

Briefing for Leeds Climate Emergency Advisory Committee: The Leeds Climate Commission and Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission November 2023

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What is a Climate Commission?

Inspired by the work of the UK's Climate Change Committee, a Climate Commission is an experimental partnership model bringing together public, private and third sectors to work collaboratively to help drive climate action.

Context:

The first Climate Commission was established in Leeds in 2017, a partnership endeavour between the University of Leeds and Leeds City Council. The early success of the [Leeds Climate Commission](#) inspired the development of a five year ESRC funded Place-based Climate Action Network (PCAN), which both provided resource to support the Leeds Commission and enabled the Commission model to be developed in Belfast and Edinburgh. PCAN has also stimulated a further 20+ Commissions across the UK.

The success of the city Commission became contrasted with the gap in regional collaboration and the lack of capacity to identify system level changes at that scale. Conceived during mid-2020, in response to the ever-evident climate change impacts across Yorkshire and Humber, and the need for regional scale collaboration on net zero challenges, the [Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission](#) (YHCC) was launched in March 2021. The YHCC adopts the same model as the Leeds Climate Commission, and its core purpose is to support and guide ambitious, integrated climate action across all sectors and the region. The YHCC is doing this by creating a positive and enabling culture where:

- existing capacity is mobilised through effective engagement
- constructive debate is supported
- our collective evidence base is strengthened
- best practise is promoted and adopted
- capacities are built and
- progress is regularly reviewed and analysed.

The YHCC is also working with local council representatives (members and officers) to create a (more) stable policy environment that builds confidence and attracts investment.

Future:

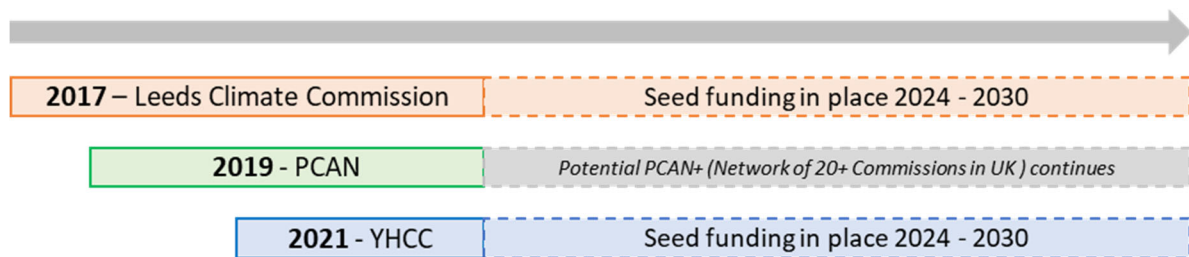
The PCAN programme is coming to a close at the end of March 2024. Both the Leeds and Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commissions are viewed very positively and there is a clear and distinct role that each can play to galvanise and enable impactful climate action.

Both Commissions have full political and wider sectoral support to continue to 2030. This is fantastic as it means both are able to develop their thinking for the next phase (2024-27) at the same time, ensuring good connections between them, and potentially other Commissions in the region; both

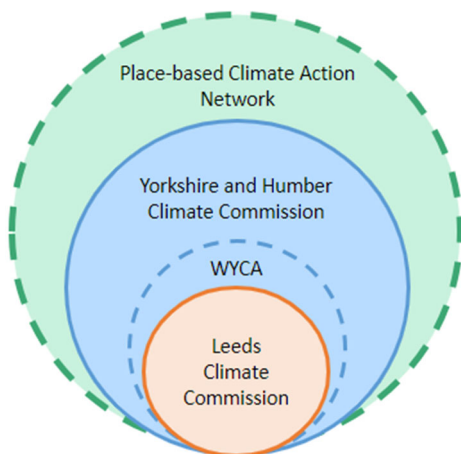
moving from the initial experimental model phase into successful partnership collaborations that support, facilitate and accelerate climate action delivery by others. The YHCC also provides the Leeds Climate Commission with a place to escalate advocacy opportunities or challenges.

The University of Leeds recognises the value the Commissions’ provide to the city and region and, as part of its ambitious [Climate Plan](#), is not only hosting the staff team that support both but is also covering half of the team’s costs until August 2029. The Yorkshire Leaders Board supports the YHCC, both politically and through an annual contribution. The YHCC has also been supported by financial and contributions in kind from a broad range of partners, ranging from the TUC, Yorkshire Universities, through to Northern Power Grid, the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water. Both Commissions will require partners to continue to contribute, both financially and in kind, to enable them to be resourced effectively to drive integrated climate action.

Although the PCAN programme ends in March 2024, the established network of 20+ Commissions around the UK will remain as a source for learning and collaboration on specific topics.



How do the two Commissions work together?



The Commissions are in a strategic planning phase to establish how they can work over the next 6 years, broken down into two 3-year phases.

The Leeds Climate Commission will focus on developing a local programme of projects that actively support the Cities net zero & climate ready ambitions. The YHCC will develop these as case studies to demonstrate best practice alongside other local initiatives in the region. Leeds Climate Commission can work with the regional Commission to benefit from workstreams that the local commission would otherwise find beyond its capacity, or out of its scope to influence at a city scale.

The Climate Commissions & Leeds City Council’s CEAC:

On the final page of this briefing, there is a high-level summary of the recent review of the Leeds Climate Commission, including some of the potential task and finish projects that have been identified.

We welcome the opportunity to explore with the CEAC what they see as their biggest priorities for integrated climate action across the city, and how the Commissions can work effectively with them.

Commission key highlights:

Leeds Climate Commission strategic review and re-fresh proposal (after running 5 years)

City level collaboration & deep relationship building...



1 Full Commission Meeting

8 workshops attended & supported including the 'City Sprint' series



25 x 1:1 Partner feedback meetings

...informing 3 core functions & workstreams...



Evaluating Progress



Peer Learning



Creating Collaborations for new climate action in the city, including with the UoL's 'Living Labs'

...and the identification of task and finish projects for proof of concept project development and delivery



Solar Initiative (energy)



Network Rail (transport)



Water challenge (water)



Aire Resilience Company (Innovative finance)



Consumption emissions profile (emissions)



Monitoring and evaluation framework (cross cutting)

Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission's Delivering Impact Programme



22 expert led sessions held exploring a broad range of climate actions over 11 months...

...with 82 speakers from 71 different organisations...

...providing over 1,000 hours of leaders and experts time...

...leading to 12 'Phase 2' system level regional workstreams being developed through collaboration with 100+ commission members

Other YHCC work stream highlights



8 Cross Cutting Regional Policy Principles developed with our Regional Policy Forum and approved by Yorkshire Leaders Board



69 Companies and Organisations have taken the Climate Action Pledge
Lead Partner in Yorkshire Sustainability Week



Contributing to two regional stage 2 academic bids, building strong connections with Y-PERN, and developing wider strategic collaborations e.g. with the Ass'n of Directors of Public Health



All (15) Local Authorities participating in our Climate Adaptation Programme working with Corporate Risk Managers, Emergency Planners & Directors



Direct 'grass roots' engagement via Town & Parish Councils with c.140 Cllrs across the region; developed & delivering Faith in the Environment events



Regional Net Zero Road Map under development, including a full technical and economic assessment of c.750 measures, identifying the most cost and carbon effective actions