

# Climate change: the importance of joined up engagement

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**Chad Newton**, Senior Communications Officer at Leeds City Council

**Kathryn Lock**, Policy and Communications Manager at Place-based Climate Action Network (PCAN)

Public Service  
Communications  
Academy 2021

Partnerships, performance  
and people

23-24 November 2021

# Overview

- **Background** – Polly Cook
- **Engaging a local authority** – Polly Cook
- **Reaching new audiences** – Chad Newton
- **Building local and regional partnerships** – Kathryn Lock
- **Conclusion** – Polly Cook

# Background

**Polly Cook**

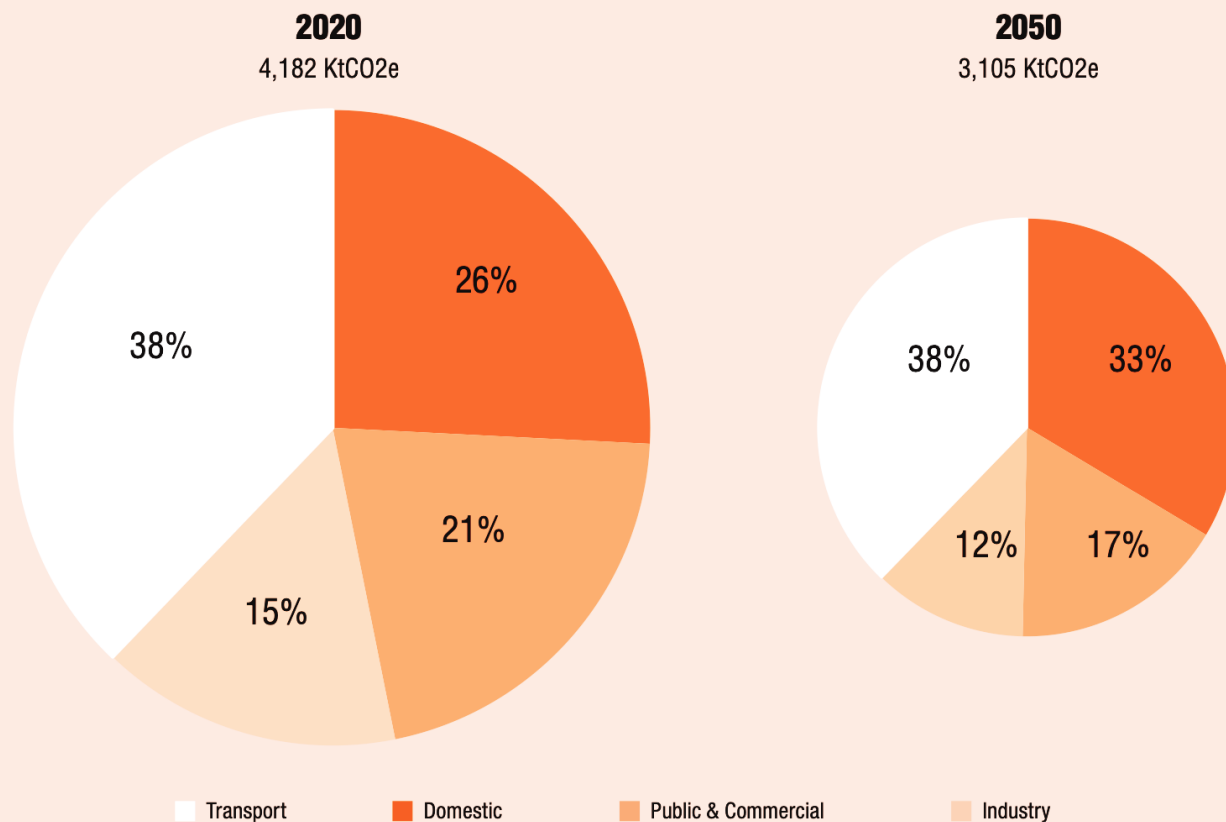
2019:

 News ▶ Leeds News ▶ Leeds City Council

# Climate emergency declared in Leeds as council makes big commitment

Leeds City Council has set out a commitment to make the city carbon neutral by 2030

# Citywide emissions



**Figure 2:** Leeds' Present and Projected Emissions by Sector

# Role of engagement

According to the Government's Net Zero Strategy (2021)...

- 30% of emissions reductions rely on some LA involvement
- 82% of emissions are within the scope of influence of LAs

Communications & engagement is essential to influence third-parties and ensure whole-council approach towards sustainability.





# Engaging a local authority

**Polly Cook**

# Governance

Changes to our governance and decision making processes helped raise the profile of the climate emergency cross-council and encouraged engagement. These included:

- A designated **executive member portfolio** for climate.
- Requiring decision makers to **outline climate impact** of reports.
- A new independent, **cross-party advisory committee** on climate.
- Publishing simple guidance on **sustainable procurement**.





# Collaborating for impact



# Collaborating for impact



# Next steps

We have only just begun! In terms of engagement, some next steps include:

1. Continuing to **'normalise' new technologies** key to net zero and tackle perceived barriers.
2. Improving **internal communications/training** to secure 'buy in' from more services and staff.
3. Developing and consulting on a strategy to address the council's **'scope 3' emissions**, e.g. carbon footprint of food served, the 'grey fleet' – securing buy-in with comms is key!

# Reaching new audiences

**Chad Newton**  
Senior Communications Officer  
Leeds City Council

# What is the role of public service climate comms?

GCS: Communication is one of the 4 main levers of government [to effect change] alongside legislation, regulation and taxation.

My approach is for all our climate communications to support 3 aims:

- **Explain policy** related to climate action in Leeds.
- **Enable programmes/projects** to be successfully delivered.
- **Engage public on the changes** needed by individuals/society.



Leeds' new  
air quality strategy  
has been approved  
by councillors.

Swipe to find out more. →



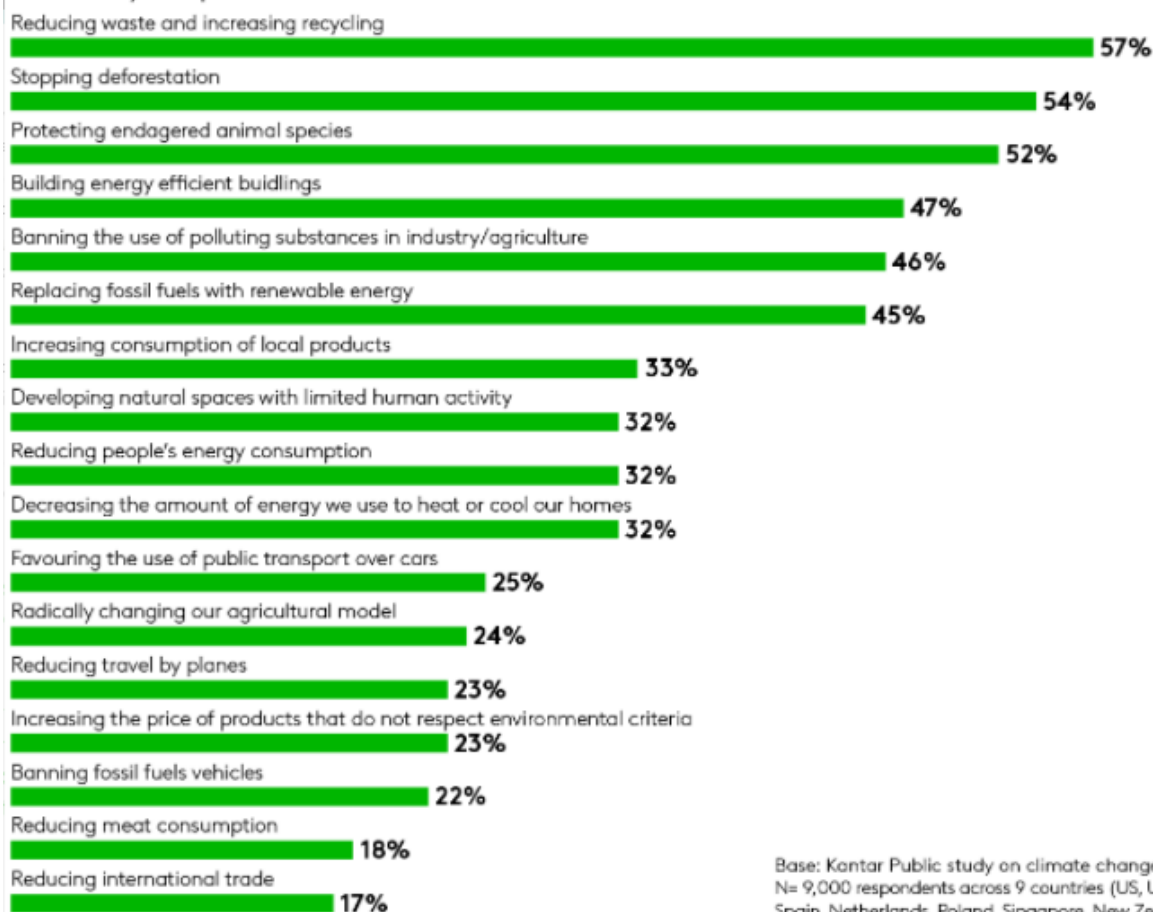
**Explain**

**Enable**

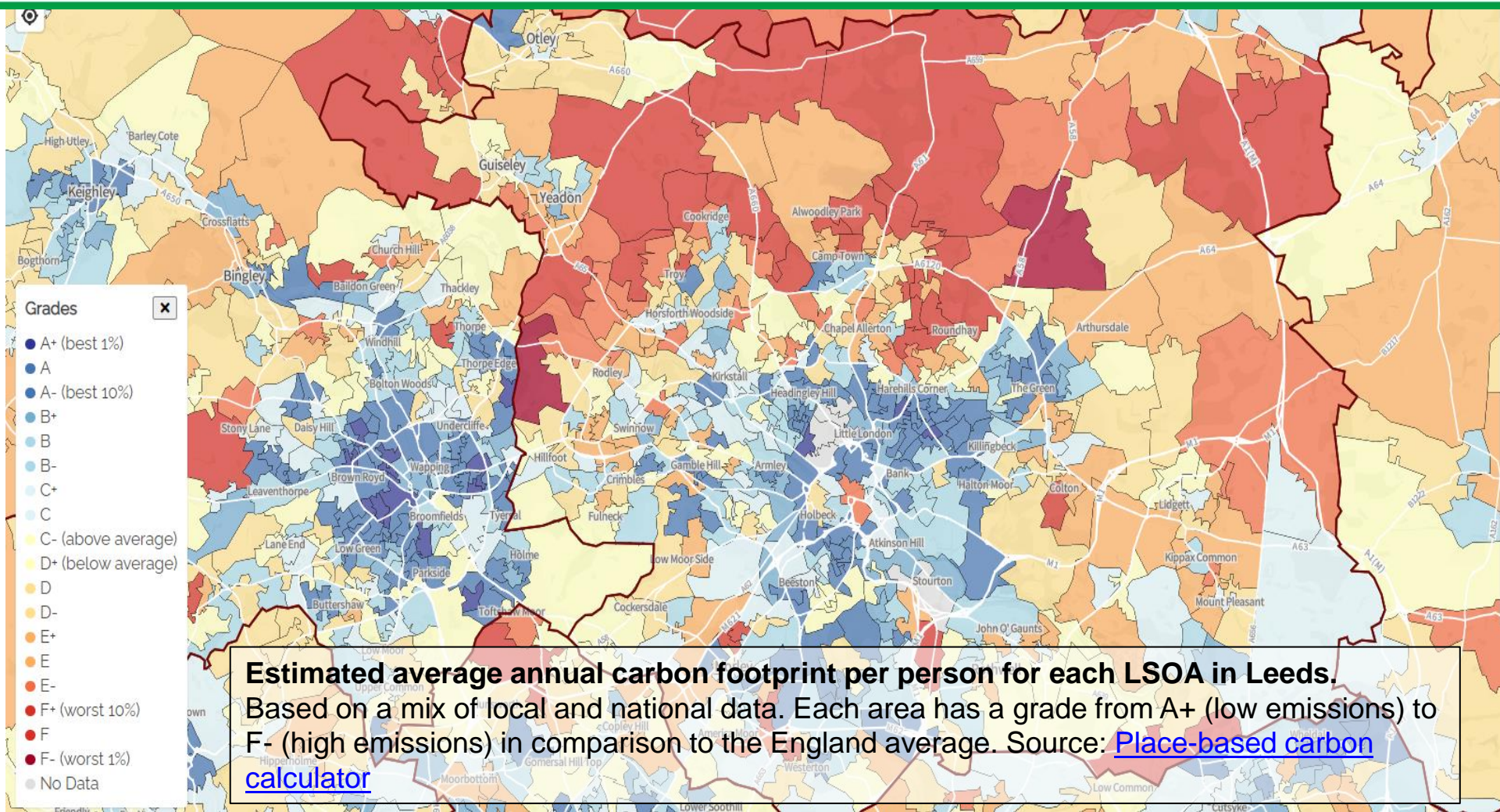
**Engage**



## % "Very Important"



Base: Kantar Public study on climate change - September 2021.  
N= 9,000 respondents across 9 countries (US, UK, France, Germany, Spain, Netherlands, Poland, Singapore, New Zealand)





# 1. Go to communities



- Respondents to the short offline survey were **younger, more ethnically diverse and more female than the Leeds average**. Online survey respondents were the opposite.
- Responses across the online and offline survey were broadly similar—both audiences saw climate action as a priority.

Figure 1: Gender % of BLCC Responses compared to population

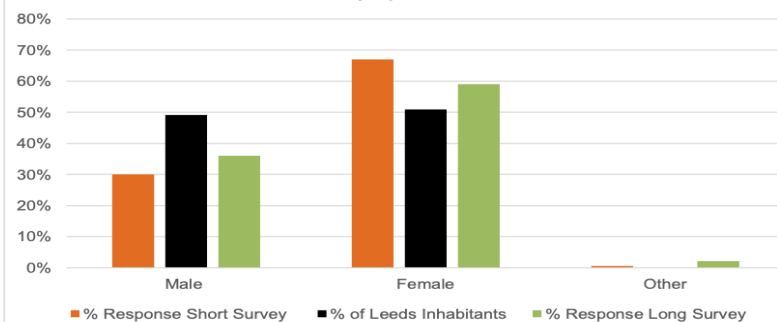
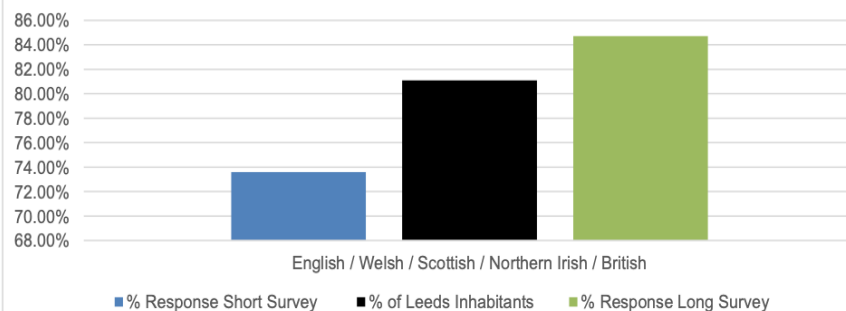


Figure 4: Ethnicity % of BLCC respondents compared to Leeds population (English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British)



## 2. Use existing networks where possible

We try to maximise securing 'earned' comms as much as we can because they typically have big pre-established audiences, e.g:

- We identify and build relations with key council services with an engagement role and their own 'channels' such as our financial inclusion team, localities team, economic development
- We use hyperlocal Facebook groups, Nextdoor, and hyperlocal publications to promote very local news stories.
- We secure press coverage in traditional and digital media.

### LEEDS CAVITY WALL INSULATION



Leeds City Council is now offering free cavity wall insulation to help homeowners living in a cold home to save money on their energy bills. Insulating a property reduces the amount of energy needed to heat it, reducing fuel consumption and helping to protect the environment.

Across Leeds, almost half of the city's carbon footprint comes from heating and powering buildings.

Cavity wall insulation takes just hours to install but could save Otley households up to £135 per year, based on estimated figures provided by the Energy Saving Trust.

To qualify, you will need to have a total household income of no more than £30,000 or receive income-related benefits. A quick survey will also need to be carried out on your property.

The work is carried out by trained installers and is covered by a 25-year guarantee.

For more information, please contact Better Homes Yorkshire on 0800 5971500 or visit [www.betterhomesyorkshire.co.uk/leeds](http://www.betterhomesyorkshire.co.uk/leeds)

### Ultrafast Fibre Broadband For Otley

Virgin Media ultrafast fibre broadband rollout is starting soon in Otley. This will cover the majority of the town. Please expect some disruption on roads and footpaths during the works. New broadband packages will be available from late Summer.

For more information please contact the helpline on 0333 000 5925 or email [expansionwork@virginmedia.co.uk](mailto:expansionwork@virginmedia.co.uk)

### ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Drivers of electric vehicles in Otley can now enjoy fast charging at Beech Hill car park, thanks to six new charging bays. Leeds City Council has secured funding from the national Office of Zero Emission Vehicles to install 15 dual fast-charge points across the city, including the Beech Hill site.

Three dual fast-charge points will be installed at the car park, enabling up to six plug-in vehicles to charge simultaneously. More than a third of Leeds' carbon footprint comes from transport emissions; however, electric vehicles emit no pollution whatsoever from their exhausts.

By switching to electric vehicles, drivers can help Leeds to tackle climate change and create cleaner, healthier air.



474

climate-related news  
stories linked to LCC  
logged in 2020

**fleetworld**



**THE TIMES**

**The  
Guardian**

**airquality  
news.com**

**THE YORKSHIRE POST**

**edie**  
empowering sustainable business.

**YORKSHIRE  
Evening  
Post**



## BBC Radio 5 live In Short

Home Clips Podcasts and Series Articles Blog Schedules Upcoming Commentaries

### Leeds: City On A Mission

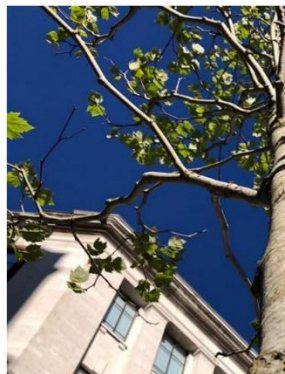
BBC Radio 5 Live has launched a year-long project to ask one of the most pressing questions of our time: how does a major city reduce its carbon emissions?

The station is following the city of Leeds which has committed to reduce the city's direct emissions to net-zero by 2030.

Net zero means reducing emissions of greenhouse gases as much as possible and then balancing out the rest by absorbing an equivalent amount from the atmosphere - with things like planting trees.

'Leeds: City On A Mission' aims to show what a net zero economy could really mean for people's homes, work, travel, diet and leisure time.

#### The story so far



According to the Leeds Climate Commission, Leeds - like many cities - like many tonnes of carbon a year with transport and housing the biggest contributors. Carbon emissions are one of the main greenhouse gases contributing to climate change.

### Making the air cleaner

One way the government hopes to tackle climate change is by bringing in measures to reduce air pollution.

This means it has become illegal to sell traditional house coal for use in home fires.

People will still be able to use open fires but they will need to burn cleaner alternatives such as dry wood or manufactured solid fuels which produce less smoke.



#### Former miner: Why I'm giving up my coal fire

Stan Renton has been heating his home with coal for his entire life.

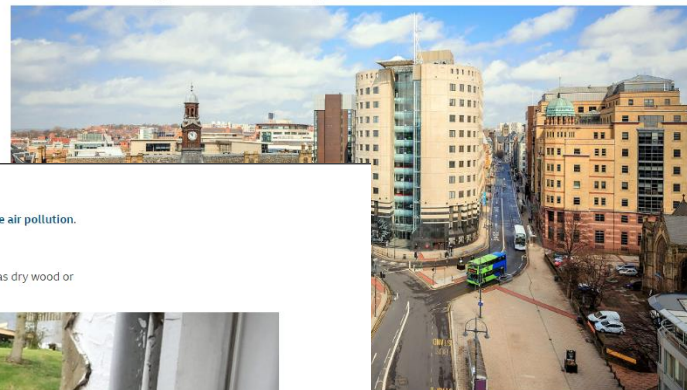
The changes means people like retired coal miner Stan Renton and his wife Audrey are calling a day on using a traditional fire to heat their homes.

Stan told BBC 5 Live although he will miss their coal fire, he hopes making the change will help stop polluting the atmosphere and be better for his grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

"Changing people's thoughts and behaviours to lead more sustainable lives, it all depends on being close to nature.

"If you line a street with trees, it encourages people to walk and cycle more to appreciate the trees they planted," he said.

### Local leaders in England demand more power



political agenda.

78 percent by 2035 compared to 1990

more money and power is put into

ter" action to protect the environment.

e ambition of a green industrial

bon emissions.

### 3. Highlight the co-benefits, of action

- Lots of insight shows that not everyone is motivated to change their behaviour by climate change, but that doesn't mean they can't be motivated to take carbon-negative actions.
- We consistently make a point of highlighting the many co-benefits of our climate-related policies, developments and schemes to maximise appeal, sometimes de-emphasising environment.
- Analysis of BLCC found that even those who didn't believe in anthropogenic global warming supported energy efficiency and green space measures!

## 4. Empower customers to be ambassadors



Lithos Consulting Ltd

276 followers

6d •

+ Follow ...

Many thanks to [Leeds City Council](#) for letting us be part of their EVTrials.

We've been using one of their Nissan electric vans for the last 3 months and saved 84kg CO2! Registration and acceptance onto the scheme was very easy and the van was free except for insurance. Even if you're not used to driving automatic cars, the van was very easy and smooth to drive and with a range of 140 miles, ideal for short trips around Wetherby and Leeds. We're so impressed, we've decided to future proof our offices and fit 4 vehicle charge points.

We'd definitely recommend the trial, so please contact EVTrials and register <https://lnkd.in/eW9zcDR3>.

#EVTrials #electricvehicles #electriccharging



2021 Nissan e-NV200 Review | Allen Hart Reviews A New Electric Van

6,576 views • 10 May 2021

189 8 SHARE SAVE ...

# Building local and regional partnerships

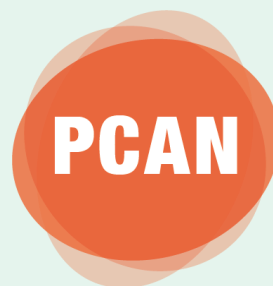
**Kathryn Lock**

Policy and Communications Manager at Place-based Climate  
Action Network

# Case studies from Yorkshire

## 1. Leeds Climate Commission:

Leeds Climate Change Citizens' Jury;  
Climate Action Readiness Assessment  
(CARA); Leeds Acts Together Campaign



**LEEDS**  
**CLIMATE**  
**COMMISSION**

## 2. Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission:

Yorkshire and Humber Climate Action  
Plan



**YORKSHIRE**  
**& HUMBER**  
**CLIMATE**  
**COMMISSION**



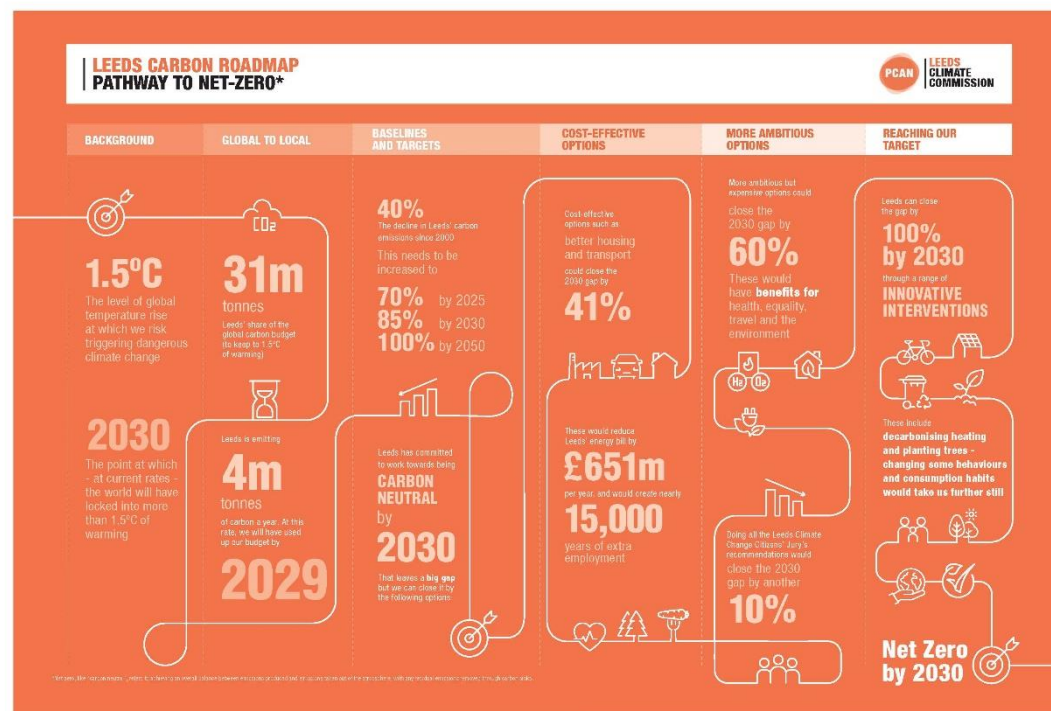
# What is a climate commission?



- Place-based partnership
- Helps to translate climate policy into action 'on the ground'.
- Independent advisory body
- Works closely with the local authority



# Leeds Climate Commission



2017: Commission launched

2018: Working groups & strategic direction

2019: First Carbon Roadmap, Citizens' Jury

2020: Climate Action Readiness Assessment

2021: New directions, revised Net Zero Roadmap

# Leeds Citizens' Jury



# Recommendations & results

Jury made 12 recommendations covered transport, housing, finance, green spaces, aviation, a Leeds Green New Deal, political co-operation, recycling, plastics – and communications.

They called for **a city-wide communications drive** with “clear, positive and practical messages which emphasise the necessity for individuals, community and organisational action at all levels.”

# Leeds Acts Together campaign





# Future comms plans for Leeds

- **2021-22:** Building on 'Climate Friendly Leeds' civic engagement workshop
- **2022:** Develop a city-wide climate communications strategy aligned with Leeds' revised Net Zero Roadmap
- **2022-23:** Co-create a positive narrative for Leeds, ensuring all voices are heard and can contribute to a new story about what Leeds could be like (2030 and beyond).
- Throughout: align with Yorkshire and Humber Climate Action Plan

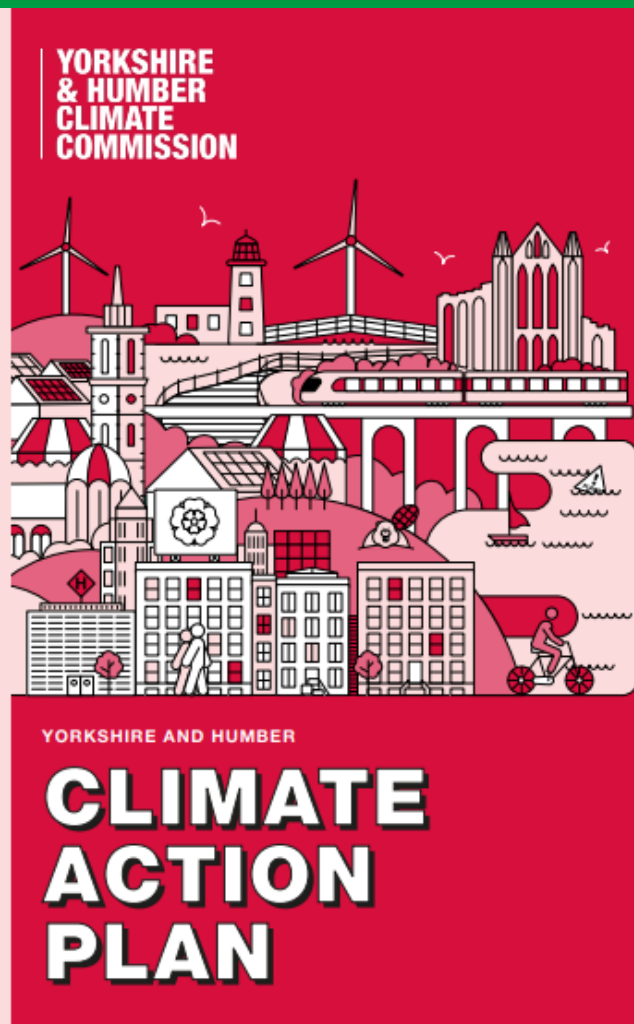
# Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission





# Climate Action Plan

- 50 key actions for the region
- Intensive 3-week consultation period: 16 online stakeholder and public events, plus online survey. 500+ respondents.
- Attractive, accessible design
- Exec summary translated into 5 other languages
- Animation being produced
- Launched at the inaugural Yorkshire Post Climate Change Summit on 10 November



# Next steps for Y&HCC

- Mapping and prioritising actions
- Making sure we reach out to, listen to, and engage with communities across the region, especially those that we might not normally talk to
- Telling the story of co-benefits and opportunities – as well as communicating climate risks and the need to adapt
- Building and connecting networks; sharing and learning from best practice on public engagement from other organisations.
- Tasks include establishing a regional Climate Forum, a Climate Leaders' Pledge, Climate Observatory (among many others).

# Case studies from Yorkshire

## 1. Leeds Climate Commission:

Leeds Climate Change Citizens' Jury; Climate Action Readiness Assessment (CARA); Leeds Acts Together Campaign

## 2. Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission:

Yorkshire and Humber Climate Action Plan

# Conclusions

**Polly Cook**

Chief Officer for Sustainable Energy & Air Quality

# Public Service Communications Academy 2021

**Partnerships, performance  
and people**

**23-24 November 2021**