

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL

#OUR PART

The Evidence

- **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)** (October 2018) - halve CO₂ emissions by 2030 and achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 to avoid global temperature rises of more than 1.5C and catastrophic consequences
- **Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)** (May 2019) – Nature is declining globally at rates unprecedented in human history – and rate of species extinctions is accelerating, with grave impacts for humanity
- **World Scientists' Warning of a Climate Emergency** (Nov 2019) –journal of BioScience:
 - ▶ We declare clearly and unequivocally that planet Earth is facing a climate emergency
 - ▶ To secure a sustainable future, we must change how we live. [This] entails major transformations in the ways our global society functions and interacts with natural ecosystems.
 - ▶ There is no time to lose, the scientists say: The climate crisis has arrived and is accelerating faster than most scientists expected. It is more severe than anticipated, threatening natural ecosystems and the fate of humanity.

Responses to Evidence

- ▶ On 1st May 2019 UK Parliament unanimously approved motion to declare a climate emergency.
- ▶ On 12th June 2019 the UK PM Theresa May announced UK will cut emissions to net zero by 2050 making UK first major nation to propose this target.
- ▶ Scotland was the first country in the world to declare a state of climate emergency.
- ▶ In Scotland, 20 councils have declared a Climate Emergency, including all of our partner councils in the City of Edinburgh and South-East Region, in Borderlands (including Carlisle City, Cumbria and Northumberland County Councils) and in the South of Scotland.

#our part 1

- Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 sets a legally-binding “net-zero” target of all greenhouse gases by 2045 with interim targets for reductions of at least 56% by 2020, 75% by 2030, 90% by 2040.
- Public bodies have legal duties re Climate Change: they must contribute to the delivery of emissions reduction targets, adaptation programmes, and act sustainably.
- Achieving net zero by 2045 is an immense challenge that will require structural changes at all levels of society
- Every sector needs to play its part in responding to the climate emergency – businesses, individuals, and organisations.

#our part 2

- As well as legal duties, Councils have a vital role in responding to the climate emergency:
 - Scale and large resource bases in their own right;
 - Influence over key areas such as planning, transport and procurement;
 - Leadership - democratically elected a duty to take a lead – setting an example, educating and investing.
- In the Scottish Borders, this role falls to Scottish Borders Council.
- Progress has been made, but a step change is needed: ‘An emergency requires an emergency response.’ (Climate Emergency Response Group – Aug 2019)

Delivered so far

We have made progress in a number of areas:

- ▶ LED Street lighting roll out
- ▶ Energy Efficiency Programme
- ▶ Fleet transition to low emission vehicles
- ▶ Council mileage reduction and efficient pool car fleet

What do we need to do?

- Provide what the local authority does best – leadership; be explicit about the nature of the challenge that we face
- Develop a clear target and a coherent plan for Climate Action (under the stewardship of the Sustainable Development Committee)
- Embed this work into the culture and DNA of our organisation
- Make demonstrable progress in the areas which we can control, such as the Council's own estate
- Champion and influence climate action across the Scottish Borders region
- Be clear what success looks like
- Be transparent about progress. People understand that this is complex. If they don't, explain it.

Emerging Climate Change Action Plan

- ▶ Council Estate – energy efficiency, buildings rationalisation
- ▶ Transport – EV charging, fleet, passenger transport, railway extension
- ▶ Infrastructure – major projects, schools, Tweedbank
- ▶ Waste – service provision, information and engagement
- ▶ Biodiversity – LBAP, Land Use & Forestry Creation Pilots
- ▶ Planning – LDP strategic direction, case management
- ▶ Staff engagement and support – Green Office?
- ▶ Identify resources for delivery/ link to 2024 agenda
- ▶ Actions for the Council/ Action with and for partners