

Climate Emergency Community Action Programme (CECAP)

Our Future Leeds, Leeds City Council
Thursday 10 December 2020

Summary

Leeds is working towards being Net Zero by 2030 - an ambition that can only be achieved through collaboration and a whole systems approach that mobilises the entire city. That's why we've developed a partnership of local organisations to help transform Leeds into a zero carbon, nature friendly, socially just and liveable city by 2030.

The Leeds Climate Emergency Community Action Programme (CECAP) is a five year, National Lottery award-winning project being spearheaded by five leading partners which centres around the creation of 16 properly supported, well-connected community hubs.

Our problem

We have a ten-year challenge to reach Net Zero by the 2030s if we're to hold global temperatures to no more than 1.5' of global warming above pre-industrial levels. Given how climate change is going to impact the most vulnerable members of our society most, our response has to be embedded in social justice. Our all time carbon budget as a city is around 40 million tonnes*; we're eating into that budget at a rate of 4 million tonnes a year, meaning that it will be spent in the next seven or eight years unless we take urgent action. We need to create a new reason for Leeds to exist, a new development model that we can all get behind to have a safe and just future. To mobilise Leeds' 700,000-strong population, we need to embed deeper levels of democracy and create transformative action by giving power back to communities who have been disenfranchised.

**An estimate by the Leeds Climate Commission based on the population of Leeds as a proportion of the global population. Humanity as a whole has a carbon budget of 420 gigatonnes, which we cannot exceed if we're to keep global warming to below 1.5'C above pre-industrial levels.*

Overview

CECAP's aim is to produce a Climate Justice City Plan, bringing together learning across 16 community hubs. The City Plan is our map towards a Net Zero, nature friendly, socially just city and the point of the community hubs is to feed into that plan and connect them to city-wide action so that local concerns and city wide interests are properly addressed and represented in our journey to the 2030s. They're also the testing ground for seeing what works and what can be learnt from the plan's creation. That plan will then be discussed at the Leeds Climate Roundtable** meetings, which will run twice a year and will be an opportunity for people across Leeds to share and learn from each other. We also have transition partners from across the city who will be feeding in

skills and ideas about how to transition

The community hubs specifically focused on supporting big ideas to tackle the climate emergency in a positive way with social and climate justice at their core. As well as feeding into the city plan, each hub will work on their own community action plans. These plans (which shape, and in turn are shaped by, the city plan) will galvanise the intentions and aspirations of that community to get behind the agenda to create a zero carbon, socially just Leeds. These hubs will be supported by a central hub in the city centre, which will be the focus for a city-wide training programme. It'll be the control room for our movement!

The project has five work packages that will work together over the allotted time period:

Work package 1 - Management: Voluntary Action Leeds is providing organisational and management support to the whole programme.

Work package 2 - Movement building: Our Future Leeds will be developing the Climate Justice City Plan, hosting Climate Assemblies and round tables, providing training programmes in community hubs and facilitating the city-wide stakeholder dialogue.

Work package 3 - Community hubs: Together for Peace is developing and coordinating a network of hubs and action plans through in-depth community engagement in different neighbourhoods in Leeds. All hubs will work closely with the Leeds city centre hub.

Work package 4 - Sector and campaign support: Leeds Tidal will be providing campaign support and skills across housing, transport and food. It'll be directly supporting community and central hubs.

Work package 5 - Learning and evaluation: A partner yet to be confirmed is going to lead on learning and evaluation. We're yet to invite organisations to tender for the role.

A five-year programme, it's not just about helping the local environment; 40 local jobs are set to be created. These jobs (administrators, communications leads, researchers, community hub coordinators, transition partners) will be distributed across the work packages, and a big focus will be on training and training capacity to help communities learn to problem solve together. A huge part of CECAP is about amplifying the voices and agency of young people. Around a quarter of Leeds' population are under 25-years-old, so youth engagement is absolutely crucial to our success. We want to build in mentorship as a key element of the programme, as young people are the ones who are going to have to deal with the consequences of our inaction if we don't get cracking.

***The Climate Roundtable meets twice a year and is an opportunity for all the different sectors to come together to share ideas about what's happening in Leeds. It's a forum for the city to share and learn.*

Timeline / project progress

The plan is to roll the first four hubs out in year one, and then the next four hubs in year two. That first year will see those initial hubs start to do their own plans around local priorities, according to the Climate Emergency Social Justice Agenda. Year one will also see a draft of the training plan and city plan being created, with learning and adapting happening in the years to come.

The project is currently in its mobilisation phase, with project leads busy recruiting and getting systems and communications in place to get the programme up and running. We plan to have a dedicated website live in early 2021 and over the next few months, we'll be recruiting for the final, missing piece of the puzzle - the learning and evaluating partner to lead work package 5. The first draft of the city plan is due in a year's time, with the remaining four years being dedicated to testing and learning how it works in reality.

Stakeholders

Local partnership is the project, and so the stakeholders are absolutely vital to the very purpose of what it is we are trying to do. The City Council aside, the other four key partners are Our Future Leeds, Voluntary Action Leeds, Together for Peace and Leeds Tidal, and we're being supported by a host of other Leeds community

organisations including:

- Better Buses Yorkshire
- Clean Air Alliance
- Extinction Rebellion Leeds
- Feed Carbon Conversations Leeds
- Frack Free Yorkshire
- Friends of the Earth Leeds
- GALBA Airport Action
- Groundwork
- Hyde Park Source
- Kirkstall Valley Development Trust
- Leeds City Council
- Leeds Civic Trust
- Leeds Climate Commission
- Leeds Community Energy
- Leeds Community Homes
- Leeds Development Education Centre
- Leeds Hackspace
- Leeds Food Partnership/FoodWise
- Leeds Love it Share it
- Leeds Permaculture Network
- Leeds Racial Justice Network
- Leeds Youth Strike for Climate
- Leeds Zest
- Lilac Co-housing, Bramley
- Living Streets Leeds
- LS14 Trust
- Makertopia
- Meanwood Valley Urban Farm
- New Wortley Community Centre
- Open Source Arts, Kirkstall
- Otley 2030
- Permaculture Association (Britain)
- Repair Cafe Leeds
- Roundhay Environmental Action Project (REAP_
- Sholebroke and Reginalds Action Group
- Social Business Brokers
- Space
- Inner East Leeds
- The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)
- Zero Carbon Headingley
- Zero Carbon Yorkshire
- Zero Waste Leeds

We've received a £2.5 million award from The National Lottery's Climate Action Fund. That money covers all the staff costs, as well as £400,000-worth of grants which are being given to the 16 hubs over the next five years. That money (which we appreciate can't do everything) will enable the hubs to work on projects across all transition areas, including transport, food and energy.

Leeds City Council fully supports CECAP, seconding Andy Hickford from the Council's climate emergency team to the project. We're trying to maximise synergies between the Council's activities and what we're trying to achieve - but we'll also be critical friends who are honest about what we can do better in the context of closing the evidenced action gap between the climate emergency and what's happening on the ground.

Whole systems approach

Amazing work is already happening around Leeds, especially through the Leeds Climate Commission and its work on a zero carbon roadmap, and the Council's own climate emergency advisory committee. This project is partly about connecting existing projects and communities so that we can work more closely together to meet our collective goals. As well as creating a cleaner, healthier environment, CECAP has the potential to create more community-based job opportunities for local people, as well as bolstering the confidence and agency of young people.

Over five years we want to achieve the following:

- Progress towards a zero carbon, nature friendly, socially just, liveable Leeds by the 2030s
- A connected well-informed city movement that understands the climate emergency, climate justice and how to take effective community action
- Active communities using hubs to create transformative change locally, and sharing this with others
- A working city-wide partnership through the Roundtable and Assemblies owning a 'climate justice' city plan
- Replicating, sharing, learning well beyond our partnership, and securing more resources to continue our work

Impact

The current form of representative democracy on offer doesn't go far enough. At the moment, we have 99 councillors in Leeds who work for thousands of people at once. Deep democracy - like participatory budgets, citizens juries etc - actually involves people on a daily basis. CECAP is building real, deep, direct democracy into every layer of Leeds society. To tackle climate change, we need to get the whole city behind us.

This project is also creating new, sustainable jobs such as local development workers who will run each particular hub.

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We're yet to know what learnings might come out of the project as we're still in the planning stages, but it's clear that none of this is possible without collaboration and clear communication. We have so many partners involved in this project that our main challenge will be ensuring that everyone is listened to and experiences are properly fed back at key interludes.

Contact details

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