

STRENGTHENING FAIR AND INCLUSIVE CLIMATE ACTION IN YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER



THE ISSUE

There is a very real risk that existing inequalities in health, housing and access to opportunities will be worsened across Yorkshire and the Humber if we either fail to act, or don't get climate action right.

The detrimental impacts of climate change are not felt equally across communities – income, jobs, caring responsibilities, mobility, and where we live all play a role, especially because those factors all affect our health. These problems need to be solved if we are to honour the wishes of the 77% of people in the UK¹ who are concerned about climate change and want to know that actions are fair, affordable and meaningful.

Across our region there are a great many organisations already working to address these challenges. What we need now are key changes to how public bodies work with communities and with each other to shape policy and funding decisions.

We believe this will accelerate progress towards a more equitable, resilient and thriving region.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Active communities:** Communities can own and run local assets, taking shared responsibility for local action, whilst being confident that their knowledge about their place is taken seriously by decision-makers.
- **Inclusive decision-making:** Institutions, businesses and government bodies make inclusive decisions and have partnerships with communities, actively moving away from 'decide and defend' approaches and investing in collaboration.
- **Focused education and skills:** Strategies for education, skills and investment are focused on and shaped with those most impacted by existing inequalities and by climate-related risks.
- **Inspiring action through creativity:** The talent and energy of people involved in arts, culture and storytelling is instrumental in inspiring hope and action.

CONTEXT

Meeting climate targets is technically achievable and good for the long-term economy. However, there are three big obstacles:

1. The funding gap: Despite the long-term benefits, government and industry are struggling to fund the up-front investment needed.
2. The agency gap: Trust in political leadership is low. People feel that policies either don't relate to them, or are done to them leaving them with little agency.
3. The opportunity gap: Many places that suffered from previous industrial changes have never recovered, have deep inequalities, and have not yet seen real evidence that climate action can be done in a way that makes people's lives better.

Yorkshire and the Humber is ready

Yorkshire and the Humber is uniquely placed to lead on climate action that puts people first: we have an impressive array of local, grassroots initiatives already making a difference; we have full regional coverage of elected mayors who are championing big issues like jobs in clean energy and reliable, affordable public transport; and we have the Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission, a regionwide, cross-sector partnership bringing together leaders from all sectors to pursue an ambitious shared agenda for action.

Our ask

Many local leaders, MPs and peers are already directly involved in grassroots projects across our region. We are calling for additional support and momentum for the full range of initiatives – to create the conditions for people and places to thrive in the changing climate.

EXAMPLES OF REAL ACTION

Active communities

- Sheffield Renewables: financed by the community, currently generating 160,000kWh per year of renewable energy.
- Incredible Edible: founded in West Yorkshire and spread worldwide, using local food growing to connect and inspire communities.
- Circular Malton and Norton: transforming Malton and Norton into the first circular economy town.
- Green Estate: a social enterprise founded in one of the most deprived neighbourhoods in Britain, transforming derelict land into green and resilient places for people and nature

Inclusive decision-making

- Calderdale's Citizens' Jury on Retrofit: recommendations include simplifying planning for housing retrofit and helping residents find affordable finance.
- The 'Ripple Effect' handbook: guidance produced by the Regional Youth Climate Assembly on how to include young people in decisions.

Focused education and skills

- Leeds Development Education Centre: providing teaching resources to address the big ideas that shape our future.
- CATCH Net Zero Training Centre: addressing the engineering skills shortages that constrain the growth of our low-carbon industries.
- Schools' Climate Education South Yorkshire: supporting students, teachers and schools with curricular and extra-curricular initiatives.

Inspiring action through creativity

- Ark Bradford: documenting what climate change means to the people of Bradford.
- University of Huddersfield's Cultures of Climate Festival: harnessing arts and humanities disciplines to respond to the climate challenges we face.

References:

1 <https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/visualizations-data/ycom-uk/>

For links to the examples above, go to:

<https://yorksandhumberclimate.org.uk/fair-and-inclusive-climate-action/>

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