

North Yorkshire Council Election 5 May 2022

NY Climate Coalition survey of candidate views on key environmental issues

Candidate name	Party	Division
Mike Newton	Labour Party	Hambleton

Thanks for taking part in this survey. We hope you will see this as an opportunity to share your thoughts with voters on important climate and environmental issues. While we would ideally like candidates to answer the survey in full, we appreciate that some of the points are quite technical. Candidates come from many different backgrounds and may be drawn to local government because of a passion for other aspects of service delivery and community interest. Please feel free to focus on the questions you feel are most relevant to you. You can always add more information later if you wish.

1. The newly elected members of North Yorkshire Council (NYC) will be responsible for overseeing the county's net zero strategy. Would you support the provision of carbon literacy training (e.g. through the [Carbon Literacy Project](#)) as part of the induction programme for new councillors?

I think that carbon literacy training is a great idea and not just for councillors!

2. Transport, agriculture and domestic energy are the biggest sources of greenhouse gas emissions in North Yorkshire. In your view, how should the new NY Council tackle these most effectively?

Our manifesto pledges are: All public transport vehicles electric by 2030 and all our own vehicles are electric by 2030
We need to encourage and facilitate cycling especially for shorter journeys, and develop a network of cycleways, meeting the Sustrans safe design standards and connecting every settlement in the county

3. Many politicians support net zero commitments, but some argue that "green" measures to protect the environment and climate are too expensive, will cost jobs and need to be delayed. Where do you stand on this?

We cannot delay. We should be investing in new green technologies
Our county needs the new jobs generated in the sector as we invest in
(a) Local renewable energy generation (b) heat pump installation (c) retrofitting insulation

4. As we seek more energy independence nationally, what role do you see in our region for onshore wind, solar farms and fracking?

We need reduce our energy consumption, by investing as described in my answer to question 3. The importance of energy independence has been demonstrated by the Ukraine war.

5. How could the future NYC use its powers under the planning system to promote sustainable development? Should there be a presumption against high-carbon development proposals in NYC's planning policies?

We would address this in the local plans , requiring new developments to support investment in energy efficient homes, and in retrofitting of buildings that reduce energy consumption. Pursue the principle of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle at every opportunity, and support the principles of the circular economy.

6. There are plans (in the [NY Local Enterprise Partnership strategy](#)) to double the current area of woodland in the region. Would you actively support this target?

Yes ! I would want to see this used to increase biodiversity as well . I am concerned there is a focus on tree planting as carbon offsetting when we should be doing this as well as reducing our carbon footprint. My son has raised money for tree planting by running 8 marathons on consecutive days.

7. Will you sign the UK Divest Pledge: "If elected, I pledge to support the council divesting its pension fund out of fossil fuels and redirecting those amounts into sustainable investments and the local economy over an appropriate time-scale. I promise to do everything in my power to make sure this happens within the first year of my term in office."

Yes, our manifesto pledges to develop an ethical investment strategy which disinvests in high carbon industries

8. Would you support net zero measures as a spending priority for the new council?

Yes

9. Most districts/boroughs in NY and around 75% across the UK have declared a climate emergency. In your view, should the new NYC adopt a similar motion to underpin its decarbonisation and planning policies?

Absolutely yes, we must however as well as pass that motion commit the councils resources to support delivery of our ambitions

10. Is there anything else you'd like to add on your environmental or climate views?

For example, what would your future priorities be in your division and more widely in North Yorkshire? Do you have any comments on more technical matters such as hydrogen as a fuel, Drax, grid capacity, energy-efficiency, retrofitting, peatland conservation, plastic pollution, waste, circular economy, nature recovery or the government's new energy security strategy?

Again from our manifesto: (a) Pursue the principle of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle at every opportunity, and support the principles of the circular economy. (b) Establish local resources-recovery parks which re-use and repair waste material and create green jobs and provide for more items to be recycled at recycling centre