

40 case studies of council action on climate change

<https://takeclimateaction.uk/resources/councils-tackling-climate-chaos>

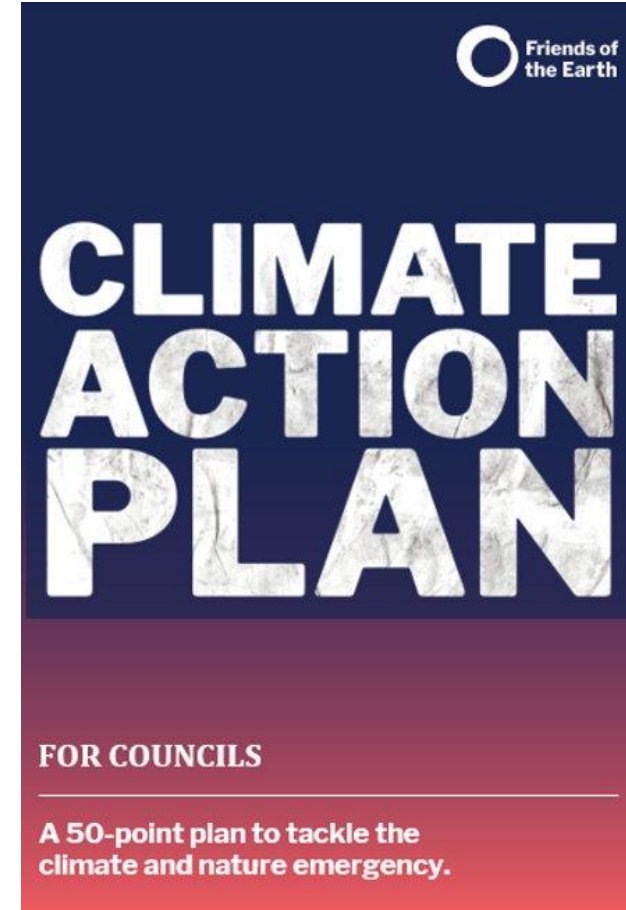
Objectives

- Give grassroots groups the analysis and information they need to win successful campaigns for local climate action.
- Provide council officers and councillors with the analysis and information they need to develop strong Climate Action Plans for their areas.
- Demonstrate the importance of local authority action by showcasing best practice, including the co-benefits, in order to support the case to national government for more power and resources for local government.

Process

- Case studies produced by Ashden and Friends of the Earth
- Funded by Peoples Postcode Lottery
- Advised by a Reference Group of ADEPT, Climate Emergency UK, Grantham Institute and My Society

Friends of the Earth Climate Action Plan



Format - informative and inspiring

- Impact (including co-benefits)
- Enabling factors
- Resourcing
- Lessons
- Friends of the Earth view



How does Action 40 tackle the
climate crisis?

What impact has this project had?

What made this work?

What resources were needed?

Lessons from Durham

Friends of the Earth view

embedded within the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan and procurement and commissioning processes.

What impact has this project had?

Reduced plastic waste

The council will quantify CO₂ savings from the project in its next two-year action plan. But the impact of some individual changes is already clear from an internal audit:

- Changes to the council's own supply list have cut the catering department's consumption of single use plastic by 90%.
- Switching from plastic to paper confetti at the Gala Theatre is saving an average of 750kg of plastic waste a year.
- Removing plastic overshoes from council leisure centres and pools is saving an average of 2.4 tonnes of waste a year.

How is Action 12 tackling the climate
crisis?

What impact has the project had?

What made this work?

What resources were needed?

Lessons from Hull

Friends of the Earth's view

What made this work?

External partnerships

Yorkshire Water has been a key partner in ramping up engagement and adapted proven engagement processes from their billing department to be used in this project. The company also helped with communications support and in training up the council's existing community networks on local water issues.

The authority is also using community groups that have existing networks and are trusted by locals to carry out the engagement. These include Timebank, Groundwork and The Hull We Want. This approach is particularly useful when engaging with diverse communities, or people who may be unsure of engaging with council officers directly.

The local authority took onboard key lessons from Hull University and the University of Sheffield. Both institutions have delivered community engagement projects across Hull to raise awareness of water and flood resilience. Key points such as making residents feel empowered and listened to were fed directly into



How is Action 26 tackling the climate crisis?

What impact has the project had?

What made this work?

What resources were needed?

Lessons from Brighton and Hove

Friends of the Earth view

The benefits include cheaper purchasing and operating costs compared with cars and vans, easier and more convenient parking and loading in congested areas, zero emissions and access to car-free areas and a positive image for the business.

What resources were needed?

The local authority was awarded about £80,000 from the Department for Transport's £1.2m e-Cargo Bike Grant Fund which allowed for the purchase of 12 electric cargo bikes and a trailer. The council included some of its own funds for the purchasing of extra equipment and resources, as well as to support the eCargo Bike Accelerator Project.

The price of individual bikes varies depending on model and type, with new bikes typically costing between £2,000 and £4,000.

Lessons from Brighton and Hove

Brexit and the coronavirus pandemic have impacted delivery and supply chains. This has made it difficult for Brighton & Hove City Council to obtain certain types



Friends of the Earth view

Reading is one of several councils going above national standards to require zero carbon new homes. Importantly Reading has succeeded in getting its policy - which goes beyond even the latest update to the UK government's Future Homes Standard - approved by the Planning Inspector and accepted by developers. This should encourage more councils to develop bolder policies.

But for genuinely zero carbon homes to become the norm even higher national and local standards of energy efficiency are needed, embedded carbon must be included, and the supply of local renewable energy increased to meet the needs of new developments. Offsetting should not be a substitute for cutting emissions.

Councils should also be ensuring that new developments are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling as car-dependent developments will increase carbon emissions (Action 28 of the Climate Action Plan).

Friends of the Earth is showcasing specific examples of good practice in tackling climate change, but that doesn't mean we endorse everything that a council is

How is Action 16 tackling the climate crisis?

What impact has the project had?

What made this work?

What resources were needed?

Lessons from Reading

Friends of the Earth view



Mix of council types, political control and location



- **Warrington Borough Council** raised funds for a renewable energy project through community municipal bonds that could be purchased for as little as £5 by residents
- **Blaenau Gwent Council** set up a citizens assembly for just £50,000 to engage the local community in climate decision-making
- **Leicester city Council** has invested in electric buses, 8km of new bus priority measures and 26km of active travel routes to cut congestion and emissions.
- **Kent County Council** has set out a comprehensive strategy to halt biodiversity loss and strongly links action on nature and climate.
- **North East Derbyshire District Council** upgraded hundreds of council homes to improve energy efficiency and alleviate fuel poverty simultaneously
- **Wirral Council** adopted an ambitious tree strategy to plant 210,000 by 2030 and protect existing trees
- **Hastings Borough Council** working with East Sussex County Council is helping home owners and private renters make their homes energy efficient with its Warm Homes Check Service.
- **Waltham Forest Council** has almost fulfilled its target to completely divest its pension funds from fossil fuels within 5 years

Lessons learned

<https://takeclimateaction.uk/climate-action/8-lessons-learned-councils-leading-way-climate>

- 1. Local action works – for climate and communities
- 2. Councils need to start somewhere
- 3. There's money to be had
- 4. Councils need more support from national government
- 5. Partner up
- 6. The green skills gap needs to be filled
- 7. Engage early and involve communities in climate decision-making
- 8. Get the whole council on board

The screenshot shows the 'Lessons from Kent' page on the Climate Action Kent website. The page has a dark blue header with the 'CLIMATE ACTION' logo on the left and navigation links for 'Join', 'Elections', 'Our campaign', 'Near you', 'Resources', and 'Training' on the right. Below the header, there is a paragraph of text about the strategy's development. A central navigation menu lists several topics: 'How is Action 49 tackling the climate crisis?', 'What impact has the project had?', 'What made this work?', 'What resources were needed?', 'Lessons from Kent' (highlighted in a dark blue box), 'Useful information', and 'Friends of the Earth's view'. To the right of this menu is the main content area, which features the title 'Lessons from Kent' and a sub-section 'Shifting national policy and priorities'. The text in this section discusses the spatial side of the strategy and the impact of the Environment Bill.

CLIMATE ACTION

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Work on the strategy began in 2018, with stakeholder engagement and formal consultation followed in 2019, with approval by both the wider Kent Nature Partnership and Kent County Council in 2020.

How is Action 49 tackling the climate crisis?

What impact has the project had?

What made this work?

What resources were needed?

Lessons from Kent

Useful information

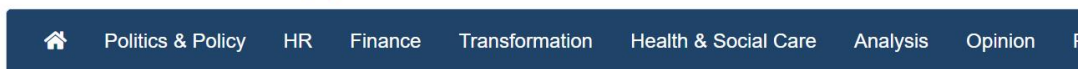
Friends of the Earth's view

Lessons from Kent

Shifting national policy and priorities

The spatial side of the strategy – interpreting and mapping the county-wide biodiversity goals at a district level – was put on hold as the Environment Bill progressed. Previously, Kent used its Biodiversity Opportunity Areas as a spatial framework and initial plans were to update these with the 2020 strategy. However, at this time the forthcoming Environment Bill looked set to introduce Local Nature Recovery Strategies as one of its flagship measures. Local Nature Recovery Strategies are spatial plans which establish biodiversity priorities specific to an area and map its habitats. A responsible authority is assigned for each recovery strategy. Kent decided these would be a more appropriate delivery mechanism and agreed to wait for the bill and associated secondary legislation to pass.

Promotion/interaction



Conscious digital transformation in local government

Russell MacDonald explores the challenges affecting local

William Eichler 13 April 2022



Inspiring local councils to take further action on net zero

Most local authorities have declared a climate emergency and an estimated 85% have formulated climate action plans. 'Decarbonisation' is the buzzword of the moment. In reality, however, the journey to net zero is a mixed picture. As a recent report by the climate charity Friends of



CLIMATE CHANGE

Sandra Bell: Six lessons from councils leading the way on climate action

10 MARCH 2022

Latest Features



Environment

What can councils do to alleviate fuel poverty?

Friends of the Earth campaigner Sandra Bell sheds light on the good work that's being done locally to alleviate fuel poverty

Next steps

- Three more case studies due to be published – early May
- Links to other case studies to be added
- Launch event 24th May 10 – 11.30
- Conference July (date tbc)
- Five new case studies – September
- Updates of case studies where needed - November

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How local councils are acting on climate

These council case studies explore the impacts, benefits and resources needed to tackle climate change locally. Share with your local authority to galvanise change, from reducing landfill waste to protecting nature.

While Friends of the Earth supports these specific projects, this doesn't always extend to the councils' wider environmental policies.

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