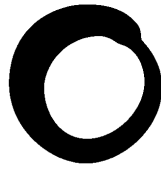


**Campaign
Introduction**

September 2010



**Friends of
the Earth**

**GET
SERIOUS
ABOUT
CO₂**

Campaigning for local action to tackle climate change

The transition to a low carbon future will involve big decisions at a national level. But also thousands of important smaller local decisions – about things like how we power and insulate our homes and offices and how we travel to work and school.

Emissions from these kinds of activities amount to a massive 80 per cent of the UK's total climate pollution. If we are to meet our national commitments in the Climate Change Act, we need to tackle climate change locally.

Councils are ideally placed to develop strategies to cut carbon in the community – by bringing together local people, businesses, and institutions like hospitals, schools and colleges, the police and fire service.

Friends of the Earth local groups have been working with their councils, asking them to *get serious about climate change* by doing more to cut CO₂ emissions.

So far ten local authorities – Brighton, Bristol, Haringey, Harrogate, Harrow, Islington, Manchester, Leeds and York – have adopted a target of cutting emissions in the local area by at least 40 per cent by 2020. Birmingham, Durham, Plymouth, Suffolk have adopted a similar target. Together these councils cover over 5 million people – over 11 per cent of the England population and they include Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat led councils.

This shows that ambitious action at a local level – in line with the scientific evidence of what is needed to avoid dangerous global warming – is both politically and practically possible.

Local Carbon Reduction

Our research has shown that 40 per cent cuts in CO₂ are possible in all kinds of local authorities – cities, towns and rural areas.

Typically this would be done through:

- **Insulating homes** to cut energy use.
- **Encouraging businesses** to cut energy use.
- **Installing renewable energy** like PV panels, solar hot water systems, on homes, schools, businesses etc. and wind turbines where appropriate.
- **Reducing traffic** by encouraging people to use alternatives – walking, cycling and public transport, car sharing – and by reducing the need to travel.
- **Encouraging low-carbon vehicles** – including electric cars and local delivery vehicles.
- Building **local energy networks** with Combined Heat and Power and low-carbon energy sources.

These are all things that are already happening in leading local authorities. For case studies outlining existing best practice visit www.getseriousaboutCO2.com

Local carbon budgets

Friends of the Earth is working with councils to call for a nationwide system of local carbon budgets.

The system would drive ambitious emissions cuts by helping local authorities to lead effective carbon reduction strategies across their local areas.

To find out more
or to support the campaign, visit
www.getseriousaboutCO2.com

Economic and social benefits

Ambitious local carbon reduction will create tens of thousands of local jobs at all skill levels. Insulating all homes and installing renewables will largely eliminate the scourge of fuel poverty and the ill-health it creates. Generating electricity and heat locally means that money will be re-circulated in the local economy.

Reducing traffic will help clean up our air, and more walking and cycling will have a big impact on obesity and improve health.

Paying for action to tackle climate change

Many of the measures required to cut carbon locally will pay for themselves over time. For example, using Feed-in Tariffs/Clean Energy Cashback, renewable energy installations can pay for themselves and start to generate income for householders, local communities and councils.

Measures to reduce traffic are a much cheaper way to tackle congestion than building roads. The government's Pay-As-You-Save scheme for home energy efficiency should enable people to cut their home heating emissions without any upfront cost. The Green Investment Bank should provide low-interest capital for energy efficiency, renewable and decentralised energy systems.

Friends of the Earth is campaigning to make sure that councils have enough money and support to lead carbon reduction work locally, and also that the right financial measures are in place to enable councils, home-owners and businesses to carry out these carbon-cutting programmes with their communities.

Cost effective local action

There is strong evidence that locally-coordinated work to cut carbon and achieve other benefits – health, jobs, community regeneration etc – is 20-30 per cent more cost effective than relying on top-down national schemes.

So local leadership and action means that the carbon cuts we already have to make to meet UK commitments in the Climate Change Act will be done in a more efficient and cost-effective way.

The successful communities of the future will be those that enthusiastically embrace this agenda now.

We want your support

1. Please ask your council to sign up to a 40 per cent local emissions target

Please ask your council to join others in adopting this target by passing a motion at their council meeting.

Please visit http://www.foe.co.uk/community/campaigns/climate/local_campaign_25170.html for:

- A model council motion
- A briefing on why the council should adopt the target
- A list of the latest councils that have signed up already

2. Please ask your council to back a nationwide system of local carbon budgets

Please visit http://www.foe.co.uk/community/campaigns/climate/council_lcb_25169.html for:

- A model letter to your council leader
- A briefing on why local carbon budgets should be introduced

3. Please write to your MP

Please visit http://www.foe.co.uk/community/campaigns/climate/local_carbon_budgets_24589.html for a model letter and petition to your MP about local action on climate change

Information

Our website is packed with information about what councils can do to lead action on climate change locally. local carbon budgets, our campaign and **Visit** www.getseriousaboutco2.com

For further information, please contact Glyn Thomas, glyn.thomas@foe.co.uk 0207 566 1672