

LEEDS CLIMATE COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT

2020

Leeds Climate Commission Annual Report

To be published on the Leeds Climate Commission website: <https://leedsclimate.org.uk>

2019 ROUND UP

Leeds Climate Commission did not prepare an annual report for 2019 as we were busy joint hosting the [Big Leeds Climate Conversation](#) with Leeds City Council, much of which was reported in Leeds City Council's Executive Board Climate Emergency Update report in January 2019

<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=102&MId=9775&Ver=4>

Some particular highlights from 2019 included:

- The Leeds Climate Change Citizens' Jury, organised and funded by Leeds Climate Commission working with Shared Future CIC. It was tasked with examining the Leeds' response to the emergency of climate change, and with producing recommendations that will be used to guide the future work of the Commission and a range of organisations across the city. The Jury's recommendations were presented at a public event in November. You can read about their work and recommendations here:

<https://www.leedsclimate.org.uk/leeds-climate-change-citizens-jury>

- The Big Leeds Climate Conversation was launched at the Big Leeds Climate Q & A hosted by Leeds Climate Commission. You can watch the session with our 'super-panel', chaired by Polly Billington of UK100 here:

<https://www.leedsclimate.org.uk/big-leeds-climate-qa>

- In July 2019 and January 2020, Leeds Climate Commission hosted seminar-style training for school leaders and governors in an event called "[Caught in the Middle: Educational responsibilities, dilemmas and opportunities](#)". This addressed the challenge of the position that schools find themselves in, caught between the valid concerns of students exercising their civil rights on the one hand, and the inadequate global political response to the challenge of climate change on the other and sought to answer the question, what is the role of schools in a climate emergency?
- Between 26 March-18 June 2019, the Commission ran [four 3-hour workshops](#) with Leeds law firm Walker Morris as part of a capacity-building programme to help organisations secure investment in energy-efficiency and low carbon projects.

PROGRESS TOWARDS NET ZERO

Based on the latest data from Dept of BEIS, Leeds' emissions fell by 40% in the period from 2000 to 2019. This equates to a year on year reduction of less than 2.7%. There has been some acceleration in the rate of decarbonisation in recent years, with emissions falling by 3.7% in 2018 and 3.9% in 2019. However, in order to get to net zero by 2030, Leeds need to deliver about 11% year on year reduction in emissions.

We estimate that Leeds' emissions fell by c13% in 2020. This reduction was largely due to the impacts of Covid-19 and the lockdown, as well as some other city-wide projects (district heating, domestic insulation) starting to have an impact. In the longer term, however, this reduction would only delay the point at which Leeds uses its share of the global carbon budget by two months.

We note that the emissions BEIS data is lagged with a delay of up to two years. We also note that it is possible that the impacts of recently adopted or initiated policies and projects may have yet to show up in the data. However, given the pre-Covid rates of decarbonisation, it is clear that a significant intensification of effort will be required to keep Leeds on track towards its target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2030. As the economy of the city is restored after the pandemic, it will be important to ensure that we embed carbon emission reduction in the recovery.

ROADMAP

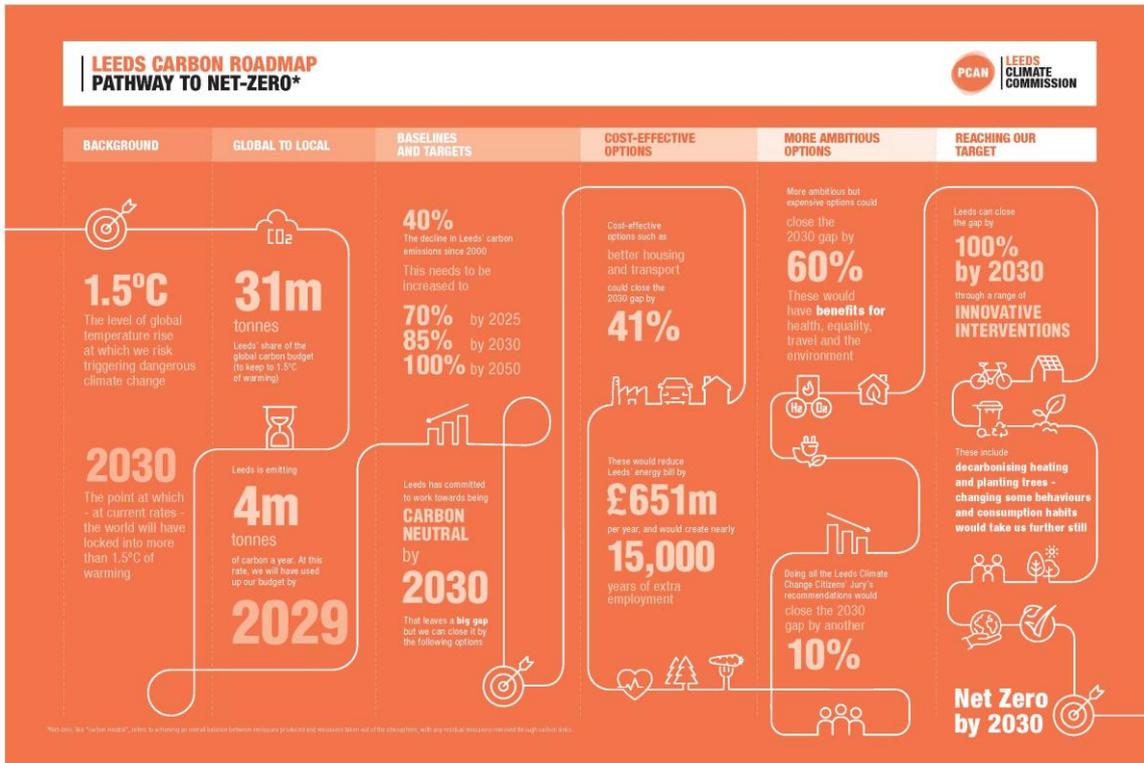
In March 2019, Leeds City Council declared a climate emergency and resolved to sign up to a science based carbon reduction target consistent with achieving the Paris Agreement of no more than 1.5°C global temperature increase. It also resolved to work to make Leeds carbon neutral by 2030.

The Council tasked Leeds Climate Commission to produce a science-based roadmap for the city, which was formally presented by Professor Andy Gouldson to the Executive Board on 17 April 2019 and was used as the evidence base for the work programme set out in the January 2020 Executive Board (see above).

A lot has happened and so much has changed in the short period of time since then that a new version was needed. An updated version, A Net-Zero Carbon Roadmap for Leeds, was published on 7 January 2021 at a webinar, with responses from stakeholders in the public sector (Leeds City Council), private sector (Business in the Community) and civic sector (Friends of the Earth), plus members of the Leeds Climate Change Citizens' Jury.

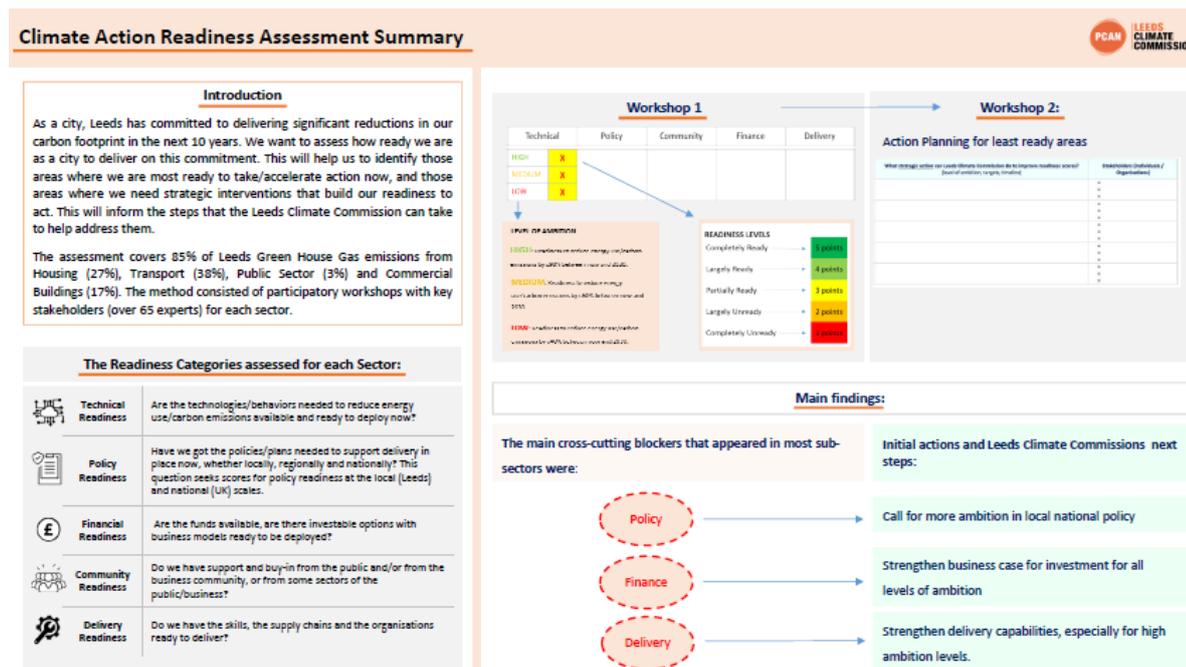
The Net-Zero roadmap shows how, in the critical years to 2030, Leeds can radically reduce its carbon footprint while also becoming a better place, with cleaner air, improved public health and reduced poverty and inequality.

<https://www.leedsclimate.org.uk/leeds-carbon-roadmap>



CLIMATE ACTION READINESS ASSESSMENT (CARA)

The Net-Zero roadmap shows how the city can respond to the climate challenge, but how ready is Leeds as a city to meet this challenge? Leeds Climate Commission worked through the 2020 lockdown to answer this question.



The Climate Action Readiness Assessment (CARA) process draws on participatory workshops to map how ready Leeds as a city is to take action in different sectors and to identify strategic interventions needed to build readiness. The CARA framework focuses on each sector (i.e. housing) and then on the sub-sectors (i.e. council housing) within it. For each sub-sector, and then for each sector, and ultimately for the city as a whole, it considers the technical, policy, community, financial and delivery readiness for climate action. The process scores Leeds's current level of readiness as a city across different levels of ambition ranging from low (40% carbon cuts between now and 2030), medium (60%) and high (90%).

The assessment covers 85% of Leeds greenhouse gas emissions from Housing (27%), Transport (38%), Public Sector (3%) and Commercial Buildings (17%). The method consisted of participatory workshops with key stakeholders (over 65 experts) for each.



The CARA process found that while some sectors and sub-sectors in the city were more ready to decarbonise than others, there were some recurrent issues restricting readiness, particularly relating to policy at the local, regional and national scale, and to finance. As discussed below, the Commission is focusing on these barriers in its future work plans.

The Commission is now working with SAIL (Sustainable Arts in Leeds) to apply the CARA process to Leeds' cultural sector.

Read more about the Leeds CARA process and download the presentation and summary:

<https://leedsclimate.org.uk/news/climate-action-readiness-assessment-inform-new-directions-leeds-commission>

LOW CARBON INVESTMENT PROSPECTUS

Leeds Climate Commission and Leeds City Council have secured 60,000 Euro funding from the European Cities Facility to support the development of a Leeds Low Carbon Investment Prospectus (LLCIP) to attract investment in the commercial/public buildings where we are most ready to act. With EUCF support, the aim is to publish a prospectus in summer of 2021.

CITY-WIDE CLIMATE ACTION

Despite the Covid lockdowns, climate-related work has continued apace across the city.

A partnership of local organisations including Our Future Leeds has been successful in a £2.5m award from The National Lottery's Climate Action Fund for a five year Leeds Climate Emergency Community Action Programme (CECAP) about ensuring that climate justice is embedded into the city's journey towards Net Zero. This will create 16 properly supported, well-connected community hubs that connect to city-wide action so that local concerns and city wide interests are properly addressed and represented in our journey to the 2030s. Leeds Climate Commission supported the Lottery application and will work with CECAP through a biannual round table, and connect up engagement and communications campaigns.

<https://ourfutureleeds.org/intro-to-cecap/>

Leeds Climate Commission has helped to establish SAIL (Sustainable Arts in Leeds), a network of organisations and individuals in the creative and cultural sector, who have come together to take action on the climate emergency.

<https://wearesail.org/>

Zero Waste Leeds is building a movement to help make Leeds a zero waste city by 2030 and Leeds By Example is bringing together examples of best practice across the city.

<https://www.zerowasteleeds.org.uk/>

<https://www.leedsbyexample.co.uk/>

Leeds City Council is leading a host of major city-wide low carbon projects and initiatives and these are summarised in the February 2021 Executive Board report

<http://democracy.leeds.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CI=102&MI=9980&Ver=4>

FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

Leeds Climate Commission's main focal points will be Housing, Transport and Finance and investment. These emerged as key challenges in the CARA process – and we will establish new panels to help us to propose viable ways forward so as to improve the city's readiness in these three areas; For Commercial buildings and the Public sector, we will work with other existing networks to help do the same;

For Communications and engagement, we will retain a working group, especially to promote the wider social, economic and environmental benefits for the city as it pursues net zero by 2030.

When resources permit we also propose to commence work on considering Consumption Based (Scope 3) emissions for the city

REGIONAL COMMISSION

Our experience as the Leeds Climate Commission has shown that there is growing interest in the role that can be played by independent climate commissions that draw together key actors from key organisations in the public, private and third sectors to support an area's response to the climate challenge.

Thus far, most climate commissions or similar are emerging at the city/local levels. However, we can see a clear role for a regional commission for Yorkshire and Humber, to provide support, learn from and where appropriate coordinate/provide a strategic framework for local commissions and other local climate initiatives and to make the case for further support from national government.

Within the Yorkshire and Humber region, the Leeds Climate Commission was established in 2016, and other local commissions or similar initiatives have been/are being established/actively discussed in Bradford, Doncaster, Kirklees, Otley, Harrogate, Wakefield and York.

The main focus of these local commissions and other initiatives tends to be on the low carbon side – indeed summary low carbon roadmaps have been prepared for every authority across the region. However, climate resilience and adaptation issues are perhaps better dealt with at the catchment or regional scales.

A regional commission could therefore add most value if it placed its primary emphasis on climate resilience, whilst also coordinating and supporting low carbon activities in localities across the region.

We will be helping with the establishment of a Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission to promote the delivery of both net-zero and climate resilient activities across the region and to ensure that activities respect the principles of a just transition to a low carbon economy. A top priority in the first six months would then to prepare a regional submission to the UN climate (COP) talks that will take place in Glasgow in November 2021.