

# Environmental Audit Committee

## Oral evidence: Green jobs and the just transition, HC 75

Wednesday 9 June 2021

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Members present: Philip Dunne (Chair); Duncan Baker; Dan Carden; Barry Gardiner; Mr Robert Goodwill; Helen Hayes; Ian Levy; Caroline Lucas; Jerome Mayhew; John McNally; Dr Matthew Offord.

Questions 170 - 220

### Witnesses

**I:** Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP, Minister of State (Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth), Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, UK International Champion on Adaptation and Resilience, COP26; Amy Jenkins, Deputy Director, Clean Growth, Green Finance and Sustainable Behaviours for Net Zero, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy; Gillian Keegan MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills), Department for Education; Sinead O'Sullivan, Director, Career Learning, Analysis and Skills Directorate, Department for Education; Rebecca Pow MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Jon Boswell, Head of Strategic Funding, Green Finance Division, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; Mims Davies MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Minister for Employment), Department for Work and Pensions; and Jessica Hodgson, Deputy Director for Labour Market Strategy, Department for Work and Pensions.

Written evidence from witnesses:

[Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy \(BEIS\)](#)



## Examination of Witnesses

Witnesses: Rt Hon Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP, Amy Jenkins, Gillian Keegan MP, Sinead O'Sullivan, Rebecca Pow MP, Jon Boswell, Mims Davies MP and Jessica Hodgson.

Q170 **Chair:** Good afternoon and welcome to the Environmental Audit Committee for the fourth and final session of oral evidence in our inquiry into green jobs. We had sessions in February covering the overview of the challenge, trying to define what we mean by green jobs. In March we focused on the education sector and regional approaches to green jobs through the devolved Administrations, and last month we spoke to industry and employers across the green and traditional high-carbon sectors.

Today we are joined by the largest array of witnesses we have ever had in a single session at this Committee, an extremely distinguished group. We have Ministers from four Departments of State accompanied by their officials. I think that just shows the challenge of trying to compartmentalise a topic such as green jobs, and to put it within a single administrative Department is extremely difficult. That is why we have representatives from so many Departments before us today. I welcome all our witnesses and ask them to briefly introduce themselves, starting with the Ministers and asking them to introduce their officials. I start by welcoming the right hon. Anne-Marie Trevelyan, who is the Minister of State, Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth, at BEIS.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** Thank you very much indeed, Philip. Yes, I have the wonderful honour of holding the net zero pen, as it were. It sits with BEIS. We have the key heavy energy side of things, but we also look across the whole of government to support the Government's net zero pledge, and I have brought the wonderful Amy Jenkins with me.

**Amy Jenkins:** Thank you very much, Minister, and good afternoon to the Committee. My name is Amy Jenkins. I am deputy director of our Clean Growth Directorate. That is really the hub of the Net Zero Strategy across Whitehall. There I am focused on clean growth, by which we mean a menagerie of topics around green skills, green jobs and green recovery, and also the work we do collectively across Whitehall on green finance and work around public engagement on net zero, too.

**Chair:** Thank you very much, Amy. Gillian Keegan from the Department for Education, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, welcome.

**Gillian Keegan:** Thank you very much. My role obviously is as it says on the tin. It is to deliver the skills to support our transition to net zero. I also co-chair the Green Jobs Taskforce with Anne-Marie. I am accompanied by Sinead O'Sullivan, who is the director responsible for adult skills and lifelong learning within the Department for Education.



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**Sinead O’Sullivan:** Good afternoon, everybody. As the Minister says, I am responsible for adult skills, boot camps, the new level 3 entitlement, and one of my teams is working closely with Amy on the Green Jobs Taskforce.

**Chair:** Thank you very much indeed. To Defra and Rebecca Pow, who is a regular attendee at this Committee, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment. Welcome back.

**Rebecca Pow:** Yes, I like to appear as often as possible, Philip. You make sure of that. I am delighted to be here and very pleased that you are carrying out this inquiry and that we have all of our colleagues together to talk about it, so I hugely welcome it. I am in Defra. I have the Environment Bill under my hat and, also relevant to this conversation, nature, adaptation—particularly as it affects COP26—and air, water, soil, waste, flooding and peat. All those things come under my portfolio. I have Jon Boswell with me today, who is from the strategic funding department within Defra. If Jon wants to say hi, it would be nice if everyone could see him.

**Jon Boswell:** Jon Boswell, head of strategic funding in the green finance and green recovery division, part of environmental strategy. I am responsible for the green recovery challenge fund and also for green jobs and skills in the natural environment sector.

**Chair:** Thank you very much. Then to DWP and Mims Davies, who is the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State and Minister for Employment. Welcome, Mims.

**Mims Davies:** Good afternoon, Committee, and hello, Chair. I am the Minister for Employment, so jobcentres and labour market strategy sit with me. That is how I work with my official who is here with me today, Jessica Hodgson, the deputy director for sectors and labour market strategy.

**Jessica Hodgson:** I am Jess Hodgson, deputy director for labour market strategy, looking after sectors, places, and our overall strategy in coming out of the economic recovery.

Q171 **Chair:** Thank you all very much indeed. The way we are going to try to manage this session is that I am going to open with a question to each Department, each Minister, and then when we move to subsequent sets of questions, they will not all be directed specifically to each Department by each questioner but by and large in that way. If Ministers wish to come in who have not been directed a question, it will be up to the questioner if that works. We are going to need to keep this quite tight. I am trying to keep each set of questions to 10 minutes, so please be conscious of that, particularly those who have to leave.

I will start with Anne-Marie Trevelyan. When your predecessor, Kwasi Kwarteng, who was Minister of State before he became Secretary of State, appeared before this Committee in December, he told us that the Green Jobs Taskforce action plan would be available in the first quarter of



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this year, which is now two months ago. When can we expect it, as it has not yet been published, and what will it contain?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** As you say, Kwasi established the Green Jobs Taskforce. Its mission was to advise on how to ensure that we have the right policy in place to support those green jobs and skills. Indeed, the opportunities in the green economy are going to be open to all, and that support is going to be available to workers in parts of the economy most affected by the transition.

The taskforce drew together representatives from industry, the skills sector and trade unions. It has met four times, as well as a number of wider stakeholder engagement events. I can assure you we are very close to them writing to us with their final report. Ministers and I had our final meeting with them last week, so we are very close to that. Obviously, the Government will very shortly afterwards provide a response that will help us feed through to the cross-Whitehall Net Zero Strategy to support where we go from here.

The taskforce has three priorities for Government action. Helping us deliver that green industrial revolution and to meet our net zero goal, key obviously is enabling and incentivising investment in those green jobs and skills and creating a skilled workforce, but also leading that net zero transition in partnership with industry and communities for those areas of our sectors that need to transition away from traditional fossil fuel areas into green energy solutions. With all of that, which we will hopefully have in our paws very shortly, we will be able to provide a response and feed it through to the Net Zero Strategy.

Q172 **Chair:** Thank you. We look forward to that imminently. We will be getting on to numbers during the course of our discussions, but there has been some lack of clarity as to the ambition that has been set. The Secretary of State has talked about 2 million jobs being broadly defined as green jobs. Is the taskforce addressing that issue of both definition and numbers?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** Yes. In terms of the numbers, I can talk to that. It was one of the questions I had when I first took on the role at the beginning of the year, to really understand and drill down so that we have a clear set of KPIs to work to and hopefully achieve. The 2 million clean-growth jobs by 2030, which was included in our 2019 manifesto, comes from a 2017 analysis by the consultancy firm Ricardo Energy & Environment for the Climate Change Committee. That figure is an estimate of a wide range, they say, of between 1 million and 2 million jobs that could exist in the UK's low carbon and renewable energy economy in that broader sense by 2030. In that sense, it is a very broad definition.

There are significant opportunities in the low emission vehicle sector, which is probably a key early one where we will see an enormous amount of growth. Of course, the work they did in 2017 in some ways could not anticipate the technology adaptations that are moving at speed and are



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creating, and will create, many more transitioning skillsets but also new skillsets. It is an ongoing figure, but we are very comfortable that we will be seeing very large numbers of people. We have over 400,000 people who we would consider to be in the low carbon economy now in a number of ways, and I think that is key.

I think you are right, the question of what is a green job is an impossible question in some ways. It is very broad and there isn't an agreed definition. When I talk to students and those who know they will be reskilling or taking their skills into new sectors, it reaches across so many areas. In terms of evidencing on green jobs, there is the ONS low carbon and renewable energy economy survey, which gives a broad definition of jobs that help the UK generate lower emissions of greenhouse gases. I think that will give us that breadth as we move forward.

**Q173 Chair:** You have given me a nice segue into my question to Minister Keegan. We have had evidence that some of the companies that are looking to employ some of the new jobs of the future are concerned at the lack of skills being developed in our colleges and, even earlier, in schools. What is being done by your Department to ensure that schools, technical colleges and universities are educating young people, not just those who are entering the workforce shortly but also those who are already in the workforce and need to be reskilled, in the skills of the future? In particular, the motor trade is moving from mechanical engineering skills to electrical engineering skills. Can you illustrate your answer with what is happening in that sector?

**Gillian Keegan:** You are absolutely right, we have major skills shortages already in our economy; in fact, globally there are major skills shortages without adding on top the green skills and the green jobs that are going to be needed to support our ambition. We are doing a lot to revolutionise our technical education and our skills training. We spend many years in education, but we still have this massive skills gap, which is something we want to try to work on avoiding.

We are doing a lot of things, first of all, obviously, within schools. Any one of us who goes into schools will be able to see that schools talk a lot about climate change, net zero, what is happening to our climate, what we will need to do to save our planet and so on. In particular, all the way from key stage 1 and key stage 2 right the way up to GCSE and A-level, in science and geography there is a lot in the curriculum on climate change. There is also the Oak National Academy, which has had 94 million views. It has specific resources on climate change.

Within our colleges there has been a lot of work recently on careers and careers education, which is an important part of trying to get young people to take informed career choices. We have also been looking at T-levels, technical education, which is trying to get young people to build up those skills pipelines a bit earlier, so it is a technical alternative to A-levels. Then, of course, there is the focus on apprenticeships and adult education. Adult education is where there have been a lot of



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announcements this year. We have the skills White Paper and the Bill going before Parliament, and that is really putting in place a lot of the foundations to make sure that we have things in place to support adults.

We have had some boot camps already. You mentioned electric vehicles. We have had some in six areas of the country, but we also have some full-time qualifications. Electric vehicle charging is one of the ones that has come forward in wave 2 of the boot camps. We have full-time qualifications and level 3 qualifications. We have, for example, an advanced diploma in electrical installation, which was part of the Prime Minister's recent lifetime skills guarantee. We also have an NVQ diploma in installing electro-technical systems and equipment, and I am specifically looking at maintenance as well.

We are just starting out on this journey because, like me, if you go into your local college, you will still see a lot of motor vehicle mechanics being trained on the current technology, not on the new technologies. That is what we are really focusing on, and that is why we are focusing on skills. It was in the Queen's Speech but it is also a big part of what we need to deliver and change, both for adults and for young people.

**Q174 Chair:** It is part of the Department's role to try to get a handle on what the demand is going to be for these roles so that you can try to co-ordinate that across the country through the different educational establishments.

**Gillian Keegan:** This is only very recent, but we have a Skills and Productivity Board, which has labour market economists looking at that. It is not just for green jobs but for many of the other skills shortages we have. That will feed into both a national picture and then, of course, the local skills improvement plans, which is a big change in the way we are going to do things.

We talk about this employer-led skills system, and what we are really going to do is work with employers through business representative organisations, colleges and training providers locally to assess what the skills gaps are in the short, medium and longer term, and a lot of the longer-term thinking will be fed by the Skills and Productivity Board, so that we can try to get a view and then match provision to opportunities and, most importantly, make sure that everybody is aware of them, whether they are a young person making their initial career choice or an adult making a change of career choice.

**Q175 Chair:** Minister Pow, looking at the 25-year environment plan, which has a lot of ambitions to do things differently, how much work is the Department doing to understand how this can be delivered by human beings? For example, we have made various recommendations about a volunteer nature service, which was not taken forward by the Department. We are all aware of various skills shortages, the lack of ecologists within local authorities to be able to cope with some of the demands for increasing biodiversity in planning applications. How is your Department recognising this challenge?



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**Rebecca Pow:** Obviously, we have the 25-year environment plan, which is a cross-Government plan. It is the Environment Bill—which, as you know, is working its way through the House of Lords and has been through the House of Commons—that sets the 25-year environment plan into law. What I wanted to explain in the beginning is that we in Defra are setting the whole framework for the future paradigm shift in what is happening in the environment. That is all-encompassing, whether it is to do with water, air quality, nature recovery, waste, which is leading a whole shift to a circular economy.

Through the Environment Bill and the 25-year environment plan, we are setting the structure for the way we need to move forward. What that is doing already, and will do increasingly, is open up a whole new world of jobs and skills required to deliver all those different measures. So, as you say, every planning department will have to deliver biodiversity net gain. Every local authority will have to produce a local nature recovery strategy. We have the new agricultural ELM system and the sustainable farming system.

Through those, we have already set up a lot of funds that will start to help deliver those things. We have the nature for climate fund, which is a £640 million fund to help deliver our tree strategy. At the moment, it is anticipated that about 1,000 jobs will be linked to that. We already have a £2 million fund for nurseries and tree planting because, obviously, we need all those people not only to plant the trees but to manage them in future. We have our peat plan, and we have money allocated from that same fund, the nature for climate fund, to deliver peatland restoration on a vast scale. We already have the Great North Bog project right across the north of England, and 600 jobs are linked to that.

A lot of jobs will be generated through the new waste measures, the extended producer responsibility, the deposit return and the consistent collections. We are moving in this whole new direction of reuse, repair, recycle, and a lot of that will be driven by private investment. I have been meeting a lot of people in that industry. A lot of that has already been kick-started because we are giving the signals in Government, and that is what our businesses need very much.

You are absolutely right, there will be a raft of jobs: ecologists, soil scientists, advisers in every local authority, advisers to develop more jobs in horticulture, habitat management, green investment advisers. There is a huge amount of thinking going on in Defra. While we already have a lot of those jobs going, we are also working very hard, at pace, on a plan for what the skills gap actually is. We will be working with Minister Keegan on a lot of the things she has already touched on, and increasingly so because we already have some measures going in Defra, for example, to start a new institute for agriculture and horticulture. That will be very much virtual learning.

Our sustainable farming pilots, which will start in October, are going to look very closely at what farmers need in the way of advisers. A lot of the



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agricultural industry already have a raft of advisers, but they might need to switch over from their work on fertilisers and pesticides to the new advice on habitat management, habitat creation and all the measures that the Environment Bill and the 25-year environment plan are directing us towards for this sustainable future.

I also link in very closely with Minister Trevelyan because, of course, through the clean air strategy and clean air zones we have those big stimulators of jobs. We need all those electric vehicles, electric cars, electric buses and an increase in cycling. It all links together very closely, but I particularly wanted to say that we have the Green Jobs Taskforce and what I believe we need to input into that—and Defra is working very closely with BEIS—is to broaden it out to include all the nature and environment jobs that are the other side of climate change.

I am working with Minister Davies on this, too. We already have some Kickstart jobs going. Over 2,000 of those jobs are apprenticeships, green apprenticeships, through some of our green recovery challenge fund and projects, which I will not talk about now. I can expand on that, Chair, because we have a lot of projects there.

**Q176 Chair:** You have identified a whole set of demand signals coming out of the Department, which I think is quite right because you need to be able to do that so that the education providers know the direction of travel. At the same time, you are presiding over a period in which agricultural colleges in the north-west of England are closing. How is this being joined up? When we are going to have this huge demand for people who are educated in sustainable farming, how are we going to allow one of our main institutions—and there are not many of them—to close?

**Rebecca Pow:** You raise a very important point, Chair. I went to a university that studied all these subjects that we need now, and that links up with Imperial College, and it was closed. We need all these things now and all of our team in Defra are working already—the farming Minister and myself—on what we need. In fairness, we already have a committee set up that Lord Curry presides over, which is very much looking at the specific providers that we need, linking into a number of colleges and universities, Harper Adams, the Royal Agricultural University, even City & Guilds, and working with a number of institutions already. We need to work even more closely with them to make sure we absolutely align with the skills that we need.

As I said before, we also think that quite a lot of people could be reskilled or upskilled to transfer over to these new advice roles, particularly farmers. One of the things that farmers are crying out for is to have advisers on the ground to help them steer their way through all the choices they will have for the new projects that they can get into in order to access the replacement for the basic payment, to access the ELM funding. We are very conscious of that. There is a lot of work already started on it but also a great more to do, and we think our skills gap plan will help us to identify what exactly we need to focus on.



Q177 **Chair:** Minister Davies, your Department has designed labour market interventions post-Covid, notably the Kickstart and Restart schemes. To what extent were those schemes designed with the net zero ambition and environmental goals of the Government as part of the thinking behind them?

**Mims Davies:** Thank you, Chair, and good afternoon, Committee, from Rhyl jobcentre. One very important factor is understanding local labour markets and local needs in the way that Minister Pow described, in relation to particular sector needs as well. That is very important, so understanding that in terms of designing the right schemes is key.

DWP is uniquely placed to be able to provide support for people into work and into new sectors. In those programmes, such as the JETS scheme, JFS and Kickstart, and throughout the work that we are doing around economic recovery, net zero and the approach that we need as a Government has been front and centre. The work that we have been doing with Government Departments to monitor the evolving economic and labour market situation has been key in terms of finding effective ways to help people back into work in the here and now. I am delighted that 2,000 of over 200,000 new jobs that have come from nowhere, in terms of the Kickstart scheme, are in the green sector.

We are looking to do more and are continuing to engage to do more. Minister Pow and I are going to put our heads together once again on that, but I am delighted to say that there are roles in areas such as sea kelp in terms of Kickstart. These are roles that, six months ago, were not there at all. In fact, with Minister Keegan I recently visited one of our agricultural colleges down in Plumpton, one of our sector-based work academy programmes. There is a huge amount of them going on in the here and now.

I think the Committee will be pleased to know that there is work going on in DWP in terms of the green jobs that are available now and how we pivot those people—who, frankly, have had a handbrake on the economy, which Minister Keegan described, in terms of the impact on their jobs—into sectors that are growing. We also need to be winning hearts and minds on this. We need to be supporting people through their transition, and we need to do this support in changing jobs with them and not forcing it on them. There is a balance here that we need to achieve through DWP and through our programmes.

I am delighted that we are working in Nottingham with Groundwork. We have eight Kickstart roles there. We also have a biodiversity, planning assistance and landscape support officer down at Matlock jobcentre. That is open right now, and we are interviewing for that.

In your own area, Chair, we are working with the Mercia district and Shrewsbury College—Telford Council as well, which is a little further away—on biodiversity and environmental engagement roles. These are all active roles through Jobcentre Plus and our sector-based work academies. This is where you can do up to six weeks of training and



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learning, where you get appropriate certification and a chance to try out the role, as some people will be moving into the green jobs sphere from a different sector. It is understanding how they can transition their skills, and they get guaranteed interviews at the end of that.

Working with Minister Keegan at DfE, we have also introduced a way of supporting people through universal credit to be able to train for longer, to support the boot camps. Through DWP you can now train and progress, where your work coach supports you and there is a growth sector, and it can be in digital, construction or green jobs. As discussed earlier, green jobs are a multiplicity, so right now if you are working on installing smart meters you are in a green job.

If I had a penny for all the people I have spoken to who have been unemployed because of the pandemic, who have said to me that they want to work in that sector and they want to be part of that transition to a low-carbon economy. We are in the right place. We are winning hearts and minds and we are giving them the opportunities. It is key that, in all of our programmes, whether it is Kickstart or the support we are giving at DWP for the over-50s—and we call it 50 PLUS: Choices—quite often that is the time in their life when people are actively choosing to go into a career or area that they are passionate about, so we can encapsulate this green recovery and represent it.

I would say to any of the Committee that if you have not been to your local DWP recently or engaged with them virtually—if I think about Mr Goodwill's constituency, there is amazing stuff going on in Scarborough. We have links with a seaweed farm and sustainable cropping there, and we have Kickstart placements. It is well worth finding out what green jobs are there. I can happily take you there, Chair, but I won't.

**Chair:** Thank you. I am afraid we are going to have to press on, as I know some of you have to go. I am going to move on to Caroline Lucas now to talk more about the taskforce's action plan. Colleagues, can we please keep to no more than 10 minutes each?

Q178 **Caroline Lucas:** My questions are about cross-departmental co-ordination and delivery. Minister Trevelyan, which Department will have overall responsibility for green jobs under the Green Jobs Taskforce action plan?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** BEIS is holding the pen on the net zero challenge and driving forwards that overarching fixture and the messaging that is coming from industry in terms of what they need, but clearly DfE in a practical sense, as Minister Keegan says, is delivering the changes in schools and colleges to help ensure they are providing the pipeline for what industry needs in future. The overarching hold for the net zero challenge across the piece sits with BEIS.

Q179 **Caroline Lucas:** To be clear about that, we had quite a lot of evidence about people's concerns around there not being a central point that is responsible for green jobs. They were citing, for example, the NAO, which



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said Government arrangements for joint working between Departments on the environment have been patchy in the past or that there has been a lack of cross-Government co-ordination, meaning there is no single place where you can go and get the information, or that you can monitor and hold accountable for delivery. I want to be absolutely clear. Notwithstanding, of course, that there will be cross-departmental relationships, at the end of the day the buck stops with BEIS. Is that what you are saying?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** The net zero pen and delivering net zero sits with BEIS, but the reality is that this is a genuinely cross-Government challenge. Every single part of Government have a part to play and have responsibilities that they need to deliver in order to help the nation reach its net zero challenge. The interesting and perhaps fair challenge that there has been patchy work has to change. The four of us sitting in front of you are working together all the time to make sure we can drive forwards. We are completely joined up about where the next pressure point is coming, as well as thinking longer term.

The point of the Green Jobs Taskforce is to make sure we can give ourselves a very strong base from which to build those next-step practical changes, investments and where we go forwards.

Q180 **Caroline Lucas:** What will the delivery mechanisms look like in a cross-departmental way? I am pressing on it because there was a lot of evidence coming in saying that, although in principle it sounds entirely rational that there should be a cross-departmental effort, all too often things fall between the gaps and people are not sure who is responsible for doing what. What practically can you put in place that would mean that the patchy progress that has been made in the past on the environment when it comes to cross-departmental working is actually remedied this time around?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** That is exactly why we have drawn this together, and we are absolutely working hand in glove. At the end of the day, what will drive this is industry's call for the requirement and making sure that we are thinking long term. Net zero is genuinely a national endeavour. It isn't something that belongs to any one part of the Government. It is a national endeavour, and it is going to take all of us to put our best foot forward and drive it through.

I am personally very encouraged in so much that is being driven by our constituents, by our businesses who are genuinely stepping into the fray. It is for all of us to work together to make sure that we drive that, but the net zero challenge, how we are doing and whether we are meeting our targets and the current budget that we have set—

**Caroline Lucas:** Yes, I get that bit.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** —those are the theoreticals, but the practicalities of meeting those are: are we building enough electric vehicles? Are people buying them because—



**Q181 Caroline Lucas:** I am going to interrupt you, I am so sorry, because I have other questions and a short time. Was any consideration given to setting up a new self-standing body? We heard an assessment from the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment that it has been calling for a new green jobs and skills commission or a similar body to drive implementation. The absence of a body with that single focus to drive the jobs bit, in particular, the institute thought was lacking. I would love to know if any consideration was given to doing that. If you look at what, for example, President Biden is doing with his jobs plan, they have a new Office of Domestic Climate Policy. They have a number of new bodies to drive this. I want to know if that was considered in Government this time around.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** The Green Jobs Taskforce has not yet reported to us. As I say, it is imminent and, as part of the Government's response, if that is a proposition that comes forward, clearly we will consider it and look internationally at how others are working. We are in the final phase of the first iteration of this and trying to get to grips with what medium-term and long-term work needs to be done to make sure we have the right base for everyone to work from.

**Q182 Caroline Lucas:** Minister Keegan, do you know whether the responsibilities for each Department will be set out in the plan. Once you have all the different actions, will it be very clear that they will be attributed to different Departments so we can see who to hold to account for the delivery?

**Gillian Keegan:** I think at one level it will be separated out by industry, Government and the education providers. That is the level at which we have been talking about it. How much specificity we get, we will not know until we see the report. You are absolutely right to push on this because it is all very good to write stuff down or to admit the problem, but it is the implementation of all these things that is truly difficult.

What we are trying to do and why the Green Jobs Taskforce is the first start is you have to separate the job from the skilled person. There will be a number of people involved in generating the jobs. Obviously, there will be some Government investment but there will be a lot of business investment as well. There will also be public sector jobs. Rebecca went through a lot of those earlier. If you look at that and then separate out the skills, building the skills and the skills pipeline, which is really around building those skilled individuals, this is the bit where the DfE will clearly take the lead, and then getting them into jobs is where the DWP has a huge role to play.

We work very closely together. Mims and I have worked very closely together to look at Kickstart and what Kickstart opportunities will then go on to apprenticeships. Having a joined-up system makes sure that we can deliver people with the skills, so that when businesses make decisions to invest here, if they make that decision—a lot of this is new technology—we want to make sure that we have some of the best skills



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that are going to make it easier for them to make those investment decisions.

It is huge, but we will take a lead on it from the perspective of whether you are looking at the jobs, the investment, the environment or the skills needed.

**Q183 Caroline Lucas:** I want to fit in one last question, again to Minister Keegan, about the funding. We were a bit worried to hear from Minister Badenoch that there was no dedicated funding stream for the Green Jobs Taskforce, so will you be setting out the costs of delivery within the action plan? Is that going to be covered in the action plan, and how will funding be co-ordinated to meet these costs? There is a worry about whether, if it is cross-departmental, they are all going to come up with the financial goods to deliver it.

**Gillian Keegan:** Where we are focusing the cost and investment is on our skills and our skills shortages. Green jobs are a big part of that and will increasingly become a growing part of it, but they are not the only thing. In a lot of the investment and a lot of the plans we put together for all these schemes that we have talked about, the real investment is the change, the real culture change, to have an employer-led skills and education system that can flex, whether it is working with nature, net zero homes, electric vehicles, whichever industry or business. We will be able to work with all of them and use the tools that we have, which are very strong foundations to build—

**Q184 Caroline Lucas:** I am still not hearing whether or not you expect that the costs of delivery will be set out in the action plan, and how that will be co-ordinated between different Departments.

**Gillian Keegan:** I very much doubt it, because it is an independent action taskforce of industry, union and education providers—

**Q185 Caroline Lucas:** Would you imagine that the Government will respond to the action plan by working out how finance will be allocated where it is needed?

**Gillian Keegan:** A lot of this will go into the spending review, which is usually what happens when you talk about anything to do with investment. Clearly, at some point we will say how we are going to deliver this, but we already have significant investment in skills. The green jobs skills will come underneath that skills investment, because the system itself is what we are investing in and being able to work with employers to deliver any skills shortage, whether it is in digital or in tree planting.

**Caroline Lucas:** Thank you.

**Chair:** Thank you very much, Caroline, and thank you for keeping it moving.

**Q186 Jerome Mayhew:** Minister Trevelyan, we have heard quite a lot of evidence about the Government having a target of creating 2 million



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green jobs by 2030, but listening to your earlier evidence it sounds to me as though that is a bit of a misnomer because you refer to a very wide estimate of between 1 million and 2 million jobs being created. Is it right, in fact, not to think of it as the Government having an absolute target to create 2 million jobs but that you see that as an estimate arising from the anticipated development of the wider economy?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** Yes. The commitment is that by 2030, as Minister Keegan was saying, we want to be able to meet the skills gap that we know is there now because so much of our economy is moving in terms of reskilling, or indeed skilling for the first time, into this very broad pot of green jobs.

The ambition for 2 million is absolutely there. The taskforce is there to help us understand and support it, so that we can see the key challenges faced by employers now, who are either in sectors that are transitioning or in sectors where there is going to be enormous growth into these new areas of activity.

The challenge in finding that right pipeline is where our focus is right now. We are comfortable with the Ricardo analysis, which was done for the Climate Change Committee, as a fair assessment of the quantum that we are talking about over the medium term, bearing in mind that we are modelling out to 2050.

If I think of some of the activity in my portfolio, like offshore wind, we have less than 20 gigawatts installed at the moment. We are looking at having 40 gigawatts installed by 2030. If you look at our modelling to 2050, we are talking about 100 gigawatts of offshore wind. We are talking about a huge industry with high-skilled jobs, some of whom have perhaps been in the oil and gas sector and will transition into the green energy sector, but many more will be needed in that sector. We are thinking long term, as well as that shorter term, to meet those initial ones.

In the plan there are 90,000 green collar jobs by 2024, with 250,000 clearly identified to 2030: engineers, construction workers, offshore wind, nuclear, clean power to our homes—there is a vast array across this—those who are going to install low-carbon heating and insulation. There are many more needed, as well as those already in those sectors but not yet in the low-carbon part of it.

Q187 **Jerome Mayhew:** Given our earlier discussion where we were slightly nervous about even defining what a green job was, how are the Government going to measure their progress towards a green jobs target?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** Part of the work that we are doing—and the response will come from the taskforce—will be to set that out in the Net Zero Strategy that we will publish before COP. That is going to help identify much more holistically some of those measurement requirements



so that we have, as you say, a benchmark from which to work as we grow into this whole new world.

**Q188 Jerome Mayhew:** Minister Davies, we have also heard about a lot of need for cross-departmental co-operation between the DWP, Defra and the Department for Education. What arrangements are in place between DWP and these other Departments to ensure the Government's long-term labour market strategy is aligned with their net zero and environmental goals, so that the goals of each individual Department are pushed together and made collaborative?

**Mims Davies:** That is an important point, and that is why I am engaged in the Green Jobs Taskforce. In fact, in the meeting that we had yesterday I was pushing for a bit more of a definition around green jobs because I think a lot of people are already working in that area and need to understand how it is being achieved across Government as a result.

We have a sectoral work strategy, which DWP is at the heart of. That covers all different areas of the labour market, from construction to manufacturing to transport to digital to the work we are doing around haulage and transport. Obviously, there are structural needs in that part of the labour market as well, and that is then honed down into what is going on in local labour markets.

As Gillian described earlier, what is really important is that we have a strong offer at DWP that links to employers and their needs. We have the high-level Government stuff that I have just described, but we also have our employer advisers, our national account managers at DWP, who work locally to understand business needs and design bespoke packages to support recruitment needs in the here and now.

We are talking about a lot of plans and what we are going to do towards 2030, but I hope I described in some of my earlier comments that we are already doing a lot of this now. That is probably why Minister Trevelyan is trying to round the figures, because some of this is already happening in our local labour markets. Things like the fact that we are going to have a strategy around green ships and marine have never happened before, so this gives us a fantastic opportunity, whether it is in south Wales, Hampshire or the Humber, to really understand where those green jobs are—

**Jerome Mayhew:** I feel terrible in cutting you short, because it is a fascinating topic.

**Mims Davies:** Please do. I have a lot to say.

**Q189 Jerome Mayhew:** Exactly. We have heard evidence that the impact of the transition on jobs will not be even. There are some parts of the country that potentially have more stranded sectors. Oil and gas in north-east Scotland would be one example, and there are some manufacturing areas as well. What I am interested in is: has the DWP done any work to identify where support is most needed by those most affected by the



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transition to the net zero economy? Can you describe a little bit of the work that you have been up to there?

**Mims Davies:** Yes, absolutely. We have weekly labour market analysis, such as around furlough, and next week we have our updated jobs numbers, so we are constantly looking at this. As DWP, we have to plan for all scenarios in terms of what could be happening to the economy. The way that we have been able to manage that because of the impact of the pandemic shows that we have been able to do that.

On the point in terms of stranded jobs, it goes back to the hearts and minds issue. We know that some sectors are going to come to a close and things are going to be difficult. We need to help people know and understand that transition. This is where we are working with Gillian and working with education about it not being a job for life; it is a life of jobs. Using the lifetime skills guarantee, learning throughout your life is really positive. It will help you to transition at any stage of your career. What we do very strongly through our work coaches at DWP is help people to transition and understand how they can move into sectors.

We have done that brilliantly with our JETS programme. That has been people who have been out of work for six months because of the pandemic, where we have worked with outside providers, giving CV help, mentoring, giving experience of interviews. Because you could have been very skilled and in a positive and long-term sector, but the pandemic or potentially the road to net zero is going to have an impact on your career. We need to be very mindful that people are very much defined by their career and their opportunities.

There is the headline labour market strategy, and then there is the face-to-face support that you get at DWP. That is why we have things like our rapid response service. That is where, if we know there are large job losses coming down the line in a sector, in an area or in a particular company, we get in early to support people, because we know once you have a job it is much easier to transition into another one.

Q190 **Jerome Mayhew:** I like your comment that it is a life of jobs, not a job for life. I am on my third job or third career. I just hope the electors of Broadland do not suggest I have a fourth.

Moving on to my final point, what is DWP doing to ensure that young people, particularly underrepresented groups, will have additional access to green jobs?

**Mims Davies:** I am delighted to report today that I started the morning at Winsford in our new youth hub in Cheshire. We have over 140 new youth hubs for the under-25s to give people a good place to start when it comes to their career. You could be 16, on universal credit and looking for your next stage, or you could equally be 23 or 24, that graduate opportunity has not come for you and you have been sitting in your bedroom for the last year and a half, wondering what is going to happen to you.



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We are working with partners such as the Prince's Trust and local charities. We have a youth hub up at Rotherham football club. If you do not have the chance to link into a JCP—I call them “jobs, community, progression,” as that is what Jobcentre Plus is—go and see one of the new youth hubs, because this is giving people a good place to start in where they go on their career, as you say, and being ready for that life of jobs. It is like climbing Everest. You have to get to base camp. You have to go through the processes and get to where you want to go, but at the moment our young people perhaps feel that they have nowhere to start.

We have the Kickstart scheme. We are linking into DfE with the apprenticeships and the traineeships. We have youth employability work coaches targeted at helping people with the most barriers. One of the best things about Kickstart is that those people with the biggest barriers are getting opportunities to go into work. If we all think back to our first job, and you said it, Mr Mayhew, the reality is someone took a chance on us. Someone saw our potential. Somebody saw it through, whether it was a teacher, whether it was your first employer. We need to give people the confidence and the skills for a changing labour market, and that is both through JCPs and our new youth hubs.

**Jerome Mayhew:** Thank you very much, a very full answer.

**Chair:** Thank you very much indeed, Jerome, and thank you, Minister Davies. Mims, I know you have to leave shortly, so perhaps your official, Jessica, could stay on the line.

**Mims Davies:** Thank you, Committee, and I am happy to come back again.

**Chair:** We are now going to Matthew Offord, who is going to ask a couple of questions. Duncan, I will allow you to come in with a supplementary because I know you have just rushed back from the Chamber, but Matthew is ready to go.

Q191 **Dr Matthew Offord:** I have to commend Duncan for getting back from the Chamber. I have seen him on my television set and now on my screen. That is quite commendable.

Minister Trevelyan, I want to ask you about the lessons that the Government have learned, particularly from the efforts to stimulate jobs through the Green Homes Grant voucher scheme. What have been good successes that you are keen to promote?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** It has helped us to expand particularly beyond the short-term stimulus of the vouchers that were put out up to 31 March, a continuing commitment to grow the social housing decarbonisation fund, and the local authority delivery element of the Green Homes Grant scheme. We have a further £300 million for the 2021-22 financial year and, of course, whether it is a privately owned dwelling or social housing, the same training is needed to help those who are going to provide the efficiencies that are being built into our homes.



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In September, the Department launched a £7 million skills competition to provide training opportunities for those energy efficiency and low-carbon heating supply chains to deliver works and scale up to meet additional consumer demand. That steady workload coming from the social housing sector is helping to grow that. The skills competition has awarded 18 providers across all measures and training areas. We hope that will deliver about 8,000 training opportunities. We are investing—as I am sure Gillian will talk to—£2.5 billion in the national skills fund to support economic recovery but also those skills needed to deliver. Some 20% of our emissions that we have to get rid of come from buildings, so this is a huge sector that needs to grow. We are making good progress there.

**Q192 Dr Matthew Offord:** That is really helpful, thank you. What lessons will you be able to transfer from the scheme, particularly into the heat and building strategy?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** Across the piece, the skillsets are in many areas. Speaking as someone who is in the process of restoring an old house, every part of the workforce that is helping me to do that is having to learn new skills and learn about the green solutions. I am very excited that I have a hydrogen-ready boiler. I just need the gas system to have hydrogen and I am ready to go.

Across every part of that there are skills needed and a systems approach to buildings that has not existed in the past, which is an interesting and quite technical area of skills growth that we are looking forward to seeing. Obviously, the heat and building strategy will be published in due course. It is a proper cross-Whitehall project in that sense, so the ambition in it is very extensive precisely because it is such a big proportion of our carbon emissions reduction requirement.

**Q193 Dr Matthew Offord:** You will certainly endear yourself to the Chair by installing a hydrogen heating system. He will be very pleased with that.

You touched on the publication of the heat and building strategy and you used the Minister's term "in due course." How long is "in due course"?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** If only I could answer that. If I were very mean, I would delegate it to my lovely civil servant to answer the question, but that would not help you.

It is making good progress and it is a really chunky strategy because it covers so many areas. We are getting there. The only reassurance is that it is forcing all of us to work really hard to get these crystallised and as much in them as we can. That is, we want to publish the Net Zero Strategy in the autumn. All of these strategies, so the industrial decarbonisation strategy that was published in March, the hydrogen strategy that will be published hopefully before summer recess, and the heat and building strategy, feed into the overarching Net Zero Strategy. The heat and building strategy is well on its way and it is coming, I promise.

**Dr Matthew Offord:** That is good. That is reassuring. As you say, it is



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part of an overall strategy so that is very helpful. Thank you very much.

**Chair:** Duncan, would you like to come in on the back of those questions?

Q194 **Duncan Baker:** Yes, thank you very much, Chair. My marathon training must be coming in handy to get back so quickly.

I hope the report is coming on well enough that it can be released in June, as the rumoured date was, but perhaps we will push on that in a moment.

I want to turn back to the Green Homes Grant implementation. While we all applaud its intention, it was certainly not the Government's finest moment. What do you think was the most significant factor in its take-up being so poor? In particular, when it was heralded as trying to drive a green recovery, what support is there for the contractors who had to lay off so many staff because it did not work as well as we all expected?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** Its intention when the Chancellor launched it last year was to help economic stimulus for the sector, to be a step in this huge decarbonisation challenge for our country. There were a lot of applications made and over 64,000 vouchers issued for private dwellings, worth over £272 million. Obviously, those applications will all be processed in due course.

One of the key issues is that consumer protection must be central to those domestic retrofit schemes, and the Green Homes Grant voucher scheme was developed with that in mind, I think on the back of some of the Green Deal challenges from a number of years ago. This scheme has performed well in terms of fraud protection, but the NAO is doing a comprehensive review at the moment with Treasury participation, which I think is due to be published in July. Hopefully that will answer it in more detail, because it is not within my brief precisely, for you to see where they feel it went well or where it failed to deliver.

Sums continue to be invested in the local authority part of the scheme, and those jobs continue to grow. I would be surprised if those workers were short of work, because the construction industry is going great guns at the moment, huge amounts of work for them, and that is great news. People could not go on holiday so they are doing things to their homes, and I very much hope that they are doing them in a green way because that is the opportunity they have. We want all homes to be EPC-rated C by 2030. There are opportunities for all the building trades and for householders to make those investments now.

**Duncan Baker:** That would certainly be helpful. I am sure you have read our report into the Green Homes Grant. I would say it was moderately damning, which is probably the nicest way to put it. I hope some of its recommendations can be taken forward.

We should also recognise that, in terms of retrofitting, we still have an enormous amount of housing, 14 million, on EPC-rating C that there is no support or strategy for. I think we have to have our eyes wide open that



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it was not a success, and we have to learn from it. Despite all of that, we all applaud what it was trying to do. However, there are some huge lessons to learn from it, and probably not for the first time when we have run a voucher scheme.

**Q195 Chair:** Thank you, Duncan. I would like to add my own question to the Minister on that. We had evidence in our report—which, as Duncan said, I am sure you will have taken to heart—that contractors had to lay off skilled workers on the introduction of the Green Homes Grant because of the timing gap between its announcement and its implementation, and then its shoddy implementation that meant it was almost impossible to access for months. Are you engaged with contractors so that the redesign, or whatever follows, does not make the same mistakes?

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan:** I know that Lord Callanan, who has direct oversight of this area, works very closely with the sector.

As the construction Minister I talk to them on a macro level, if that is the right way to describe it, on a very regular basis. I had a meeting with the Construction Leadership Council last week. It is very busy and is wanting to drive forward, particularly with the CO<sub>2</sub>nstructZero challenge it has set itself, to help all parts of the sector to work in a greener way and to help its customers to build greener homes and, indeed, to help retrofit, which is, as you say, a huge challenge. I am sure the NAO review, working with the Treasury, will help to identify those and give us the right footing on which to keep working on retrofit strategies as we move forward.

**Chair:** I am pleased to hear you are engaged with them. I think a big confidence-building exercise needs to be undertaken across Government.

**Q196 Barry Gardiner:** All Ministers will probably recall the 2013 report by ALGE, the Association of Local Government Ecologists. It said that one in three local authorities had no in-house ecological officer resource. The APPG for Nature, which I chair, recently wrote to over 300 council chief executives, asking them to outline their current capacity and skills base to see if the situation had improved, whether they considered they could now meet the need to deliver both the Government's aspirations on local nature recovery strategies and on the biodiversity net gain requirement. We are still collating the responses, but so far it seems pretty clear that capacity has only become worse since 2013 as the demands, both from planning and from Defra, have increased.

I was going to ask Jessica Hodgson if she could tell us how the labour market strategy is specifically addressing that gap, given the length of time it takes to train a local government ecologist. How many training places are there? How many more ecologists will there be in five years' time according to your strategy?

**Jessica Hodgson:** Without wanting to dodge the question, is that not more of a skills issue because it is about training up ecologists?

**Barry Gardiner:** I am happy for you to make the hospital pass to whomsoever you wish.



**Gillian Keegan:** That will be me then, thanks, Barry. In terms of answering your specific question of how many they need, that I do not have. However, I know there is an ecologist level 7 in place, which is a masters-level apprenticeship standard. Of course all the local authorities pay the levy, or most of them will pay the levy. Therefore, they have all the bits they need, is what I would say, to be able to build that skills pipeline. Obviously, there are other ways you can get the ecologists.

When you have a skills shortage it is very important, particularly in the public sector as well, that we take a lead in building the skills pipeline as opposed to just taking them from another place and leaving a hole. That is what has happened and what happens in the short term, but we have to be more strategic. That is what a lot of our skills reforms have focused on, being more strategic with employers, working together to solve the pipeline issues.

Q197 **Barry Gardiner:** Minister, I absolutely understand what you are saying about the pipeline. I think that is perfectly fair. Let me be clear, though, who it is you are saying should be responsible for encouraging people into the front end of that pipeline so that, in a few years' time, they come out with that skills level 7.

**Gillian Keegan:** There are two things. First of all, you can advertise for apprenticeships. As you know, a level 7 apprenticeship, which is effectively where you are earning and learning up to masters level, is very popular. In fact, the higher-level apprenticeships are more popular than many of the university places because, of course, somebody else pays for your study. The first thing is making sure you use the system. I would imagine that perhaps we have not yet fully populated that, there is more to do there. That is the first thing.

The second part is how we get young people, or adults coming back, to want to go into those careers. The other big investment we have made is in careers hubs. Careers hubs are where, in every school across the country—I think we have them in about 75% of schools at the moment— young people from a young age can start to interact with businesses, including the local authority. What we are saying to all the employers is, "Start to build your pipeline. Everybody is going to be fighting for these young people to be doing whatever it is you need to fill your skills gaps, so engage with the careers hubs and make sure young people are aware of these opportunities." That is the challenge. Everybody has misconceptions and preconceptions in their head about what careers are out there, and they are very out of date.

Q198 **Barry Gardiner:** Perhaps Minister Pow can tell us then when the Defra study—which was commissioned from the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport and ALGE—will be published. That would, at least, enable us to see with clarity what the gap is and what needs to be done. Minister Pow, can you enlighten us on that?



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**Rebecca Pow:** That review is under way with a view to deliver the biodiversity net gain requirements that every planning department is going to have to deliver, where every development is going to have to put back 10% more nature than was there when they started. We believe we need about 200 full-time equivalent ecologists. I cannot give you the exact date—we can get back to you with the date—when we think that review will report back.

We have done some assessment in Defra, and we believe that quite a lot of upskilling will be able to take place within local authorities to help fill this capacity and, indeed, sharing of ecologists between different authorities. I spoke to my local county council only this week about exactly what you are saying, Barry, that there will be a requirement for all these roles. It anticipates setting up a link with our local, in Somerset, Cannington agricultural college so it can get that pipeline going locally for what is required on the ground.

Local authorities have to deliver a lot of measures through the Environment Bill, and they will need a raft of all these skills. That is why I will be working very closely with Minister Keegan to bring these forward. That is why our institutes of agriculture and horticulture will be so important in order to do this.

I wanted to say we have set up—

Q199 **Barry Gardiner:** Sorry, I am trying to respect the Chair's request that we each stick to a 10-minute slot. That means, unfortunately, I have to cut you slightly short.

However, let me press you on this. Many of the chief executives who responded talked about a tension between the Government's desire to speed up the planning process and the objectives of biodiversity net gain and the environment plan. If these things are going to be worked through properly then that is going to, in itself, take time, particularly if there is not the in-house resource. I wonder how you see that tension resolving itself.

In particular—if I can turn, maybe, to Jon Boswell—the chief executives who responded noted there is a lack of any up-front budget allocated to local authorities to ensure that the local nature recovery strategy and biodiversity net gain in the planning system can be delivered. If these are indeed national priorities, where is that funding going to come from?

**Rebecca Pow:** I would love to bring Jon in, in a sec. We have said all burdens on local authorities will be covered. Of course, delivering local nature recovery strategies is something that all local authorities will be required to do, but they can do it with an adopted partner. That might be, for example, their local wildlife trust. Many of them already have these plans under way. It will be these other bodies that already have a great deal of expertise and knowledge that will be required for the local authorities.



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Jon, if you want to add to that, but that is something we have considered and talked about at length.

**Q200 Barry Gardiner:** That is not what the chief executives who have gotten back to us have said. Overwhelmingly, they have highlighted this as a problem of resource. Yes, there are other partners they can work with but that resource is a limited one, given the number of local authorities that will need to go out of house in order to secure those partnerships to advance the Government's aims.

**Jon Boswell:** I cannot comment on that specifically, but what I can say, as Minister Pow said, is that we have launched these local nature recovery strategy pilots. Those will be reporting soon; we will be receiving a formal lessons learned report hopefully this month. That will give us some idea of what the skills needs are for those.

I am afraid I cannot comment on the funding side for the biodiversity net gain, but certainly we will be learning lessons from the pilot local nature recovery strategies.

**Q201 Barry Gardiner:** Finally, if we were to look at the circular economy, following the waste and resources strategy, what planning has Defra done with other Departments to ensure the 25,000 to 30,000 new jobs that SUEZ says are required in the waste and resources sector are going to be delivered?

**Rebecca Pow:** I met with Veolia, which has just joined with SUEZ, last week and went to Southwark, to one of its tremendous recycling centres. I highly recommend it, Chair. It is well worth a visit to learn about the new moves that are being made in this exciting new circular economy. An awful lot of those waste jobs—we discussed this at length—are being driven by private investment. What they are very pleased about are the signals that Government are giving, through the Environment Bill and through our waste and resources strategy, which highlight the direction of travel in law. They are now investing in all these new plants that we need to move us to that circular economy, to do more prescriptive sorting of our waste and our rubbish and to turn it back into other products. That is very much driven by private investment, they are not Government jobs as such.

The Government—I am sure you probably know this already, Barry—are doing a great deal of work on the green finance strategy, which is looking at where it is needed. We have a natural environment readiness fund that is leveraging in private investment, giving advice for projects that are almost ready to set up but just need that extra oomph. We have a whole raft of financial work going on in green investment to help projects that will create the jobs I think you are getting at.

**Q202 Barry Gardiner:** If I can try to home in on that question, are you then confident that the 25,000 to 30,000 jobs that SUEZ specified—Veolia and SUEZ—are going to be in place by 2030? How many would you anticipate seeing in the next five years? Are there interim targets by which you will



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assess whether industry is on track? You are absolutely right, these are not jobs for Government to create, but the Government need to be tracking the progress because otherwise the delivery is not going to be there.

**Rebecca Pow:** That is a very good point. That is why, through the Environment Bill, we have set this rigorous system of targets. We will be setting our waste recycling targets. We already have a target, but we will be honing and tightening them up. We will have interim targets as well that have to be reported on within five years. The whole system will be constantly reviewed and monitored with reporting back, indeed reporting back to Parliament so, Barry, you will have your chance to comment on them. Then we will be able to see our targets that we set for reuse, repair and recycle on all of the different materials. We are starting, for example, with plastic packaging, the EPR scheme that will help drive that recycling and reuse, and the deposit return scheme and the consistent collection scheme, all of which we are consulting on now. We have had all the responses and we are looking at them now. All of those things will drive the targets and the measures we have in place, with the laws that are set up, and will drive the investment. It was clear to me when I spoke to the industry last week that this is the direction they are going in.

**Chair:** We have to bring that set to a conclusion. I know the Minister has to leave in a moment. However, I would like her to answer the first question from John McNally because it is directly related to her Department. Then, Rebecca, I know you have to leave.

I have been to a recycling centre. The only robotic recycling centre for electronic waste is in Bridgnorth, in my constituency.

Q203 **John McNally:** Rebecca, some very interesting contributions and ideas have come from Groundwork on creating green jobs in nature, providing new entrants to the labour market with practical, transferrable skills and qualifications. I wonder if Defra has considered introducing a national nature service, if you like, whereby those seeking employment could gain skills while delivering conservation work.

**Rebecca Pow:** It is very nice to see you, John. We used to be on the Committee together and did all that plastics work.

I know Groundwork runs a natural neighbourhoods project that is delivering green jobs through 70 different sites in green spaces. That is already doing good.

We have heard, obviously, about this idea of setting up a national organisation for green jobs and so on. However, we believe we already have many measures in place that are driving things in that direction anyway. For example, we set up the green recovery challenge fund, which is an £80 million fund, to help with the green recovery. The whole focus of it was to create jobs or protect jobs, all of which would work on projects on the green environmental agenda. The Groundwork project won money from that fund, which is how it has been able to set up this project. There is a whole raft of other projects that this has basically got



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going. We are in the second tranche of the challenge fund right now. We hope by the end of it we will have generated about 2,500 jobs, all of which are in projects right across the environment. There is one project working with the YMCA in national parks and there is a whole lot particularly based in deprived areas and areas of low employment. We have already done a lot of work in that sphere. We believe our tree strategy and our peat strategy are already generating a lot of jobs to do all the restoration work that is needed and all the tree-planting work that is going on. They are all linked to jobs.

It is something we believe might be repeating a lot of the measures we already have in place. Of course, we are working with our arm's-length bodies, too, the Environment Agency and Natural England. They are all looking at their own skills requirements, to make sure they have the right skills to deliver what they are required to do through the 25-year environment plan. Natural England is working on its own strategic workforce plan, its own apprenticeship schemes and its own career paths. I have already met a few people who have started on those schemes. I met somebody the other day down on the Somerset levels who started as a volunteer, then got on to their apprenticeship course and now she is set on a career path.

I want to touch on what Gillian Keegan said. It is also very much about capturing our young people, getting them excited about going into this world, which I believe we can do but we need to focus on it. In lockdown so many people got in touch with nature and realised that not only could they get out there and enjoy it but that they might be able to get a job related to it. There is a raft of jobs out there. There are great health and wellbeing spinoffs, and it also keeps you fit so it even links into our obesity strategy. There is big mileage there, John.

**Q204 John McNally:** Yes, I agree with that. It is probably even solving a lot of mental health issues by getting people into some sort of active, practical work and then, to use one of Philip's phrases, a segue into Gillian's Department, where you get people involved and you have some sort of active qualification, so there are practical steps that can be taken.

To follow up on that, you said people are volunteering. I know you have to run, Rebecca, but I do not think you can rely on people volunteering. There has to be some very active practice to encourage people in the first place, to say, "There is a qualification at the end of this." Perhaps that is the right way to do it.

**Rebecca Pow:** You are right. I did not mean to suggest that. What has happened is some people started as volunteers on nature reserves, for example, then realised there was a training scheme and have applied for it. Now there is a proper career path through Natural England, one of its schemes, and the EA. It is just one way of hooking people in.

However, through our green recovery challenge fund we have already launched 69 programmes across the country and nearly 800



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apprenticeships have started as a result of that in a whole range of areas, from park rangers to biodiversity officers and all those things.

Forgive me, but I have to run because I am doing a debate in Westminster Hall in about five minutes. Thank you so much.

**Chair:** Thank you very much indeed, Minister. I am afraid we have very little time, so thank you for your time.

Q205 **John McNally:** Minister Keegan, this is about diversity, inclusion and access to green jobs. The Committee has heard that the environment sector is among the worst in terms of diversity. In fact, the environment profession is the second least diverse of 202 occupations, which is a huge concern. As you will know, EngineeringUK commented that diversity and inclusion is a win-win situation and should, and must, be a Government priority in terms of green jobs.

One of the purposes of the Green Jobs Taskforce is to increase diversity in the low-carbon workforce. How will the Government monitor progress against that aim?

**Gillian Keegan:** As you say, it is very important. If you think about all the industries that are represented on the Green Jobs Taskforce—construction, oil and gas and so on—there are very, very low levels of diversity and inclusion. They know that is a challenge and they are trying to do more and more things.

What we are doing is we have a number of different measures. We have diversity champions. We have a network of people who try to encourage young people to look at apprenticeships and opportunities in the green jobs space. I think the most important thing is careers. Careers is where people will get a broader understanding of what is a job. Today I think many people have, as I say, a misconception or preconception about what jobs are. If you think of construction, you would not really know or imagine all the roles that are in construction, including modular building, retrofitting, planning and architecture, all of those things that are really cool jobs. That is why three of the T-levels are in that area, to try to get more diversity and inclusion through that channel.

With apprenticeships we have lots of ambassadors in all the different areas. We also have a BAME ambassador network to try to encourage a broad range of people to consider these options. Then obviously we have giving adults a second chance, and that is also where these sectors are very much focused.

However, it is a challenge. It is a huge and continuing challenge. We have targets on it. The DfE has targets for inclusion, for black and ethnic minorities, for women and also for those with special educational needs. It is continuing to make sure those opportunities are widely available.

Q206 **John McNally:** It is very interesting to note—I will not take up much more of your time—that the whole building and construction industry is going through a phase at the moment because of the lack of supplies,



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and the possibility of delays in construction could, in turn, possibly lead to fewer apprentices unless there is monetary support for the building and construction industry. I know that on a personal level and, in fact, Philip, Helen and I sat on a roundtable two weeks ago that was absolutely fascinating. I do not want to get into that, but that is something you should be mindful of. Maybe you are.

If I can move on to Minister Trevelyan—

**Chair:** Unfortunately Minister Trevelyan has had to drop off, so could you direct the question to Amy Jenkins at BEIS?

**John McNally:** Amy, this is for you then. It is on enabling infrastructure for access to green jobs. Venetia Knight from Groundwork told the EAC that digital connectivity was an issue for rural communities. Dr Joanie Willett from the University of Exeter stated to the EAC that people in rural areas without their own transport are totally reliant on public transport, which can have an impact not only on their ability to take jobs but to apply for jobs that might be on offer.

The basic question is: has the taskforce looked at what enabling infrastructure is needed to help people access green jobs, such as internet access, public transport as I mentioned, and care?

**Amy Jenkins:** That is a really good question. Indeed, one of the areas that has definitely emerged from the Green Jobs Taskforce work—it has done a sweep of all the evidence when it comes to green skills and the challenges we face on net zero—is that there is a whole raft of generalised skillsets we are going to need in addition to specialised skillsets when it comes to engineering for offshore wind or the automotive sector as it transitions to manufacturing electric vehicles. There are also things like project management and, as you say, a whole raft of digital skills will be needed across certain sectors. Absolutely, it has looked at that.

The infrastructure that enables people to reach those jobs has probably come in more at a peripheral level to the taskforce's conversations. I think some of that relates to some of the areas we are looking at in terms of just transition, such as where this will impact from a regional perspective. I think there was a question earlier from a Committee member about how we are start to look at where these jobs will be, both in terms of the jobs created and also maybe risks of jobs being lost in certain areas. We are really conscious that often people tend to look for work in a locality. That is part of the journey the taskforce has started, to understand the areas of evidence we have around that.

**Chair:** I am very conscious that we are about to run out of time. I would like to ask the remaining Minister, Minister Keegan, if you are able to stay on a bit longer or do you have a hard stop?

**Gillian Keegan:** No, I am able to stay a little longer.

**Chair:** I am very grateful. I hope the remaining witnesses are also able to stay for a few minutes, if we can quickly go through our remaining



questions.

Q207 **Dan Carden:** Amy, can I carry on with the issue of a just transition for those people working in high-carbon industries? Can you talk me through a little bit of the work that is being done to identify the areas across the UK that we expect to be negatively impacted in that transition to net zero and what planning is taking place to ensure green jobs are available to those, to replace jobs lost?

**Amy Jenkins:** The first thing is that the taskforce has been looking at some of the generalised evidence we have about that transition in terms of skillsets. There is some interesting analysis coming out of LSE around the fact we could see 10% or so of people currently in the workforce needing to reskill to some extent.

Clearly, the next step, to the conversation around new jobs created, is working out where those jobs created are likely to be and where they might offset some of the jobs that may no longer exist on account of our net zero transition and where there might be areas where we need to focus on other opportunities. That can be done at both a regional level and a sectoral level. Clearly, Government have started that by looking at some of the sectors that will be impacted. The North Sea transition deal, which Minister Trevelyan mentioned, was published in March. That very much looks at how we support and work with the sector to transition their skillset. Already we are seeing lots of people from the oil and gas sector starting to invest in offshore wind.

We have also, quite purposefully as part of the 10-point plan, made announcements about support for transitioning sectors. The automotive sector is a really good example of this. Clearly, in the 10-point plan we announced what we call a phase-out date for petrol and diesel cars to move to electric vehicles, but we did that alongside the automotive transformation fund announcement, so £500 million. That is starting to look at how we can support industry to move into the UK in some of the strategic parts of the automotive supply chain when it comes to electric vehicles.

In essence, the planning at a sectoral level has started. We are also using the taskforce to understand what the state of play is when it comes to regional planning. We are also using some of our local energy activity. We have five local energy hubs, so we are starting to understand how we deliver net zero at a local level, to understand what will be the deployment at a local level and what that means in terms of jobs.

Q208 **Dan Carden:** How are you working with local authorities to co-ordinate a just transition, and how are you working with cities, because lots of cities are coming up with their own plans, and metro Mayors? I know in the north-west we have Net Zero North West, which is a low-carbon industrial cluster. Also, how are you working with the TUC, with trade unions, to co-ordinate this?



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**Amy Jenkins:** TUC and Prospect are members of the Green Jobs Taskforce, so they will be feeding into the report and the recommendations that are out shortly.

In terms of that co-ordination piece, it is definitely something that has emerged from the taskforce's conversations. The way we interact on the energy side is really through our local energy and net zero programmes, through these local energy hubs that are typically hosted by the local authority and tend to work with LEPs and others in the local region to understand their net zero needs, as it were. We will look to build upon that as we get the recommendations from the Green Jobs Taskforce.

**Gillian Keegan:** We are working with the mayoral combined authorities. We piloted some of the early boot camps. We have worked with Andy Burnham in particular, looking at retrofitting council houses in Manchester, which is one of the extensions we have done recently to wave one. Hopefully, we can grow that further, assuming they are successful.

Q209 **Dan Carden:** Minister Keegan, can I come back to you on a similar question to do with your role with apprenticeships and skills? How are you working with cities and metro Mayors to make sure they benefit, for instance the north-west metro Mayors?

**Gillian Keegan:** One of the things we have with apprenticeships, in particular, is trying to make sure we spend all the levy money and we utilise it as much as possible. We have all the standards we think we need in place now; obviously we can add others. One of the things we are also working with is the transfer of the levy. A few businesses have been working with the metro Mayors to make sure that works better within local areas. There have been some pilots there as well with the West Midlands Combined Authority. We will be looking at what we can take from those. I meet regularly with the Mayors to make sure we are very much focused on the skills agenda. The AEB, the adult education budget, is devolved to those areas, so we obviously have to work closely together because we have different pieces of it.

**Dan Carden:** Thank you. Back to you, Chair.

**Chair:** Thank you very much, Dan, for keeping it tight. I am going to look for some similarly exemplary questioning from Helen Hayes.

Q210 **Helen Hayes:** Two quick questions from me, both of them for Minister Keegan.

I am interested to know about the arrangements you are planning to put in place for the ongoing monitoring of skills needs in relation to the net zero transition. How will you be sure that the funding and the resource the Government are putting into reskilling the population is delivering the skills that the economy needs? How will you make sure you are not overshooting? How will you know whether this is working? What does that plan look like?



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**Gillian Keegan:** It is the holy grail, isn't it, trying to make sure the skills match the skills needs? It is a difficult thing. However, it is really underpinning one of the big reforms in the skills White Paper and the Bill that is coming to Parliament. That is two things. One is the employers being really involved in the qualifications, the design of the apprenticeship standards and all the technical education so what people study is what they want.

The second is in terms of matching up local needs, the provision and the awareness of the availability of the options and where the key skills are. That is part of something called the skills accelerator programme, which we are going to be piloting. Local employers work with local business representative organisations and with local colleges and training providers, to have a local skills improvement plan that is there and can evolve, and it is to make sure that the provision, the careers and everything that backs up from that is based on that local plan. It is a very ambitious target that we have, and there are quite big cultural changes we will have to go through to deliver it. That is why the foundations we have put in place are vital to enabling us to deliver this.

Q211 **Helen Hayes:** Can I push you a little harder on how you will know it has been successful? I understand the basis for devising the plans, the role for organisations in different localities and the cross-sector partnership working. I understand all that. How will you know it is working? How will you know if you need to do something different, and at what points will you know that?

**Gillian Keegan:** What we will be looking at measuring is how many people are taking these courses that we have put on, how many adults are going back and reskilling, how many are engaging in boot camps and how many people are getting a job as a result of the boot camps. They are the outcomes.

One of the big strands of the reforms is funding and accountability. We are trying to simplify and make funding easier but make accountability much greater as well, so making sure we measure. That is particularly now we have the longitudinal data, which effectively says where people end up, what jobs they end up in. We are working through what it looks like, and we will be consulting on it as well. That is part of making sure we can clearly measure. You are right, you have to measure these things to make sure you are monitoring whether what you have put in place works and, if it does not, review it and do something different.

Q212 **Helen Hayes:** My final question relates to the restriction of the equivalent or lower qualifications rule for full-time courses. In the context of the scale of the transition you are seeking to achieve, which we need to achieve, have you considered whether that restriction might be lifted or whether there might be another way of assessing the entry level suitability of candidates who might have missed out on those qualifications earlier on in their careers but might be very well equipped through the skills and experience they have developed through their lives



to be able to take on additional training and reskill at a later stage?

**Gillian Keegan:** The lifetime skills guarantee that we introduced in April this year—so it is very new—is effectively for those adults, about 11 million, who do not already have a level 3. There are about 400 courses and there are many that support the green agenda. I have talked about a couple of them, whether it is in the environment, electric vehicles, electricians and all those kinds of things. That is full-time courses, some of them shorter and some of them longer. That is level 3, if you do not already have an equivalent level 3.

There are many other ways to upskill and reskill. About half of the apprentices in the country are adults. The boot camps are the bit that I think is the piece in the middle. They are 12 to 16 weeks and they are intensive. Basically, the only criteria is that you apply to go on to one; whatever you had before does not matter. You do not have any eligibility requirements at all. That is the other route that I think, personally, is going to be a very powerful route, working with employers or a group of employers in a local area for 12 to 16 weeks with really valuable qualifications that enable you to get a job or to get a much better job if it is upskilling.

Q213 **Helen Hayes:** Monitoring the transition into employment, how many people secure jobs, as that process starts will be the key, will it not?

**Gillian Keegan:** That is vital, and that is what we have to do as part of it.

**Helen Hayes:** Good. Thank you very much.

Q214 **Mr Robert Goodwill:** Amy, I think many people are concerned that as we close down our high-carbon smokestack industries we merely export not only the jobs but the carbon dioxide overseas as we buy steel from China or what have you. As you advise Ministers, is there any way you can address this to ensure we are not merely moving the problem elsewhere and having a warm feeling as a consequence?

**Amy Jenkins:** You are absolutely right. As we are thinking through how we move along in our transition to net zero, it is making sure we are not experiencing carbon leakage. We do not want to simply move emissions elsewhere. This was covered to some extent in the first stage of the Treasury's net zero review. We are expecting the second part of the review. That is going to look at both the costs of delivering net zero, whether we are doing it in a way to maximise the economic opportunities, and also thinking about the impacts on competitiveness of different parts of industry. That should be coming out shortly. We also started to articulate the range of approaches we might take in the industrial decarbonisation strategy.

First and foremost, the Government are very much looking at climate diplomacy—we obviously have the G7 and we will be working towards COP26 at the end of this year—to make sure others are acting in step with us and are upping their ambition. At the same time we are very



much looking through that net zero review from Treasury at what other measures there might be to help mitigate any risk of carbon leakage.

**Q215 Mr Robert Goodwill:** We are going to need a lot of steel to make the wind turbines, the nuclear power station pressure vessels and the steel reinforcement bars. The decision to turn down the metallurgical coalmine in West Cumbria was seen as somewhat controversial, given that we are still going to need the steel. How do you feel you can square that decision, which obviously Ministers were recommended to make, with the situation in West Cumbria? Surely we are still going to need the steel, we are still going to need the metallurgical coal. Why do we not provide the jobs in West Cumbria and reduce the carbon footprint of transporting that coal to steelworks in the UK?

**Amy Jenkins:** I saw somewhere that the Government will be procuring around 5 million tonnes of steel in the next decade because we are embarking on a significant infrastructure programme. However, there is lots of work under way to look at how we decarbonise the steel sector. This was a topic and a theme of the industrial decarbonisation strategy that Minister Trevelyan referenced earlier. We have reconstituted the Steel Council; BEIS Secretary of State Kwasi Kwarteng re-established it and co-chaired it on 5 March. It is starting to look at precisely that question as to how we decarbonise the steel sector.

**Q216 Mr Robert Goodwill:** Can we maybe look at adjustment mechanisms on carbon at the border, import standards, carbon tariffs or other ways of making sure we are not exporting the carbon overseas and, in fact, being subject to carbon leakage from the UK economy?

**Amy Jenkins:** Again, this is to that point on carbon leakage. This is going to be a topic that, in its net zero review, the Treasury will look at and bring forward some further proposals on. We are conscious there has been an EU proposal that was leaked recently; it is not a formal proposal. Obviously, officials, less in my area but elsewhere in BEIS, are monitoring that debate and discussion in the EU quite closely.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:** Thank you for those concise answers.

**Chair:** Thanks very much, Robert. We have a final set of questions from Ian Levy.

**Q217 Ian Levy:** Thank you, Minister Keegan, for staying on because I realise we have overrun a little bit. I will keep it quite brief.

My questions are on education and skills for green jobs. Do the Government plan to adapt the national curriculum to include sustainability and climate change in primary and secondary-level courses?

**Gillian Keegan:** We already have environment education in schools and it is part of primary science, key stages 1 and 2. It is also part of secondary science, key stages 3 and 4, where pupils are taught about the production of carbon dioxide by human activity, climate change and the impact of increased levels of carbon and so on. There are specific



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modules in geography as well. There is also, as I mentioned before, the Oak National Academy, which has a load of lessons and resources to support teachers. It is done by teachers for teachers and it also has a number of additional resources to support this. Therefore, I think we have already done that to some degree.

The piece that probably needs beefing up is the careers piece. We are very much at the beginning of that journey so people can link all of that to jobs, choices and subjects.

**Q218 Ian Levy:** I was going to touch on teachers. Are they equipped enough to deliver these courses, or is there anything more you think we could be doing as a Government?

**Gillian Keegan:** There is teacher education. There are resources that go into that. If I look at my own area of FE colleges, for example, there is a level 5 teaching apprenticeship, or you can do it as a full-time course as well, which has to have sustainability as a part of it.

In terms of educating and training the teachers, it is something that is continually evolving. There is investment in teacher training. To be honest, Ian, if you go around any school it is full of it. I do not know about your schools where you are, but every school I go into there are eco warriors, eco champions, an eco council, and it is all over the school. Therefore, I think the resources and knowledge the teachers have is very good. There will be teachers who do not feel well equipped, and we need to make sure the investment responds to that as well.

**Ian Levy:** You just need to plug those gaps, if there are any.

**Gillian Keegan:** Yes.

**Q219 Ian Levy:** Moving on from that into apprenticeships, have you considered adapting apprenticeships to include a module on sustainability in all courses?

**Gillian Keegan:** First of all, the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education has a green advisory panel and a green apprenticeship advisory council, which is a whole load of businesses advising the panel that has been set up. What they are doing is looking at the maps of every single apprenticeship and looking at how it maps on to sustainability, how sustainability is part of it and how that needs to evolve. This panel and the council—which, as I say, has a number of employers—are right now going through and considering the existing apprenticeship standards and what that will look like in the future.

**Q220 Ian Levy:** That is great. Lovely, thank you. Finally, how is the Department for Education adapting its 2017 careers strategy to ensure it is aligned with the Government's net zero emission goals?

**Gillian Keegan:** The key thing—I say this a lot now—is we have the building blocks in place to have an employer-led system. What we need for an employer-led system, and we are only at the beginning of this



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journey, is leadership from employers. What I am doing now is working with lots and lots of different employer groups, including public and private sector, and saying, "Look, start this journey early. Get involved with the careers hubs. Offer these opportunities for young people to come and see the kind of jobs you have, to understand what it is to work in a council as an ecologist and what all the routes are to get there, because the more you put into it the more you will get out of it." That is a bit of a change in the way we do things, but I think it is going to be a really strong way to do things. It is much better than a teacher or somebody who does not understand all those jobs trying to interpret what is going on in the whole economy and talking to young people about the opportunities.

Particularly with green jobs, we know every young person is going to be super-attracted to these purposeful jobs that help save our planet. If we can take advantage of that, as Rebecca said, and make sure they have clear routes from where they are sat on their chair in school into some of those roles, that is what I consider to be our job to do, to make it much easier for people to see those routes.

**Ian Levy:** Absolutely. Thank you for your answers, Minister. I think it is very important that we reach out to the children, all the way through the education system.

**Chair:** Thank you very much, Ian. I would like to conclude this session by thanking our witnesses, in particular Minister Gillian Keegan for staying on beyond our allotted time, and also to thank—in their absence now—Anne-Marie Trevelyan from BEIS, Rebecca Pow from Defra and Mims Davies from DWP, and the officials who joined us today, Amy Jenkins from BEIS, Sinead O'Sullivan from the Department for Education, Jon Boswell from Defra and Jessica Hodgson from DWP. Thank you very much indeed to members of the Committee for staying on and to our Clerks who helped prepare us for this session.