

APPENDIX 2 - WHERE WILL THE WORKERS COME FROM?

The numbers involved look large. However, after much discussion and circulation for comment, I think they are realistic.

In terms of what is needed: we have less time to do more work, and the work is extensive - this is our inherited reality.

And in terms of workers who will be available, who will need jobs.

EXISTING RETROFIT BUILDERS

There are an estimated 160,000 workers currently working on repair maintenance and improvement of buildings. Our premise is that these workers can become part of the NCS programme but will still need the training, or the "leadership" of trained workers. This not only a truth universally acknowledged in construction, it's also corroborated by the pitiful (6%) take up of the Green Homes Grant, in massive part because of the shortage of certified skilled installers.

EXISTING OTHER BUILDERS

Beyond these are the remaining 2 million plus building workers who are currently employed on projects including large-scale roadbuilding, HS2, speculative offices, intense newbuild housing developments in selective market hotspots, and out-of-town shopping. In any serious climate action scenario these sectors will decline, and workers will become available for other work.

OTHER WORKERS LOSING JOBS

But the central premise of the NCS is that it will allow redeployment of workers who become redundant in industries affected by decarbonisation.

It's important that we all recognise the level of change that will be required. To achieve net zero, and then to create a stable and fair world economy which can steadily take carbon out of the atmosphere over the following decades/centuries, will mean more than electrification and retrofit works. It will require a significant shift in the way that we do things: consumer goods will need to be more durable, repairable and shareable; homes will need to include more "coliving" arrangements along with the amenities that make that work; work-related transport will need to be reduced; low/zero carbon leisure will need to become the norm. More people will be involved in growing food and other crops, tending the landscape, repairing things - less people will be involved in making short-lived ephemeral products from oil-plastic or high carbon materials, and far less people in advertising, promoting, fighting over market share etc.

So not only would we expect sectors like fossil fuel extraction and distribution, aviation and car making to decline, there will be - needs to be - a decline in other areas of high carbon production. The Climate Jobs pamphlet overall is based on finding roles for these people, and my point here is that we need not fear an absolute shortage of workers, even though many will need or want to be redeployed to other new sectors like renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, biodiversity management, low-

zero carbon manufacture, and crucially the health, care and education sectors as we manage a just transition.

A note on previous recruitment increases: the NEF points out years where the UK construction workforce has increased by between 110,000 and 150,000. This has been massively facilitated by migrant workers, in particular from eastern and southern Europe. CITB reports note of those UK students who have learned construction skills at FE level (approx 100,000 each year) a big proportion don't go on into the industry, or stay in it. Combine these factors with the unregulated cost-driven nature of the UK industry and you can see why quality control suffers on site. My experience is that the person doing the job is at the bottom of a line of people and usually a long way from specifications and even drawings. Add to this a language problem and you can see why it's hard for builders as well as people who want a good outcome. Our training can take all that - including language -on board and potentially transform the culture of the industry as it becomes normal to do things properly.