

YORK CLIMATE STRATEGY

Since work began on the Climate Change Strategy in May 2020, we have:

- Undertaken a review of the evidence base and existing policy context
- Calculated past and present city wide green house gas emissions
- Stage 1 of engagement; public attitude survey as part of Our Big Conversation
- Stage 2 of engagement; stakeholder perspectives through thematic roundtables
- Completed the main content of the Strategy
- Undertaken the internal officer technical review

The following actions are still to be completed:

- Period of Public Consultation aligned with Stage 3 engagement
- Update the strategy design and accessibility
- Publish the York Climate Change Strategy

On the current timescale, the Climate Change Strategy will be published early 2022

- ✓ Evidence Gathering
- ✓ Emissions Baseline
- ✓ Our Big Conversation
- ✓ Stakeholder Perspectives
- ✓ Strategy Writing
- ✓ Officer Review
- Public Consultation
- Stage 3 Engagement
- Design and Accessibility
- Climate Strategy Published

STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

- Three thematic roundtables
 1. Buildings
 2. Transport
 3. Energy, Industry, Waste and Natural Environment
- Representation from 35 organisations
- Identifying barriers and opportunities across 5 challenge areas:
 - a) Technical
 - b) Policy
 - c) Financial
 - d) Community
 - e) Delivery
- Findings used to shape strategic objectives








BUILDINGS

STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

As part of the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan development, three workshops were held, and a public attitude survey published to gain stakeholder views on how York could respond to the climate emergency. A summary of the key stakeholder views relating to buildings are detailed below.

Challenge areas

	Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Technologies that have reached maturity are now trusted and widely accepted (e.g. PVs), newer technologies still treated with scepticism and suffer from high cost. Heat pumps need financial subsidy to stimulate market until economies of scale drive down price. ○ Complicated systems that underperform can generate negative reactions. Only appropriate solutions should be specified with local demonstrators/pilots to showcase new technology.
	Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Approach to decarbonisation of conservation/heritage assets is insufficient and inconsistent. National policy (NPPF) needs to reflect climate emergency priorities, local policy (The Local Plan) needs to provide standards and guidance for heritage retrofit and planning practice needs a consistent, joined up approach. ○ Need to balance decarbonisation with reducing fuel poverty and recognise the role of demand reduction.
	Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Government subsidies for low carbon heating solutions have not been effective. Gas is too cheap and so a greater financial incentive is needed switch to electricity. ○ Financial offers can be complicated and initial capital outlay may be prohibitive for some organisations/households. Role for specialist independent advice.
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Broad awareness of need for change has increased significantly, but there is an evident behavioral gap when it comes to uptake. ○ Inconvenience, lack of simple independent information, complicated list of suppliers and pricing all add hassle factors to retrofit. There is a need for an independent and trusted brokerage service and local pilot/demonstrators.
	Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Limited availability of specialist consultants (particularly for heritage buildings). Highly skilled project co-ordinators/managers also needed in construction sector. Potential for area-based skill sharing schemes for Clerk of Works/Building Inspectors. ○ Need to provide suitable training, skills and market development but high level of inertia in trainers/education. National curriculum change will be slow so need to promote local apprenticeships and integrate into purchasing policy of local organisations.

TRANSPORT

STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

As part of the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan development, three workshops were held, and a public attitude survey published to gain stakeholder views on how York could respond to the climate emergency. A summary of the key stakeholder views relating to transport are detailed below.

Challenge areas



Technical

- There are many concerns regarding the lack of infrastructure surrounding the support of the transitions to EVs from a technical perspective; such as the lack of charging infrastructure and a gap in the data to help estimate the required change need to meet the growing demand.
- Central hub is needed to connect more than one mode of transport e.g., one app connecting all journeys with different modes and influence decision making with costs per mode and carbon cost.



Policy

- Long term security of policy is impossible due to change in political parties' agendas.
- Clarification on policy on EV charging demand.
- Historic nature of the city - how to accommodate infrastructure that is compliant with guidance.
- Members of the Council may not live in the inner-city areas - who they represent may limit York's activities.



Financial

- Funding schemes are short term - no finance in the medium/long term e.g., in 7-8 years.
- Limited finance to pay for new bus networks/improvements.
- Need funding to encourage residents to switch and enact that behaviour change and ensure offers are affordable.
- How to make roads safer to increase cyclist confidence, speed reduction, large vehicle restriction - limited space.
- 73% of survey respondents listed that an efficient and affordable public transport system should be a key objective of York's Climate Change Strategy.



Community

- Lack of education on cost of an EV - Council should encourage people to think about switching to EV through more educational opportunities.
- Encourage co-creation - discuss solutions with members of the community.
- Engagement with community when encouraging shorter distances.
- Ethical considerations are important - fair and just transition to consider all communities.
- Direct engagement with communities to challenge conceptions and drive change.



Delivery






- Facilitating behavior change by introducing earlier bus schedule.
- Number of residents put pressure on transport and infrastructure - puts more pressure on the NHS.
- Council to develop cycling routes through the city centre which connect to outer areas.
- People don't want to leave the safety of their vehicles, especially with the pandemic and weather is changeable.

WASTE

STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

As part of the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan development, three workshops were held, and a public attitude survey published to gain stakeholder views on how York could respond to the climate emergency. A summary of the key stakeholder views relating to waste are detailed below.

Challenge areas






	Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need to consider whether there is potential for a waste recovery plant and if it is a long-term solution, as waste is diverted from landfill and is instead generating energy. Potential to utilise existing technology but with additional infrastructure or technology should be explored - e.g. the conversion of the anaerobic digestion site. ○ Ongoing technical projects to find single use plastic alternatives through University of York. ○ Mycelium packaging assessing technical viability.
	Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Having consistency between households and businesses, as businesses are mandated to do recycling and sort more waste as a result. ○ There's a need to be consistent in policy in infrastructure for waste, packaging and producer responsibility alongside any ongoing cost and management of waste. ○ Potential policy change could include food waste.
	Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Uptake of Re-biz programme is not as high in certain areas due to a lack of audits and grants. ○ 55% of respondents to the Our Big Conversation Residents survey listed cost as a key reason preventing them from reducing their carbon footprint in areas including waste.
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Need to increase community awareness and business incentives to discourage single use plastic. ○ Need for community champions who provide encouragement and education for the smallest businesses.
	Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The biggest issue with microplastics is their depository in natural areas, their life cycle needs to be managed. ○ Time and effort into recycling different plastics and determine what can and can't be recycled. ○ Greater emphasis on larger businesses, need to consider whether different language and a different approach is needed.

INDUSTRY

STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

As part of the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan development, three workshops were held, and a public attitude survey published to gain stakeholder views on how York could respond to the climate emergency. A summary of the key stakeholder views relating to industry are detailed below.

Challenge areas

	Technical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Although technology already exists to capture carbon emissions, such as carbon capture storage (CCS), it is not readily available. ○ Consistent demand for energy in industry provides an opportunity for a Power Purchase Agreement. ○ Consistent demand for energy in industry may limit the ability to rely on renewable energy without sufficient energy storage.
	Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is an existing Clean Growth Strategy for the UK, which should be referenced and considered. ○ Most policy focused on industry is at larger geographical scales than a local authority, so the influence of CYC may be limited.
	Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ COVID Recovery Loan Scheme from government is set to help industries hit particularly hard by the pandemic and provides an opportunity for building back better and driving low-carbon growth and low-carbon infrastructure. ○ Development of low-carbon infrastructure can have high associated costs. ○ Businesses may not have significant available funds due to COVID-19, and therefore would need financial support to implement changes. ○ Funding needs to be made available to businesses of all sizes. ○ CCS has high associate costs.
	Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Jobs may be created in CCS trials and low-carbon infrastructure. ○ May face resistance from industry without support. ○ There may be a skills shortage in the local workforce to install low -carbon infrastructure.
	Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ External reporting mechanisms provide guidance and structure to reporting. ○ External reporting mechanisms have high credibility and reflect well on the business. ○ Knowledge of low-carbon infrastructure and energy efficiency measures to be included in new builds may be limited. ○ Heritage and historical importance of York’s landscape may limit infrastructure improvements.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

As part of the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan development, three workshops were held, and a public attitude survey published to gain stakeholder views on how York could respond to the climate emergency. A summary of the key stakeholder views relating to the natural environment are detailed below.

Challenge areas



Technical

- Tree planting can be used to mitigate the risk of flooding which doesn't have to be within York's boundary and can be tied into local York initiatives.
- Trees offer a nature-based solution to the warming of urban areas by providing shade.



Policy

- Under the UK's exit from the European Union, policy can move away from the Common Agricultural Policy and provide a change in funding requirements for landowners. The requirements could focus on the public good and there could be more funding options for decarbonisation/afforestation.
- The temporal period is a barrier to tree planting and tree cover reducing carbon emissions. Policy should consider that more mature trees have more significant impact but may not tie into the 2030 timeline.



Financial

- There are existing funding streams available for urban planting.
- There is an associated cost to the maintenance of trees and green space which needs to be demonstrated.
- The return on investment in the form of carbon sequestration will be more in the long-term.



Community

- Need to address the public view of the value of trees and how they benefit the city.
- Community engagement is very important and should be viewed as a positive upfront investment.
- Involving the community with green infrastructure initiatives engages people with nature.
- There may be disagreement and resistance to local changes, also known as "Not In My Back Yard"-ism (NIMBYSM), over the location of new trees.



Delivery

- There are opportunities for rewilding and tree planting in the outer areas of York.
- Tree planting in urban areas can also look at levels of deprivation when deciding on locations to improve local areas.
- Land use availability - land under local authority ownership covers a small percentage of the district, which means that the impact tree planting can be dependent on the engagement and willingness of local landowners.

ENERGY SUPPLY

STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

As part of the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan development, three workshops were held, and a public attitude survey published to gain stakeholder views on how York could respond to the climate emergency. A summary of the key stakeholder views relating to energy supply are detailed below.

Challenge areas



Technical

- Assessments from the Council should look at all renewable energy options e.g., a heat pump strategy, wind strategy.
- The use of technology should be maximised, e.g., apps that show the amount of money and carbon saved from renewable energy.
- Technology should also be used to amplify good practice e.g., apps to share case studies and tips.



Policy

- There is a gap in policy for new-build properties between the Local Plan and the requirements of Passivhaus. There is a need to balance Passivhaus and offering retrofitting such as loft insulation across the city, existing stock should also be focused on.
- Historic and heritage-based policy may conflict with renewable energy installation.



Financial

- Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) can benefit SMEs through free or cheap audits, the development of a plan and help accessing finance to invest in upgrades. The payment then comes out of saving made from energy bills. This method is working well in Oxford but does require some initial capital investment. The ability of ESCOs to benefit small businesses may be limited.
- Funding opportunities are predominantly for larger businesses and need to be made available to small businesses.
- Need to provide a financial incentive for people/businesses.



Community

- Need to ensure all groups are accounted for and get a say in any transition/conversation.
- Negative view of putting in a planning application for wind turbines to the council due to negative past experiences.
- Opportunity for tying the COVID-19 recovery to initiatives.
- Role of the creative sector to reshape the heritage view of the city to now include renewable options e.g., wind turbines.



Delivery

- Solar tiles may be more beneficial than solar panels.
- Implement smart grid technologies e.g., demand-side response to manage renewable energy supply/demand.
- Allocate small portion of new renewables to be community-owned.
- Carbon literacy may help with the missing conversation to promote renewable energy.