

Councils and community action on climate change

Trailblazing councils have shown that coordinated action in our communities – for greener travel, clean energy and energy efficiency – boosts emissions cuts and ensures that tackling climate change is good for local people and the economy as well as the planet.

Government, the independent Committee on Climate Change and the Local Government Group all agree that council action is ‘vital’ and ‘pivotal’ to help meet UK Climate Change Act commitments.

But nationwide a step-change in the scale and pace of this local action is needed. Government has the opportunity to achieve this in the Energy Bill – and must act at Report Stage.

40 councils from all political parties, businesses and green groups are asking for the Energy Bill to be strengthened to ensure every council does its bit. They are asking for:

- **Clarity about what councils need to do locally:** through advice from the Committee on Climate Change.
- **All councils to have a local climate change strategy:** setting out a plan for energy saving and clean electricity – involving local residents, businesses, and institutions like schools and hospitals. And Government to support councils to roll out the green action needed.

This would deliver the step-change in action needed. It would mean decisions about the low carbon future of our communities would be made locally. And there would be increased transparency and accountability.

“I’m happy to see the Government introduce targets on the environment provided they are realistic.

It is helpful if they are mandatory - it means no wriggle room and everyone in the council pulling together.”

Cllr. David Harvey
Environment lead, Oxfordshire County council
David Cameron’s constituency

“I have written to Lord Turner to explore his initial views on the role that the Committee on Climate Change might play in providing advice [to help councils tackle climate change locally].

“In light of his reply, I will be happy to say more on Report, if not before.”

Greg Barker
Climate Change Minister
21 June 2011

‘The previous government’s system of national indicators has been abolished.

‘ Instead, a Memorandum of Understanding signed between DECC and the Local Government Group earlier this year sets out how central and local government will work together to help and encourage English local councils to reduce their emissions.’

‘[It is] unclear whether there are now enough incentives for emissions reductions across all local authorities.’

Committee on Climate Change
3rd Progress Report to
Parliament, 30 June 2011

Broad support for law change

An unusual alliance of councils, businesses, trade unions, community and green groups are calling for this law change.



Federation of Small Businesses



The Stop Climate Chaos Coalition represents over 100 organisations from environment and development charities to unions, faith, community and women's groups.

Energy Bill Amendments

Amendments have been tabled for debate at Energy Bill Report Stage that would deliver the action needed. Please support:

New Clause 3: calling for advice for councils from the independent Committee on Climate Change

New Clause 4: calling for every council to have a climate change strategy drawing on the advice

New Clause 6: for local carbon budgets

Further information

Friends of the Earth has briefings on how councils can make a difference and how the proposed amendments would be effective.

Contact Liz Hutchins: liz.hutchins@foe.co.uk

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40 councils, led by all parties are calling for a law change:

Cllr Barbara Janke, Leader, Bristol City Council (Liberal Democrat) ■ Cllr Louise Goldsmith, Leader, West Sussex County Council (Conservative) ■ Sir Richard Leese, Leader, Manchester City Council (Labour) ■ Cllr David Faulkner, Leader, Newcastle City Council (Liberal Democrat) ■ Cllr Claire Kober, Leader, Haringey Council (Labour) ■ Cllr Paul Tilsley MBE, Deputy Leader, Birmingham City Council (Conservative and Liberal Democrat coalition) ■ Cllr Mike Heenan, Leader, Stafford Borough Council (Conservative) ■ Dorothy Thornhill, Elected Mayor, Watford Borough Council (Liberal Democrat) ■ Cllr Mehboob Khan, Leader, Kirklees Council (Labour) ■ Cllr Jeff Green, Leader, Metropolitan Borough of Wirral (Conservative) ■ Cllr Bob Young, Cabinet Member, Strategic Environment and Leisure, Durham County Council (Labour) ■ Cllr Paul Scriven, Leader, Sheffield City Council (Liberal Democrat) ■ Cllr Eddie Collicot, Lead member for the Environment, Lewes District Council (Liberal Democrat) ■ Cllr Ann John OBE, Leader, Brent Borough Council (Labour) ■ Cllr Veejay Patel, Leader, Leicester City Council (Labour) ■ Cllr Derek Osbourne, Leader, Royal Borough of Kingston (Liberal Democrat) ■ Cllr Mark Crane, Leader, Selby District Council (Conservative) ■ Cllr Christopher Knowles-Fitton, Leader, Craven District Council (Conservative) ■ Cllr Stephen Houghton, Leader, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council (Labour) ■ Cllr Stuart Drummond, Mayor, Hartlepool Borough Council (Independent) ■ Cllr Iain Malcolm, Leader, South Tyneside Council (Labour) ■ Cllr Berni Turner, Local Government Group Environment and Housing Board (Liberal Democrat) ■ Cllr Bill Stephenson, Leader, Harrow Borough Council (Labour) ■ Cllr Andrew Eade, Leader, Telford & Wrekin Council (Conservative) ■ Cllr Brian Phillips, Cabinet Member for People & Sustainable Communities, Hambleton District Council (Conservative) ■ Cllr Jane Parlour, Member Spokesperson on Climate Change, Richmondshire District Council (Conservative) ■ Cllr Paul Barrington-King, Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council (Conservative) ■ Cllr David Tutt, Leader, Eastbourne Borough Council (Liberal Democrat) ■ Cllr Ann Shaw, Leader, Three Rivers District Council (Liberal Democrat) ■ Cllr Angela Mason, Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member for Sustainability, Camden Borough Council (Labour)