



## Climate Emergency consultation 25 April 2019, Edinburgh

**Hosted at City of Edinburgh Council Chambers / Organised by Transition Edinburgh**

Councillor Karen Doran, Vice-Convener of the City’s Transport and Environment Committee, welcomed participants to the event and briefly indicated the intentions of the City Council, while advising that the Climate Emergency action plan goes to the relevant committee on 14 May.

Mike Wignall from Transition Edinburgh then gave an inspirational account of a large gathering in Manchester – where 1,800 people exchanged hope, information and enthusiastic determination to take real action in the face of the environmental and climate emergency. It was held in March and hosted by Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester Combined Authority, who won strong pledges for climate action from Chief Executives representing a wide range of public bodies and private companies.

### Mike’s account of what others are doing included:

#### How to get started

- Acknowledge scale of challenge
- Go for small, short term wins
- Full costed plan not necessary
- Loads of experience in other LAs to draw on

#### Building local alliances

- Reach out to all local organisations
- Invite local Transition Town (Transition Edinburgh!)
- Involve school students – they are the future



See slides at <https://transitionedinburgh.org.uk/events/report-from-past-events/>

The main part of the evening was the opportunity to discuss what action we can and should be taking here in the city of Edinburgh. The enthusiasm of the 60 attendees was such that people were still being urged to stop their discussions 30 minutes after the planned finish time!

Conversations took place at eight tables, led by volunteers from some of the city’s stakeholders. [NHS Lothian, RBS / business, University, 3E (Environment, Employment, Education), Environment groups, EcoCongregations, City of Edinburgh Council, political groups]. The points below are extracted from discussions – full notes are on web at: <https://transitionedinburgh.org.uk/>

Transition Edinburgh will collaborate with city stakeholders and City of Edinburgh Council to ensure appropriate action is initiated. One good outcome of this well attended event would be if the **Edinburgh Partnership** adds “Climate Neutral Action” to current priority of reducing poverty and increasing inclusion. There are co-benefits where such action helps reduce poverty and inequality.

*Transition Edinburgh is a community-led organisation that connects and supports community groups – and initiates practical projects – that strive for a greener, fairer, healthier and more resilient Edinburgh. In process of registering as a charity, Transition Edinburgh aims to:*

- *raise awareness of the problems of climate disruption and fossil fuels*
- *take and support actions that promote reductions in climate emissions and fossil fuel use*
- *encourage a positive attitude to such lifestyle changes – different can be better*
- *co-operate with groups and individuals in ways that enhance local communities, and*
- *promote a Climate Neutral Edinburgh.*

## ***Feedback from the 60 participants at the Climate Emergency Consultation***

Three questions were posed for discussion at the eight tables: ***Timescale? Who? and How?***

### **1. *What is a realistic timescale?***

**Clear consensus was to be ambitious – go for 2030, like most other Local Authorities.**

- Need to account for time required to make changes. Technologies are there but plans need to take note of IPCC time scale – major action over coming decade.

### **2. *Who to involve in the transition to Climate Neutral?***

**Consensus was to engage the whole city, involving all stakeholders and communities.**

- All climate action needs to be led by top management in charge and accountable
- Requires both Public Bodies and business engagement ... a major challenge
- Climate Neutral Festival(s) to raise awareness – localised? – fun and creative
- NHS “not well prepared for health impact of climate change”. Scale of problem not well recognised and NHS needs to be included on the City’s Climate Emergency Action Plan
- Carbon targets – and programmes to achieve them – needed for all sectors across the city
- Scottish Government has to change fast – recognising the Just Transition – to keep the oil and gas in the ground ... needs incentives to de-carbonise
- Need better quality housing – change planning rules / make more demands of developers.

### **3. *How to make the changes?***

**Consensus: Develop an Outline Strategy with timelines, monitoring and evaluation.**

- Joined up thinking, in Council and in collaboration with other organisations, avoid silos
- Need robust baseline and monitoring; use ECCI and science expertise?
- Cross party working essential - especially as some decisions might be unpopular as they impact on individual lifestyle choices e.g. driving / holidaying / food choices
- Carrots and sticks. Incentives. Ensure change is essential, we do not have luxury of choice
- Incentives for switching both domestic and commercial heating

### ***Update since the Consultation Event 25 April***

On 28 April the First Minister declared a “Climate Emergency” at the SNP conference, saying “*If ... advice says we can go further or go faster, we will do so ... Scotland will lead by example.*” She added: “*Every single one of us now needs to take more action – not just Scottish Government but also all businesses, schools, communities, individuals and organisations.*”

On 2 May the Committee on Climate Change recommended: ***Scotland to be “net-zero” by 2045.***

On 3 May the Scottish Climate Bill was amended in line with new guidance. Aims to cut emissions by 70% by 2030 and 90% by 2040.

David Reay, Professor of Carbon Management, University of Edinburgh, said the report changes everything. “*It is a blueprint for a revolution in every facet of our lives, from how we power our homes and travel to work, to the food we buy and the holidays we take. ... For those who still lobby for delay under a smokescreen of economics the message is blunt: net-zero is affordable and we can do it much faster than the rest of the UK too.*”

### ***Edinburgh 2050 City Vision***

Lord Provost Frank Ross launched an Interim Report in 2017 on wide public engagement seeking to identify a new vision for the city supported by businesses, public bodies, citizens and visitors. Further deliberations continue – and this new context might be the opportunity for the Edinburgh Partnership to reach out to all stakeholders and embrace a Climate Neutral ambition for 2030?

6 May 2019 [www.transitionedinburgh.org.uk](http://www.transitionedinburgh.org.uk) / [Edinburgh@transition.scot](mailto:Edinburgh@transition.scot) / 07743 759 528