

Manifesto Asks from the Blueprint Coalition



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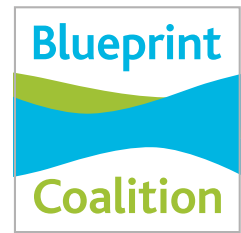


Working together to deliver **place-based climate action**



With support from Green Alliance and London Councils

The Blueprint Coalition



The **Blueprint Coalition** is an influential coalition of local government organisations, environmental groups and research institutions. We came together in 2019 to set out a blueprint for how the government can accelerate climate action at the local level. An **updated summary document** was published in July 2022.

Manifesto Asks from the Blueprint Coalition

The Blueprint Coalition is now calling on political parties to include the following in manifestos:

- Recognition of the need for a place-based approach with adequate funding and support.
- Commitment to a genuine partnership with local authority leaders through a more effective Local Net Zero Forum.
- Commitment to reform and devolve funding streams, and increase flexibility, to enable local authorities to act at the scale and pace required.
- All future devolution deals should include ambitious plans for place-based actions to reduce carbon emissions, adapt to the impacts of climate change, and restore nature.

The Coalition has also set out sector specific priorities below

The UK's legally binding carbon reduction targets, and its strategy for adapting to climate change impacts can only be reached with the contribution of local authorities and their communities.

The essential nature of place-based local action has been acknowledged by the Climate Change Committee (CCC)¹ and more recently Chris Skidmore MP's 'Mission Zero' review.² It makes economic sense to invest in a place-based approach, which has been calculated to be a much more cost effective way to meet the targets of the sixth carbon budget than a more centralised approach.³ Limited, inefficient competitive bidding rounds should evolve into an allocation based funding model to ensure that all places have a foundation of support to deliver net zero.

Councils can join up climate action with their local priorities, including the cost of living crisis, and create a just transition to a 1.5°C world. Some are already leading the way.⁴ To achieve this at the scale and pace required however, councils urgently need more effective, devolved funding to deliver and build capacity, a supportive policy framework and a framework for a collaborative, delivery driven relationship with central government.

We have set out below the commitments that should feature in all political party manifestos.

Invest in low carbon and climate resilient infrastructure

- Devolve decision making and provide long term funding to local transport authorities with the aim of delivering quality **public transport** services, including to those most in need. To include long term stable funding for efficient affordable bus services (as emergency post pandemic funding ends) especially in areas of low car ownership and to facilitate the switch to low carbon vehicles.
- Speed up and scale up the development of **renewable energy** by removing the barriers to onshore wind in planning policy that have prevented local authorities from facilitating investment in renewables in their areas. It makes no sense for onshore wind to have to pass tougher tests than other infrastructure.
- Develop tools and guidance for the production of **Local Area Energy Plans** (LAEPs) and provide dedicated funding for their production and renewal. Many councils want to develop LAEPs, which would have a significant role in meeting net zero targets for their areas, but do not currently have the resources and technical skills required for detailed energy planning.

Support reskilling and retraining to accelerate the move to a net zero economy

- Ensure **better join up** between training scheme funding and local authority delivery of retrofit, to ensure that the right low carbon skills are prioritised. Building decarbonisation targets will fail without an urgent ramping up of construction training and in reskilling in low carbon heating technology such as heat pumps.
- Publish an **action plan for net zero skills** with a comprehensive assessment of when, where, and in which sectors there will be skills gaps specific to net zero, in line with [Climate Change Committee recommendations](#).
- Increase funding for the **Adult Education Budget**, so that it is at least in line with 2010 levels (from £1.5 to £3 billion). Devolve to local authorities to target where the funding is needed most, including on retrofit skills, [as recommended by the LGA](#).

Upgrade our existing homes to ensure they are fit for the future and ensure new housing is zero carbon

- Launch a **national retrofit programme** to be delivered over 10 years with £60bn of public investment, including funds for councils to coordinate area by area insulation programmes in neighbourhoods with high levels of fuel poverty. Provide incentives, such as a fiscally neutral variable stamp duty land tax, to encourage retrofit.
- Embed targets to get **private rented sector** properties up to Energy Performance Certificate C rating by 2028 into regulations, backed by resourcing for local authority enforcement. This is vital given that the private rented sector has the highest rates of fuel poverty.
- Align the **planning system** with carbon targets and budgets, through legislation, so local authorities can set ambitious policies to improve the energy efficiency standards of new homes and reject poor quality, high carbon development. It makes no sense that robust local authority policies for zero carbon homes are being rejected by the Planning Inspectorate.

Make it easy for people to walk or cycle, and work remotely

- Increase funding for cycling, walking and micro mobility provision: over £2 billion a year is required to improve cycling infrastructure so that it's safe and easy for people to cycle wherever they live. Increasing funding for active travel will also help tackle inequalities, helping people without cars access jobs and services - places that are most in need due to unsafe and under served walking and cycling infrastructure need to be prioritised.

Accelerate tree planting, peatland restoration, green spaces and other green infrastructure

- Ensure local authorities have the capacity and expertise to deliver effective **Local Nature Recovery Strategies** to protect and restore biodiversity and ensure that everyone has access to nature rich green spaces.
- Target **green infrastructure** funding to areas that are most nature deprived.
- Strengthen planning policies for **nature protection** in national policy, giving biodiversity higher priority in decision making, and ensure no weakening of protections that originated in EU law including the Habitats Regulations.

¹ <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/local-authorities-and-the-sixth-carbon-budget/>

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1128689/mission-zero-independent-review.pdf

³ *Accelerating Net Zero Delivery* found that a centralised (place-agnostic) approach would take £195 billion of investment in things like heat pumps, insulation, and electric vehicles, to meet the targets set out in the sixth carbon budget; and would release £57 billion of energy savings, and £444 billion of wider social benefits over the next 30 years. By contrast, under a scenario taking a place-specific approach, £58 billion of investment would be needed to meet the same targets. In the process it would generate £108 billion of energy savings for consumers, and £825 billion of wider social benefits over the next 30 years. The benefits of place-based approaches are significant.

⁴ There are many [inspiring examples](#) of councils acting to cut emissions and create healthier places for their residents, but to reach the UK's legally binding target for net zero by 2050, every council will need to scale up action. To achieve this, they need coordinated leadership, support and resource from government.

The Blueprint Coalition

You can find out [more about the Blueprint Coalition here](#) and find our joint publications.

Any other inquiries, please email the Coalition via secretariat@adeptnet.org.uk.



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