

North Yorkshire Council Election 5 May 2022

NY Climate Coalition survey of candidate views on key environmental issues

Candidate name	Party	Division
Geoff Foxall	Labour	High Harrogate & Kingsley

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

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?

Transport: No new roads. Invest in and promote public transport in electric vehicles. Prioritise walking and cycling measures over car transport. Use rail rather than road.

Agriculture: Promote best practice in farming aimed at reducing the impact that agriculture has on climate change. Encourage rewilding and new woodland creation. Support good practice that encourages pollinators. Campaign to protect our marine and natural environment and increase biodiversity, reduce habitat loss, and encourage tree and wild-flower planting to increase bees and other pollinators.

Domestic energy: Support renewable energy initiatives using wind, solar, biomass and water. Encourage community ownership as well as community and domestic generation of renewable, clean energy. 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. Establish local resources-recovery parks which reuse and repair waste material and create green jobs and provide for more items to be recycled at recycling centres.

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?

Support net zero commitments and creation of green jobs

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

Support renewable energy initiatives using wind (onshore and offshore), solar, biomass and water.
Oppose fracking

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?

I will campaign for a consistent approach to carbon budgeting and ensure that the environmental impact is taken account of in every decision made by NYC.

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 and actively encourage local groups to get involved supplying an advice service and, if possible, funding for group activities.

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

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

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 power station, grid capacity, energy-efficiency, retrofitting, peatland conservation, plastic pollution, waste, circular economy, nature recovery or the government's new energy security strategy?

Although I will keep a watching brief in my division, my priority is to prevent global climate catastrophe. There should be no limit to our scope and vision.