



The role of local authorities in tackling climate change

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Importance of local action

“The huge surge in mutual aid groups has demonstrated the resilience, kindness and innovation that lies at the heart of our local communities. The climate crisis deserves a community-led response too. At the heart of this should be the voices of those historically disadvantaged and disproportionately affected by environmental and social problems due to factors like age, race, class”.

Friends of the Earth Green Recovery Plan <https://takeclimateaction.uk/solutions/demand-uk-green-and-fair-recovery-plan>

More than two thirds of local authorities have now declared a climate emergency and have set or are setting Net Zero targets. This provides an opportunity for an increased role in delivering the Net Zero transition, provided it is backed up with the relevant resources and support from central Government..

Committee on Climate Change Progress report to Parliament June 2020

“If you look at what the assembly members wanted, they really emphasised a focus on tailored solutions and choice. So they were favouring more locally based solutions and more players in the energy market, rather than a sort of top-down, national-level...solution.”

Prof Rebecca, Willis, University of Lancaster, climate assembly

Developing a shared vision – we're all in this together

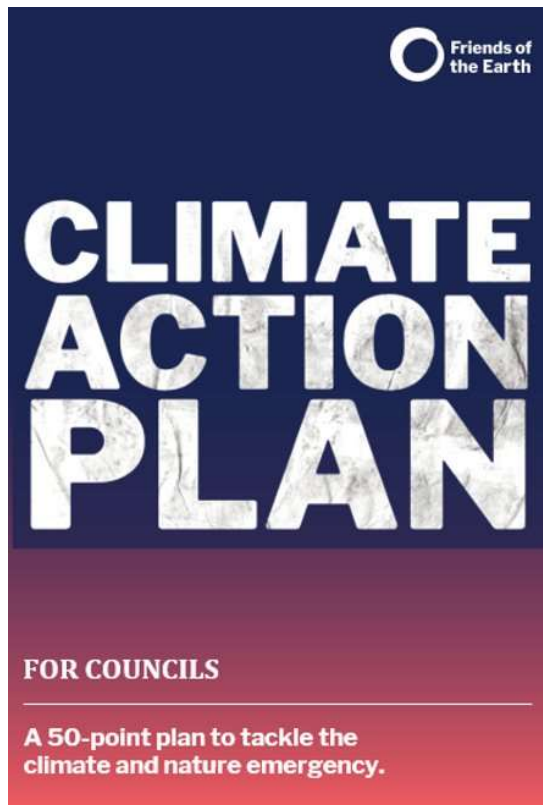
69% of Brits would view a failure to tackle pollution and climate change in a post-coronavirus recovery plan as 'a sign that the government has the wrong priorities.'

Ipsos MORI poll for Conservative Environment Network

12,705 neighbourhoods have been identified which are particularly vulnerable to extreme weather and have a large proportion of people least able to respond.

University of Manchester

Local Climate Action Plans



Friends of the Earth 50-point plan what councils can do:

- Decision-making
 - Raising money
 - Protecting the vulnerable
 - Buildings
 - Transport
 - Power
 - Waste
 - Land-use
 - Influencing others
 - Campaigning
-
- <https://takeclimateaction.uk/sites/files/climate/documents/2020-06/Climate%20Action%20Plan%20for%20councils%20June%202020.pdf>

Co-benefits of action

Meeting carbon reduction targets will require some significant changes to the way that most people live. Not all of these changes will be popular. Demonstrating the co-benefits of climate action can be helpful in winning hearts and minds and facilitating the transition to a low carbon economy.

<https://www.ashden.org/programmes/co-benefits>

- 700,000 direct jobs could be created in England's low-carbon and renewable energy economy by 2030, rising to more than 1.18 million by 2050 [LGA]
- Children living in inadequately heated households are more than twice as likely to suffer from conditions such as asthma and bronchitis than those living in warm homes.
- Greener environments are also associated with better mental health and wellbeing outcomes including reduced levels of depression, anxiety, and fatigue, and enhanced quality of life for both children and adults. [Public Health England]

Local Climate Action Plans

Friends of the Earth recommends:

- Use additional decision-making approaches for complex or contentious choices, such as representative citizen assemblies or citizens' juries, participatory mapping and budgeting, etc
- Review and improve how we involve citizens in our existing decision-making processes.
- Provide particular support to SMEs to access funds and expertise, so they can recover from the COVID-19 pandemic contributing to carbon pollution reduction, nature restoration and the growth of the green economy

“We need to make the journey to 2041 without leaving anyone behind”

“The investments we make in order to meet the climate challenge will be into the people who need them to thrive: tackling fuel poverty, giving people space to change career direction, improving skills, providing affordable connectivity, cleaning the air, and ensuring the quality and availability of public spaces and assets”.

West Midlands Combined Authority #WM2041

“We are all partners with rights and responsibilities to deliver this strategy for Bristol, working collaboratively within the city as well as across boundaries. Good communication will be central to effective collaboration”.

Bristol One City Climate Strategy

Collaboration, community engagement

"People in Bristol really do care about their parks and green spaces and they make their voices known,"

"They were really angry and upset about the reduction in the parks' budget. But we are an administration that listens to what people have to say and will amend proposals or withdraw them."

we made a decision that we couldn't cut the budget anymore, but we needed to try and develop cost-neutral parks' projects."

Bristol City Councillor Asher Craig,

Bristol now has an ambitious plan to double Bristol's tree cover by 2046.

More case studies:

<https://takeclimateaction.uk/resources/councils-tackling-climate-chaos>

Local action – prioritisation – postcode tool

- **Summary assessment – example**
- The Bradford area needs to do much more if climate catastrophe is to be averted, particularly on renewable energy, home insulation and waste recycling. Action on climate change will also improve health, help nature, and boost the economy. Compared to other areas this local authority area has made less progress on addressing climate change.
- In Bradford **38%** of emissions come from housing, **27%** from transport, and **35%** from industrial and commercial activity.²
- There are different estimates of how fast the UK should reduce greenhouse gas emissions if it's to do its fair share in combating climate breakdown, ranging from 7% to over 25% per year.³ Researchers at the Tyndall Centre have published a detailed carbon report for every local authority and say that Bradford should reduce its emissions by at least **13%** per year.⁴

<https://takeclimateaction.uk/climate-action/how-climate-friendly-your-area>



Campaigning together for change

Examples of what National government needs to do

- Fund low carbon infrastructure including active travel routes
- Funding to retrofit houses with social housing a priority
- Planning policy to require all new homes and other buildings to be zero carbon by 2025.
- Funding for local green spaces and tree planting
- Ensure skills training supports the low carbon economy

<https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/insight/how-can-government-help-english-councils-act-climate-breakdown>

Support national action

Please show your support for our call for councils to have the powers and resources they need to accelerate climate action and a green recovery at the local level:

<https://www.adeptnet.org.uk/>

A blueprint for accelerating climate action and a green recovery at the local level



ADEPT
Association of Directors of
Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport



Grantham Institute
Climate Change and the Environment
An Institute of Imperial College London

GREENPEACE

London Environment Directors' Network
LEDNET



With support from the Local Government Association,
London Councils and Green Alliance



Campaigning together for change

Opportunities (and threats) in 2020

- Planning White Paper
- Comprehensive Spending Review
- Devolution White Paper
- Sixth Carbon Budget



Additional Resource

- <https://policy.friendsoftheearth.uk/insight/englands-green-space-gap>

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