

North Yorkshire Council Election 5 May 2022

NY Climate Coalition survey of candidate views on key environmental issues

Candidate name	Party	Division
Denise Sangster	Labour	Scalby & the Coast

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?

Yes I would. I believe this is one of the areas it is very important that NYC should address, for all councillors. Regular updates should also be provided.

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?

Currently converting all possible NYC vehicles and public transport to electric by 2030 should be the aim. However we should be constantly looking at all other forms of green energy that could be harnessed, with a view to cost efficiency and viability. We do have a project in Scarborough and Whitby for the Cinder Track (Old Railway line). This is being upgraded for use by pedestrians and cyclists and will give our community the opportunity to walk or cycle between Scarborough and Whitby and beyond.

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?

I support the net zero commitments and believe we should invest in new green technologies. There is a movement to provide local energy generation that I fully support. Other measures to consider and pursue are heat pump installation, retrofitting insulation and carbon capture. All new housing should be built with the inclusion of some forms of green energy efficiency.

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

I believe fracking is completely unacceptable. I have attended many meetings where the viability of this method of extracting gas has been explored and have been totally unconvinced that it would be beneficial

to our environmental health or cost effective – lead times alone should prevent any consideration of this method of energy production.

I support onshore wind and solar farms as alternative forms of energy. I would also like to see serious consideration for tidal power – an example is the Swansea Bay tidal project that was not pursued by the current government.

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?

When drawing up the Local Plans NYC should ensure that any new developments consist of energy efficient homes.

House/flat owners of older properties should be given advice and support to retrofit in order to reduce energy consumption.

NYC should be encouraging the principle of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.

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?

I believe that the absolute minimum target should be to double the current area of woodland in our region and I would actively support this. Personally I support Woodland Trust and have planted trees through their initiatives.

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. I believe we should develop an ethical investment strategy in order to disinvest high carbon industries. NYC should also be using a bank that is ethically driven.

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?

Yes NYC should. Scarborough Borough Council declared a climate emergency some time ago. We should also be looking at NYC resources to support this.

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?

My priority for my division would be sustainable transport. Scalby and the Coast deserve a much improved local bus system that would enable the community to have the ability travel to work or on leisure activities at reasonable times of day, including weekends. Village life is very limited for people to go any distance who do not have the use of a car. Life for them is dictated by bus timetables and personal mobility. I believe that local transport should provide a sustainable community service. If it was regular, timely and reliable more people would support it and it would be so much better for our environment.

I believe we should be exploring all green measures of energy, including green hydrogen as a fuel as it appears to be the cleanest option – without CO₂ as a by-product.

Drax power station is powered by sustainable sourced biomass, it has been questioned as “green” due to the amount of carbon dioxide produced. This requires further investigation.

With regard to the National Grid capacity there are fluctuations in energy provision and it is important to ensure these are addressed and contained with appropriate back up measures in place.

We should be pursuing maximum energy-efficiency within our means and be proactive in seeking out new methods.

Retrofitting is very important for our communities sustainable future. Home insulation initiatives should be reintroduced as soon as possible.

Our peatland is a very precious part of our environment. I am aware that peatland is burnt off deliberately in some areas and this practice should be prohibited. The damage to wildlife should be one consideration (with the encroaching extinction of many species). Peatland also acts as a global carbon store, drinking water filtration, flood prevention and as an historical archive.

Plastic pollution in our environment is a very big concern, with miniscule deposits found in fish (part of the food cycle). All our communal areas - woodlands, seashores, parks, streets – are littered with plastic - not to mention the seas themselves. So much of our household rubbish contains plastic, often not recyclable, so it ends up in waste mountains. We should be following the circular strategy of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle in our considered approach to life in our community.

There is a movement towards agricultural wilding that some farmers are actively participating in. This introduces and conserves wild crops and plants for agricultural purposes. I really support any initiative that will enable nature recovery and in turn will benefit all our communities.

I do not support some of our government's new energy security strategy. The main reliance seems to be on nuclear which will take several years to go into production. Offshore wind, solar and hydrogen are all included but cannot tackle our current energy crisis. Labour has promoted a Windfall Tax on BP and Shell to go towards current household bills, with further financial assistance to those most in need. I absolutely support this.