

North Yorkshire Council Election 5 May 2022

NY Climate Coalition survey of candidate views on key environmental issues

Candidate name	Party	Division
Gareth Dadd	Conservative	Thirsk

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?

No objection at all, and would advocate training and factual information in this and all other matters to equip Cllrs with the tools they need to make the decisions and choices they will face

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?

It must be done in a pragmatic manner, with a balanced approach to the economy alongside the vital importance of CO2 reduction. We must exploit the economic opportunities that CO2 reduction can bring.

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?

See above. I have learnt over the past few years that this can bring an opportunity for the economy.

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

I do believe we can harness on-shore wind and solar farms within North Yorkshire, with the protections through the planning process to mitigate the perceived harm they will do to local communities, for example noise from turbines dictates that they must be positioned away from residential areas. In terms of fracking, I simply do not know the full facts around it but do refer to the recently adopted Minerals Plan by NYCC that has in place tough safeguards for local communities SHOULD Fracking be allowed to restart by national 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?

Planning is not my skill set, but it seems to me that positive policies with a presumption in favour of alternative energy is probably a good tactic. We cannot, for example, ban petrol and diesel filling stations in North Yorkshire but would hope that these stations embrace EV charging.

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-100%

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."

I am not sure if this could be achieved without serious financial damage to the pension pot. As a principle yes, but with the qualification over time scale. It may well be achievable, I do not know.

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

As one of the priorities, yes. Of course we have other services to provide, and services to vulnerable people will always remain my priority. We can, of course, change how we deliver those, for example we are at NYCC incentivising the use of electric vehicles for staff, including home care providers.

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?

I would have no problem with this, but of course words are worth less than actions and given our commitment to net zero by 2030 I think we have already shown that we do actually take this seriously.

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?

I am still learning, but locally we absolutely must develop means of on-street charging for vehicles. We are looking at lamp posts etc and innovative methods of providing that opportunity for those of us that

wish to drive EVs. Our street designs and Highways departments must always be minded to consider CO2 reduction. I am committed to place this at the heart of future decision-making, as important as financial considerations.