

The Leeds Climate Change Citizens' Jury: Launch event

Between September and November 2019, 25 randomly selected residents from across the Leeds City region were recruited to take part in the first Leeds Climate Change Citizens' Jury. The group met for nearly 30 hours of deliberation over the course of eight weeks to answer the question, 'What should Leeds do about the emergency of climate change?' To help them with their task the jury received presentations from 22 commentators (expert witnesses). A Citizens' Jury oversight panel was formed to agree both the recruitment methodology and which commentators would present to the jury. This oversight panel was made up of 12 key local stakeholders from the public, private and community sector, from the City Council to Extinction Rebellion. The Citizens' Jury produced 12 key recommendations, which were made public at a launch event on November 25th. The full report can be downloaded [here](#).



Members of the jury met for a planning session a couple of weeks prior to the launch event at which they agreed a structure and roles and responsibilities. After a brief introduction, jury members explained the recruitment process and the role of the commentators that presented to the jury. They then shared a number of personal stories explaining their motivation for taking part and the personal impact their participation had. You can watch a video of their presentations [here](#).



After the presentations a series of small group discussions took place based around themes from the jury recommendations. The following gives a flavour of the discussions from each of the themed groups.

Making it happen: this small group discussed a range of topics including a) the need to strengthen the business case by linking to resilience against extreme weather conditions b) the power of citizens via their pensions, c) the need to connect with other cities doing the same kind of thing, d) the possibility of the Lottery Fund being used to build an alliance across local groups, e) the very real opportunity for the Council to take action around bonds and funds, f) the need for a £2.5 million climate action fund to create a climate emergency hub, taking on the Citizens' Jury recommendations g) helping Leeds City Council to model the pay as you save scheme and key obstacles to funding efficiency h) the need for CEAC (the Leeds City Council Climate Emergency Advisory Committee), to tease recommendations apart and make them actionable 'act where we can, lobby where we can't', i) build a facilitation team to create organising structures to tackle this, j) organise a climate emergency press conference, k) explain and identify climate positive investments, l) divest pension funds and introduce smart labelling, m) the Climate Commission to develop an investor's perspective, n) Can Extinction Rebellion take these recommendations on board and engage in direct action to ensure they are realised?

Housing: the group talked about the scale of the challenge; for 340,000 homes to be retrofitted requires an industrial response as well as local/citizen action. There is a need for a skill program to implement this retrofitting. There was also discussion about a) the need for a review of planning in the city, an examination of sustainable urban planning i.e. are Leeds City Council planning policies fit for

purpose? b) the role of devolution c) the challenge of national guidelines and the role of developers that can appeal and d) the need for good landlord behaviour to be positively recognised for example kite mark schemes e) a plea that Leeds City Council could change planning permission policy f) the need to educate on the importance of insulation.

Communication: this group talked about: a) the possibility of the communication recommendations forming part of a Lottery bid for the Climate Action Fund b) the need for a website to show all resources and opportunities (headteachers would be interested in this), c) the importance of hearing from people at the beginning of their 'climate change journey' not just climate specialists d) that the Leeds Development Education Centre is developing a climate curriculum for use in schools (with Leeds University) e) the role of the three TV companies that we have in Leeds - they could do pieces on climate change every week f) using Citizens' Jury members as a resource – if they are willing! g) use the 99 local councillors and 10 community committees to get messages out. h) using storylines: 'how to convince my dad?' Build these storylines into everyday life and decision-making for example carbon footprint on memes, leisure centres, libraries. Other ideas discussed included 'can the jury make a short film about their experiences and recommendations? As a teacher I would use this in school?'

Recycling: the group discussed why recycling had featured in the recommendations. Is it a useful starting point for engagement? The small group then went on to talk about the role of incentives, how to encourage business to act, the need to target big local companies (e.g. Asda, Morrisons) and to communicate what companies in Leeds are already doing (tell the story). Finally, the group talked about the role of members of the jury as ambassadors and the need to look globally for solutions, as they already exist.

Transport: this small group talked about the airport and planning permission for the link road. The Chief Executive of the airport will be questioned at the forthcoming CEAC meeting. On the topic of public ownership of the buses, the group discussed the possibility of First Bus going into public ownership and the role of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority in bringing this about.



The following organisations registered to take part in the launch event, AECOM, ARUP, Burohappold, Business in the Community, Civic Engineers, Cyclops Pedal Power CIC, DRIAD, ENGIE, Environment Agency, Hubbub, ITV, Jacobs, the Labour candidate for Leeds North West, Leeds Chamber of Commerce, various representatives from Leeds City Council, Leeds Climate Commission, Leeds Racial Justice Network, Leeds Schools, Leeds Youth Strike 4 Climate, Living Streets, LSSI-University of Leeds, Madina Town Movement, Opera North, Otley Energy Co, Our Future Leeds, DEC, Extinction Rebellion, Permaculture Association, Project Rome Ltd, REAP, Social Business Brokers, SURE Insulation, T4P / South Leeds Life, The Green Party, Our Future Leeds, University of Leeds, Voluntary Action Leeds, West Yorkshire Combined Authority, Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust, Yorkshire Water, Youth Council / Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) Youth Advisory Board.

Leeds Live have produced a [short video](#) of the event including interviews with Jury members