher costs than the general population. Benefit cuts and changes to the welfare system over the last ten years hit disabled people particularly hard, leaving disabled adults four times worse off financially than non-disabled adults. Nearly half of those in poverty, 6.9 million people, are from families which include a disabled person.

Whilst there are few specific powers in the city region devolution deals, all local authorities have a legal duty to ensure the health and safety of all workers within their authority areas.

### **Use the local authority H&S duty to scrutinise gender and racial justice at work [R4.a]**

We recommend that all local authorities empanel a scrutiny board of trade union and business representatives to scrutinise the specific issues for workplaces in each local authority, and for local authorities to demand all workplaces allow access for accredited union health & safety reps to sign off on workplace risk assessments during the return to work.

## **Make business support conditional on commitment to equal treatment [R4.b]**

We further recommend that these panels continue their work in scrutinising business support from local authorities and city regions, ensuring that gender pay gap, and race pay gap reporting, among other indicators, play a role in the award of funding, as well as procurement and commissioning.

## **Make procurement conditional on commitment to race equality [R4.c]**

We recommend that city regions and local authorities consider the recommendations of the 60/76 Business Commission report, in particular the model clauses in appendix 10, to embed race equality monitoring in the procurement process for local government contracts, and embed racial justice at work throughout the local supply chain.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> 60/76 Business Commission on Race Equality in the Workplace, October 2007, Report by the National Employment Panel pp.67-69

Recommendation Five

## Find Yorkshire's new place in the world

The virus has demonstrated the interdependence of people not only within communities, workplaces and nations but throughout the world. The importance of countries sharing expertise, working together on a vaccine and supporting each other through tough times has demonstrated the value of international collaboration and solidarity. These values must be integral to our recovery.

It is not just the virus that crosses borders. Our economy is truly global in nature: investment, goods, services and people cross national borders every day in increasingly complex and varied pathways. The rules that govern our international systems for trade and finance often act to

damage the interests of poorer countries and make it harder for working people across the world to be paid fairly for their labour, driving down regulatory standards and working conditions. Workers in the global south whose livelihoods and often lives depend on the behaviour of large multinational companies are let down by the lack of global rules on workers' rights and social protections, and the low levels of trade union coverage. Those that face discrimination, including minority ethnic and migrant workers have often paid the greatest price.

These rules have benefited the multinational companies that benefit from cheap labour, but have been promoted by the multi-lateral institutions, such as the World Bank, IMF and World Trade Organisation, that should be standing up for workers' rights.

Yorkshire, although it may not seem it, is truly a border region. Hull and the Humber are our gateway to the world, with daily traffic from Belgium, Holland, Germany, Denmark and Norway; along with connections from our three international airports. We have a role to play in fighting human trafficking, and post-Brexit, we must ensure that in the race to bottom trade deals, the working rights and standards of cross border employers and employees are not cut away.

**We must ensure that the resurgent far right can find no corner of our region to call home.**

promotion of trade union rights in the regions of the world we trade with.

Our new international relationships can play a role in helping us fight the resurgent far right. We must ensure that they can find no home in any corner of our region. Whatever

**We are truly a border region with Europe, with moral responsibilities for defending workers' rights across borders, and fighting human trafficking.**

In addition, with the new powers our city regions have received around international trade, we now have a duty to ensure our trading relationship with the world is based on ethical supply chains, and

role this takes, be it a resurgence of the post-war twin cities programme or a new idea, it should include a strong trade union dimension.

## **International trade and ethical supply chains [R5.a]**

In order to ensure Yorkshire plays its role in supporting fair and sustainable economic growth throughout the world, any new trading relationships that our city regions embark upon should be premised on the principles of fair pay, ethical supply chains, and trade union recognition. Any procurement, commissioning, or business support for Yorkshire businesses should be contingent on adequate checks and support for trade union access and collective bargaining with foreign companies. The TUC can play a role in facilitating this through our sister trade union federations.

To support this, we recommend that our city regions appoint union representatives to the relevant bodies that will deal with UK Trade and our international trading relationships.

**Trade unions must have a role in the new trade powers devolved to city regions. These powers come with a responsibility to lift up global labour conditions.**

## **Our role as a border region with Europe [R5.b]**

We must recognise our role as a border region with mainland Europe, in particular the strong freight relationship that exists between Hull and the Humber, Rotterdam and Denmark.

Our approach to this role should be rights-based, ensuring that as our relationship with the EU changes, this does not allow for a lessening of working rights for cross border workers, or that UK workers employed by cross-border European companies, do not lose out in terms of employment rights or standards.

It is also important that we foster our new regional relationship with these border regions and the EU, in order to take advantage of the huge economic potential of cross border energy supply, especially around the North Sea interconnectors, and renewable energy generation.

We recommend that any new international relationship building should have a strong trade union presence, with a trade union representative appointed to any advisory board working on this. This should include a trade union dimension to any circumstance where our new relationship building takes best practice from the Bristol-Bath Brussels office, and our city regions establish a more permanent presence with our European neighbours.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.bristolbathbrussels.org/>