

LGA Independent Group Climate Conference

14 February 2020

You've declared an emergency, now what?

Our morning workshop saw attendees split into four groups which each visited four different areas to share their actions and ideas on waste and recycling, planning and housing, energy and sequestration and transport.

A summary of the actions and ideas shared is below.

Waste and Recycling

- Actions taken:
 - Banned single-use plastic in council buildings / charter against single use
 - Food waste collected weekly
 - Moving to paperless council
 - Enhanced communication with the public and greater education initiatives
 - Encouraging use of waterbutts to collect rainwater
 - Installed drinking fountains to reduce plastic bottle use
 - Used furniture projects / upcycling
 - Recycling bins in city centres
 - Repair cafes
 - Free re-fill schemes for water

- Ideas of actions that need to be taken:
 - Incentivise / reward businesses for producing less waste
 - Clearer communications on what can be recycled – consistency across the country?
 - Completely end single-use plastic
 - Recycling bins in city centres
 - National protocol for waste disposal that can be devolved to councils

Planning and Housing

- Actions taken:
 - Wildlife protections to prevent unnecessary developments
 - Eliminate change implications
 - Committed to zero carbon council housing
 - All new housing to have electric vehicle charging
 - Encouraging and supporting biodiversity
 - Raised issues on 58 © of NPPF as a priority
 - Central Beds – committed £1.7m to tree planting
 - Uttlesford – left areas for rewilding

- Ideas of actions that need to be taken:
 - Building control authority that promotes eco-friendly developments
 - Don't demolish, refurbish
 - Training for builders on carbon efficiency
 - Greater air quality monitoring
 - Wholesale change to NPPF to change drivers from commercial/economic development to environmental and human wellbeing
 - Building to Passivhaus standards
 - Retrofitting housing
 - Need to building housing now which is carbon neutral, rather than already knowing we'll have to retrofit new stock
 - Need to require higher energy efficiency standards through planning
 - Only councils allowed to build houses
 - Plant two trees per house built
 - No building on green belt to protect trees, biodiversity etc
 - End five year rule
 - Need landlord registration so there can be better engagement with rental sector on what's needed
 - Aim above the standard in regards to planning requirements

Energy and Sequestration:

- Actions taken:
 - Replaced streetlight lightbulbs with LEDs (Northamptonshire)
 - Solar panels on all council buildings
 - Moved to electric council fleet
 - Greater EV electric charging ports and electric busses
 - Councils shifting to green energy tariffs
 - Lambeth community energy projects
 - Geothermal homes
 - Solihull – ground source heating pumps for industry
 - Tidal energy benefits as well as solar and wind
 - Northamptonshire – solar panels on all industrial buildings
 - Bedford council – insulated halls
 - Guildford – replaced storage heaters with Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs)
- Ideas of actions that need to be taken:
 - Tree planting to increase green space
 - Retrofitting all homes
 - Actively promoting solar panels on new developments and encouraging their installation on older homes
 - Turn off street lights at earlier hours
 - Policy change (and greater comms about benefits of) onshore wind
 - Community energy schemes – shared benefit of solar panels, charging points, public transport
 - Not just planting trees – look at peat, soil and wetlands as things to encourage

Transport:

- Actions taken:
 - Rejected airport expansion on climate change terms
 - Anti-idling car initiatives - Signs up at schools and junctions to turn engines up
 - Car-free city centres
 - Allocated money for cycling routes
 - Improved electric bus services
 - Essex schools encouraging more walking, less use of vehicles
 - IoW – updated cycle paths
 - Central Beds – good bus service from train station
 - Work going ahead with Mums 4 Lungs around school air quality
 - Workplace parking levy to encourage council staff to share rides

- Ideas of actions that need to be taken:
 - Introduce a “Transport for London” authority for all counties
 - Pedestrianize city/town/village centres
 - Differentiate fees for parking permits (EV lower fees than petrol)
 - Replace all emergency service vehicles with electric
 - Improve cycle storage and car sharing systems on estates
 - More bus routes and cycle lanes
 - Introduce low-traffic neighbourhoods, town centres, days of the week
 - Mobility centres for charging of electric vehicles / scooters/bikes
 - Make parking less attractive for visitors with different rates for residents versus tourists, to encourage public transport
 - ‘Green’ the emergency services
 - Work with schools so they have better transport plans – for their own and parent vehicles
 - Suggest all new slots at Gatwick be for electric / hybrid planes only
 - Fill the potholes