



Briefing for Labour Councillors  
[www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com](http://www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com)

## LGA Labour – Climate Emergency Campaign Pack for Labour Party Councillors

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The LGA Labour Group exists to provide a strong voice for Labour in local government, both within the cross-party LGA and within the wider Labour Party. We represent and support Labour councils and opposition Labour Groups in England and Wales, including political support, leadership training, and sector-led improvement. We aim to influence and set the political agenda on the issues that matter to Labour councils so they are able to deliver local solutions to national problems.

Our leadership, officers, and regional representatives are elected by Labour Groups on an annual basis, and our elected leader, Cllr Nick Forbes, is the de facto leader of Labour in local government.

As part of our work supporting Labour councillors to tackle climate change and create greener communities, the LGA Labour Group has produced campaign packs on the climate emergency and other environmental issues.

This campaign pack is an overall campaign pack on the climate emergency, and contains:

1. A briefing for Labour councillors (see below)
2. A briefing for Labour Party members
3. A model press release
4. A model climate emergency motion

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### *Background*

- **We are facing a climate emergency – the IPCC has found that temperatures are likely to rise by 1.5C by 2050.** In the UK, this means we need to expect flooding both in coastal and inland areas, colder winters and hotter summers which will lead to increased energy demand and higher energy bills, loss of native animal and insect species, an increase in illnesses related to the extreme heat and cold, and crumbling infrastructure that wasn't built for these changes in temperature.
- In May 2019, **Parliament declared a climate emergency as a result of a Labour Party motion.** The United Kingdom was the first country to declare a climate emergency, and the Labour Party are holding the government to account to ensure that they place tackling climate change at the heart of their work. The Labour Party nationally have also appointed a

Shadow Minister for Climate Justice and Green Jobs to put this agenda at the heart of everything that the Labour Party is doing.

- **Labour councillors are leading the way** in tackling climate change and making our towns and cities greener. The action that is being taken is showing that Labour in local government are leaders in this area, and that the Labour Party nationally should be looking to local government to learn about what can be done.
- **Over 70 Labour-run councils have declared a climate emergency** – many of these climate emergency declarations commit to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

*What is happening now?*

- If you've declared a climate emergency already, then make sure you've got a clear strategy in place to make your motion a reality. You can read a blog by Cllr Tom Hayes, Oxford City Council's Cabinet Member for a Zero Carbon Oxford, about [what to do once you've declared a climate emergency](#).
- **Some of the steps taken by Labour councils include:**
  - **Leeds City Council** have created the Leeds Climate Commission, which brings together stakeholders across the city from the public, private and third sectors. The Commission will provide authoritative advice on climate change policies and shape the decisions of local policy makers. It produces an annual reports that feeds through the democratic process of Leeds City Council
  - Councils such as **Waltham Forest** and **Oxford** have been taking action to tackle poor quality in their areas. Oxford are introducing the world's first Zero Emission Zone and Waltham Forest have undertaken a programme of highways and public realm interventions to encourage people out of their cars and onto greener modes of transport
  - Many councils are making their buildings and vehicles more energy efficient. **Harrow Council** is retrofitting their buildings, including schools, to make them more energy efficient, and are introducing monitoring systems to reinforce this. **Plymouth** is fitting solar panels to council buildings, schools, and other buildings in the city to generate solar energy for the city. LED streetlights are being installed up and down the country as they are more energy efficient and last for much longer than traditional street lighting
  - **Bridgend Council** now have one of the highest rates of recycling in the UK after introducing waste and recycling arrangements aimed at changing resident behaviour in this area. **Doncaster Council** have taken part in a national campaign to reduce food waste which has educated residents about how to reduce food waste and why it will benefit them – including how it will save them money.
- This is **just a taster of the work** that Labour councillors have been doing to tackle the climate emergency and make our communities greener. For all this and more, including campaign packs, campaign materials such as Labour Group leaflets, and blogs about climate change, visit [www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com](http://www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com)

*What still needs to happen?*

- **If your council hasn't declared a climate emergency, then make sure you take a motion to your full council meeting to do so.** Make sure your resolutions in it are achievable and realistic, and that you have a clear strategy to follow on from the declaration of a climate emergency.

- Take a look at all of the best practice on our website – [www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com](http://www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com) – and **take any examples that you think would work locally and propose that your council implements them**. If you've got any best practice to share, get in touch with the LGA Labour Group who will be able to upload it on to the website.
- If you have any campaign leaflets on climate change (or any environmental issue) that you're happy for us to share then please also send them through to us to share on the website.
- **Think about how your council can not only take steps to reduce carbon emissions in the borough and make it a greener place to live but also how you can encourage residents to make individual decisions and changes that are more sustainable** – such as using reusable coffee cups, shopping at zero waste shops, using clothing swaps and changing how they travel round the borough.

The model press release, model motion and briefing for Labour Party members are for you to use locally – please do adapt them for use locally and share with local Labour Party councillors and activists.

# LGA LABOUR CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Briefing for Labour Party members

[www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com](http://www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com)

## LGA Labour – Climate Emergency Briefing for Labour Party Members

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### *Background*

- **We are facing a climate emergency – the IPCC has found that temperatures are likely to rise by 1.5C by 2050.** In the UK, this means we need to expect flooding both in coastal and inland areas, colder winters and hotter summers which will lead to increased energy demand and higher energy bills, loss of native animal and insect species, an increase in illnesses related to the extreme heat and cold, and crumbling infrastructure that wasn't built for these changes in temperature.
- In May 2019, **Parliament declared a climate emergency as a result of a Labour Party motion.** The United Kingdom was the first country to declare a climate emergency, and the Labour Party are holding the government to account to ensure that they place tackling climate change at the heart of their work.
- **Labour councillors are leading the way in tackling climate change.** Labour councils up and down the country are taking bold and radical action to make their towns and cities greener and more sustainable.
- Over **70 Labour-run councils** have passed a motion declaring a climate emergency, with many setting ambitious targets to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- **Some of the steps taken by Labour councils include:**
  - **Leeds City Council** have created the Leeds Climate Commission, which brings together stakeholders across the city from the public, private and third sectors. The Commission will provide authoritative advice on climate change policies and shape the decisions of local policy makers. It produces an annual reports that feeds through the democratic process of Leeds City Council
  - Councils such as **Waltham Forest** and **Oxford** have been taking action to tackle poor quality in their areas. Oxford are introducing the world's first Zero Emission Zone and Waltham Forest have undertaken a programme of highways and public realm interventions to encourage people out of their cars and onto greener modes of transport
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- This is **just a taster of the work** that Labour councillors have been doing to tackle the climate emergency and make our communities greener. For all this and more, including campaign packs, campaign materials such as Labour Group leaflets, and blogs about climate change, visit [www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com](http://www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com)

## Climate change and the Climate Emergency – Model Motion

This Council notes that:

- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has found that global warming is likely to reach 1.5C by 2050. The Met Office predicts that the impact of climate change on the UK will include, but is not limited to, flooding of coastal and inland areas, increased demand on energy during hotter summers and colder winters, species loss and extinction, damage to infrastructure that is not equipped for extremes of temperature and an increase in illnesses caused by extremes of temperature;
- Parliament and over 200 councils across the country have already declared a climate emergency, recognising the seriousness of the situation and committing to take action in their local area;
- Local government has the ability and tools to make an impact at a local level, including greening the council estate, fleet and housing stock, working with local industry to help and incentivise them to operate more sustainably. However, local councils have also seen their budgets cut by 60p in every £1 since 2010, which has had a crippling effect on public services and will severely impact the ability of councils to reach their full potential in tackling the causes of climate change;
- [A recent survey by ComRes](#) has found that 71% of UK adults think that climate change is a more pressing long term issue than Brexit, and 60% of adults feel that the UK government is not doing enough to priorities the climate crisis;
- Co-operatives, community energy companies, local and national campaign groups and charities have already been taking action to tackle climate change, raising public awareness about climate change and environmental issues such as single use plastics and air quality;
- Action needs to be taken now in order to minimise the impact and reach of temperature rises and climate change, and that there should be an ambition of carbon neutrality by 2030 at the latest.

This Council resolves that XXX Council will:

- Join with other councils and Parliament in declaring a Climate Emergency;
- Set a goal and vision of becoming carbon neutral across XX borough by 2030;
- Ensure that this work doesn't just focus on the activity of XX borough, but also reaches out to partners and residents to help them reduce their carbon footprint;
- Make a practical action plan to ensure that all councillors and officers are clear what XX council will do to tackle the climate emergency;
- Work with employers in the town/city/borough, including businesses, the third sector, charities and the public sector to encourage them to take steps to reduce their carbon emissions and operate in a more sustainable way, and learn from any best practice that they've already put in place;
- Work with local MPs to lobby the Government and Labour's/(other political party) front bench to ensure that local government is given the powers they need to tackle the climate emergency and make our town/city/borough greener.

**DRAFT PRESS RELEASE**

**September 2019**

**For immediate release**

Contact XXXX for media enquiries

## **XXXXX Council declares a climate emergency**

XXXX Council have passed a motion declaring a climate emergency, in recognition of the rapid pace of climate change and the impact it will have on XXX area.

The motion commits XXX council to become carbon neutral by 2030, as well as working with partners across the city/town/borough to reduce carbon emissions, change the way that people travel around the borough, make buildings more energy efficient and increase biodiversity in the area.

Over 200 councils across England have passed a climate emergency motion, recognising the seriousness of the changing climate. Labour councillors are leading the way in tackling the climate crisis, taking radical action to make their towns and cities greener. Leeds City Council have created the Leeds Climate Commission which brings together partners across the city to address the impacts of climate change, Oxford City Council are creating the world's first Zero Emissions Zone, Plymouth Council is fitting solar panels to buildings to generate clean energy, and Bridgend Council has changed the way they collect waste and have increased recycling rates in the process.

XXXX, Leader of XXXX Council said:

“It is essential that we take action to address the impact of climate change. XXX Council has declared a climate emergency and we are committed to taking radical action to become carbon neutral by 2030 and to play our part in tackling climate change. As part of our work in this area, we're planning to XXX, XXX and XXX. I look forward to working with businesses, other public sector organisations, charities and residents to make XXX greener and more sustainable”

ENDS

Notes to editors

1. The LGA Labour Group have produced a website sharing best practice by Labour Councils who are taking action to tackle climate change – [www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com](http://www.lgalabourclimateemergency.com)