

North Yorkshire Council Election 5 May 2022

NY Climate Coalition survey of candidate views on key environmental issues

Candidate name	Party	Division
David Noland	The Green Party	Skipton North & Embsay-with-Eastby

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?

Absolutely. All councillors, of whatever hue, need to be aware of and updated with the latest research and advice where they can freely ask questions of experts in the field to leave no scope for ignorance of the problems that NYC and the UK in general face. They could share this training with town and parish councillors.

Carbon literacy roadshows could roam NY to give residents the opportunity to be informed of the problems and projected solutions as well.

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?

We need an integrated transport plan connecting all forms of transport that would promote active travel and significantly reduce fossil fuel use. NYC must lobby Westminster for more funding for this but ultimately the fastest progress will be through change of national government at a general election. NYC must support '20's plenty' to reduce speeds in villages, in the centre of our towns and especially around schools. This would make life more pleasant for residents and encourage active travel thereby reducing emissions. NYC Highways must be directed by the new Council to be more proactive in road safety e.g. Reducing speed limits for all, particularly for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, before accident statistics tell them that a given road is dangerous. The statistics often belie the danger because pedestrian and cyclists avoid certain roads or take to cars for short journeys.

Cyclists need safe and dry parking. NYC planners should include it in their plans and ask developers for this provision when they don't see it in planning applications e.g. On street bike hangars such as those Bristol Cycling Campaign have been particularly successful in having installed. To encourage cycling NYC should investigate the introduction of segregated cycle lanes in towns as part of integrated plans. Pedestrians need safe routes too e.g. widening pavements, less 'street furniture' on pavements (EV charging points should be in bays on the road not on the pavement) and the parking of vehicles on pavements banned.

As a rural county many residents are used to eating meat and should be encouraged to buy this locally but NYC should encourage a better and more balanced diet starting in schools.

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?

It’s clear to me from the science that the costs of not facing up to the climate disaster will be far worse than doing what we can, as soon as possible. ‘Green’ measures are in fact projected to generate many thousands of jobs through the Green New Deal, not least in Yorkshire.

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

I’d rather see than an onshore wind farm than a nuclear power station. However, as a regular cyclist and hill walker in the Yorkshire Dales I appreciate the great outdoors and prefer the investment first to be in reducing energy demand through technology and insulation. There is a huge wind farm industry off the East coast of the UK producing energy two or three times cheaper than nuclear without the pollution and waste.

If homeowners were given the right financial encouragement again to install solar panels on their roofs it would rejuvenate the industry and each house would be a mini power station, reducing the need for solar farms which take up land that we could be growing food on or creating woodlands.

Fracking must not go ahead, anywhere in the UK. We don’t need it. It pollutes the land, water and air.

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?

All housing development on NYC land should consist of housing that produces more energy than they consume with air source heat pumps, solar panels and high levels of insulation, to Passivhaus levels. This must be extended to all housing through changes in UK planning law.

I can’t think of any reason why a high carbon development should be allowed.

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?

Doubling is probably nowhere near enough but it would be an improvement, with an agroforestry programme including mixed woodlands of native trees not acres of pines.

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, of course. This must be a priority.

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

NYC will have a huge budget. Measures such as installation of heatpumps in NYC buildings where possible, solar panels on roofs, new NYC vehicles being EV, showers and cycle stores for NYC employees, discounted rail travel negotiated for employees for commuting and NYC business.

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?

NYC must adopt a climate emergency motion as soon as possible, as my own council did after my Green Party colleague and I had proposed it. Every policy that NYC adopts should be measured against its potential impact on our climate.

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?

As I understand it Hydrogen as a fuel can be produced from surplus renewable electricity to be used in those particular industries that will still need gas or as a backup store in times of need. That is based on the latest 'Carbon Net Zero Britain' research from the Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales.

Drax needs to be shut down. It sucks in £millions from the UK public purse to fell hardwoods in North America and Eastern Europe to be burned at Drax. It's an ecological disaster. A Green New Deal would give employment to about 250 000 people trained, for example, to install high quality insulation in our housing starting with council homes, housing association properties and working their way through the housing stock.

The Local Electricity Bill, which is close to gaining support from a majority on the House of Commons would enable local communities to more easily and viably set up local, smaller scale renewable energy projects.

Retrofitting is crucial to make our current housing stock more energy efficient. It's five times more expensive to retrofit insulation than to build well-insulated homes in the first place which is why all new housing should be carbon positive.

Peatland is a massive carbon store and should not be dug up for any reason and especially not for compost. Restoring peatland will allow it to absorb carbon.

NYC residents should be encouraged to make their own compost but not everyone will want to. NYC residents could have this collected through community composting initiatives.

Plastic pollution is a menace on our grass verges streets and in our oceans. It can be recycled but in a circular economy we would be reusing not throwing away. Children in NYC schools need to be fully informed of the damage we are all doing to our planet and what we can do instead. NYC schools/offices should not be using/selling any single use plastic.

To what extent nature can recover is a moot point given how many species of plant and animal we lose on an hourly basis. I can walk down my high street and buy Roundup in at least two stores. NYC must ban its use and that of similar chemicals by any NYC employee.

Limiting earth warming to 1.5 degrees by 2030 is possible but unlikely given current UK and global leadership. The government's new energy security strategy addresses 'supply' not 'demand'. We need to power down (potentially saving 60% of our energy by CAT's research), using the latest technology including smart appliances.