

## How to get your council to sign the Nottingham declaration

### **“Campaign in a box” by Reading Friends of the Earth**

The Nottingham Declaration is an A4 paper that commits the council to take action on Climate Change. It can be viewed here:

[www.lga.gov.uk/Documents/Briefing/Our\\_Work/Environment/Nottdclaration.pdf](http://www.lga.gov.uk/Documents/Briefing/Our_Work/Environment/Nottdclaration.pdf)

A new version will be coming out in December 2005.

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

To get Reading Council to sign the Nottingham Declaration we ran a campaign. The campaign had the support of all of the green groups in Reading. We first talked to people in all of the groups. We then circulated an email containing a template letter for them to send to their councillor, MP and lead councillor on the environment. We then started doing some letter writing to the papers and started a petition for which we got 400 signatures. We also started doing some banner drops and demos in the town centre. Big and colourful ones with animal suits, banners, and noise. We then presented the petition to council, asked when they were going to sign the declaration at a council meeting. After about 3 months the council had moved from a position of “declarations don't mean anything, it's action that count” to committing to sign the new declaration when it comes out in December 2005. For more information please contact Rob White at [rob@readinggreenparty.org.uk](mailto:rob@readinggreenparty.org.uk).

### **2. TEMPLATE LETTER TO COUNCILLORS**

Dear Councillor

The evidence is overwhelming that climate change caused by human activity is happening. Scientists predict that climate change will have far reaching effects on the UK's economy, society and environment. As my representative will you put a motion to the council asking for it to formalise it's commitment to the environment by signing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change.

The Declaration allows councils to state openly their commitment to:

Working with central government in delivering the UK climate change program.  
Preparing a strategy to address the causes and effects of climate change.  
Encouraging the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions in their local communities.  
Providing opportunities for renewable energy generation within the local area .

For the full text see,

[www.beanstalk.org/newgreen/Nottingham-Dec-Text.pdf](http://www.beanstalk.org/newgreen/Nottingham-Dec-Text.pdf)

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Your sincerely

XXXNAME  
XXXADDRESS

### 3. TEMPLATE PETITION

Petition for Council to take local action on Climate Change

We the undersigned want Reading Council to join with 86 other councils around the country and formalise its commitment to the environment by signing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change.

This will commit the Council to tackling Climate Change, by amongst other things preparing a plan with our local communities, to address the causes and effects of Climate Change.

Name	Address	Signature

### 4. TEMPLATE LETTER 1

Title: In Response to Reading Council's Propaganda on Climate Change.

( This was in reply to an open letter written to the local press challenging the council's position and record on climate change. )

In response to the propaganda put out by Reading Council ("Working to halt global warming", Evening Post, August 17<sup>th</sup> 2005), the council has made some progress towards cutting it's own C02 emissions in the form of council site and employee reductions, but this is surely a drop in the ocean when compared to the borough's C02 emissions - which based on the Taking Stock report are already extremely high and increasing, according to a recent DEFRA report!

David Sutton, the leader of the council, mentions the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change saying that "action is more important than how many declarations we have signed". If David called for action without a strategy in any other policy area he would be laughed at. For me the most important line in the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change is the line that commits the council to "prepare a plan with our local communities by – a date to be set - to address the causes and effects of Climate Change". This will give the council a strategy with targets and dates. The council will then be able to measure it's progress towards meeting these targets and it will be accountable, as opposed to the current situation where the council is able to implement a few token gestures and incorrectly claim that "the council's record is good".

After the recent bombings in London the government started pushing it's "anti-terrorism" legislation through quicker than you can say "infringement of my civil

liberties". As has been recognised by Greens for a long time and more recently the government and Reading Council, Climate Change is a very serious threat if not the most serious long term threat we face. So why is the council dragging it's feet about tackling this deadly serious issue?

Will any councillor do their job and represent the people of Reading calling for real action on Climate Change, the people from all over the world currently suffering the effects of Climate Change and the future generations whose lives Climate Change will blight and put a motion to the council meeting in October calling for it to sign the Nottingham declaration.

Rob White  
Reading Green Party  
1d Biko Court, Reading, RG1 3JE.

## **5. PRESS RELEASE - PRESENTATION OF PETITION**

Title: PRESS RELEASE and PHOTO OP: Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change Petition

A number of campaigning groups and individuals in Reading have collected over 400 signatures calling for Reading Council to join with 86 other councils around the country and sign the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change (1).

The petition will be presented to Reading's lead environment councillor Steve Waite inside the civic centre at 18:30 on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2005. Campaigners will be dressed in swimming, and diving gear to highlight the link between climate change, rising sea levels and floods.

Green Party member Rob White said,

“Climate change is one of the biggest problems we face as a planet and it needs to be tackled at all levels. There are many ways in which Reading Council could take action on climate change, through the planning system, through the education system and through its approach to waste to name just three areas. But this needs to be done as part of a coherent strategy, with targets, to be met by dates. The Nottingham Declaration facilitates such an approach.”

Local campaigner Mike Cox said,

“The council have taken some steps already to tackle climate change, but if we are to stop the worst effects, we must all act, and act now! The problem is that serious. Signing up to the Declaration will be a step along that road, - a road we all need to travel quickly. If not, the prospects for our planet, and for future generations, are bleak!”

Notes to Editor

1. Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change can be viewed at,

[www.beanstalk.org/newgreen/Nottingham-Dec-Text.pdf](http://www.beanstalk.org/newgreen/Nottingham-Dec-Text.pdf)

2. For more information please contact Rob White on 07985923938.

## **6. QUESTION TO ASK AT COUNCIL**

Climate Change – Nottingham Declaration Question for Council

As has been acknowledged by all political party's, climate change is an extremely serious and urgent issue.

I welcome that the council is taking some steps towards tackling the problem.

Will the council formalise its commitment to the environment and to tackling climate change, by joining with 86 other councils around the country, by following the Local Government Associations advice, and by listening to the hundreds of local people that have signed the petition and commit to signing the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change this calendar year.

This request has the support of Reading Green Party, Reading Lib Dems and many local people and campaigning groups.

## **7. PRESS RELEASE – COUNCIL SIGNS**

Title: PRESS RELEASE - Reading Council buckles to pressure on the Nottingham Declaration

At the full council meeting on Tuesday evening Reading Council buckled under the pressure from the cross group campaign for it to sign the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change and take action.

The campaign consisted of lobbying, petitions, questions, meetings, letters in the papers and press stunts, Reading Council.

Speaking at the Council meeting Rob White from Reading Green Party said,

“I welcome that the council has reacted to this cross group campaign, and I look forward to the day when sustainability and justice are at the heart of the councils decision making?”

“For me the most important line in the Nottingham Declaration on Climate Change is the line that commits the council to “prepare a plan with our local communities by – a date to be set - to address the causes and effects of Climate Change”. This will give the council a strategy with targets and dates. The council will then be able to measure it's progress towards meeting these targets and it will be accountable, as opposed to the current situation where the council is able to implement a few token gestures and incorrectly claim that “the council's record is good”.”

“Through the planning, education, and waste management systems to name just three the council has numerous opportunities to tackle Climate Change”

Note for the Editor

1. For more information please contact Rob White on 07985 923938.