

North Yorkshire Council Election 5 May 2022

NY Climate Coalition survey of candidate views on key environmental issues

Candidate name	Party	Division
Felicity Cunliffe-Lister	Independent	Masham & Fountains

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 that would be useful

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?

- Relax any planning restrictions that prevent home owners from improving the energy performance of their home or installing micro power generator units such as solar panels and wind turbines. Many houses will be in conservation areas or be listed and this creates restrictions that might deter some house owners from taking these steps.
- Repurpose as many public spaces as possible, where appropriate, for installing electric car chargers.
- Introduce priority parking for electric cars in car parks, ideally this would be free if budgets permit
- Raise council tax for second home owners and apportion some of the supplement towards funding home insulation or installing car charge points for lower income home owners
- Improve the bus network providing more routes and more reliable and regular services. We have to make it viable for car owners to leave their cars at home. Timetables need to be more intelligent, to be available when required – and the different bus companies should work together to enable services to link in with each other, and to link in with train times also.
- The NY fleet of vehicles should be, as far as possible and if not already, electric (and the Council's electricity supply should be green)
- Install micro power generation units on all council buildings (solar power, wind power etc) and review the eco efficiency of the operations within the buildings
- Assist farmers to install eco power generator units to enable them to cut down on conventional power consumption. I don't think electric tractors are yet a viable option, so measures to encourage these would have to follow.

- I would encourage farmers to adopt eco efficient and environmentally friendly practices wherever possible

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 don't agree. If we don't take measures now the impact will be far worse. Some environmental measures create savings, especially now as we start to see the economies of scale and prices dropping as production is scaled up. We owe it to the next generation to invest in this now. It would cost less to do so and achieve net zero now than to pass on to the next generation the costs of a planet that is environmentally damaged with all the societal and financial costs that that would incur.

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

I think fracking is a distraction. It would take 10 years to achieve and would be delivering fuel that causes ever more damage. I support both on-shore wind and solar farms. Solar and wind energy farms could be an option for farmers looking to diversify in the light of all the challenges they will be facing over the next few years. My only proviso would be preference be given to sites that are not in THE MOST sensitive areas in terms of conservation and landscape (but at the same time the farmers in these areas need to be adequately compensated for being custodians of the landscape).

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 have commented on how sustainable development can be achieved in this way already. Regarding the presumption, I am assuming you are meaning high carbon just in terms of the building process (rather than the activities that will be carried out post construction). I think building processes should be low carbon.

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. These type of proposals would need to go hand in hand with a strategy to ensure that food production in terms of quantity and environmental cost is not compromised. It's a very difficult balance but I have no doubt it can be achieved.

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 will sign this pledge.

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

Environmental social governance has to underpin all of the Council's operations. The Council must deliver the services that it is obliged to do and in my mind these take priority, delivered in an environmentally responsible way. Beyond that, if budgets and resources allow, I would fully support the Council should it give priority to investing in and launching net zero initiatives.

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

I think we could do much better with our waste management. We should be recycling more and sending more to compost and reducing the amount going to landfill as much as possible. Look at San Francisco – they have proved how much can be achieved.