



## **ACE NEWS FOR September 2022**

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### **The Truss Government – What Climate Action?**

Liz Truss' record so far and her appointment of Jacob Rees-Mogg, as Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, do not bode well for climate action.

Lifting the moratorium on fracking is of major concern, along with the continuation of a policy to extend oil and gas extraction together with raising the levels of production,

and temporarily cutting the 'green levies' all seen as ways of tackling the energy crisis.

Both Truss and Rees-Mogg are opponents of wind and solar farms and are being asked to respond to a joint letter\* from the Committee on Climate Change and the National Infrastructure Commission, sent on the 7<sup>th</sup> September, to limit the rising costs of gas and fossil fuels whilst supporting the energy transition.

During the leadership campaign Truss committed to net zero by 2050, but with a noted climate sceptical Rees-Mogg it's difficult to see how the necessary policy framework will deliver the action needed. As Alok Sharma begins his last couple of months as COP26 President, he has been given little with which to reassure and encourage the rest of the world that the new UK Government will be anything but globally minded on the climate crisis.

\* You can read the letter from Lord Deben, Chair of the Climate Change Committee and Sir John Armitt, Chair of the National Infrastructure Commission at: <https://nic.org.uk/app/uploads/NIC-CCC-Letter-to-Prime-Minister-6-September-2022.pdf>

[Photo credit: 'Prime Minister Liz Truss Cabinet Meeting' by Andrew Parsons of No 10 Downing St <https://www.flickr.com/photos/number10gov/52345462343/in/photostream>]

## Sarah Wiltshire



### Help Stop the Return of Fracking

Tom Fyans Director of Campaigns and Policy | CPRE  
The countryside charity

In her first announcement as the new Prime Minister, Liz Truss has reversed the moratorium on fracking see the following news stories:

<https://news.sky.com/story/ban-on-fracking-to-be-lifted-as-part-of-liz-truss-energy-plan-12692646>. Despite all we knew about fracking – its devastating impact on the climate, its toxic effects on local communities, and its total inability to bring down energy bills (see: <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jul/20/fact-check-why-fracking-uk-will-not-reduce-energy-bills>) the government has gone full steam ahead back into the stone age.

The good news? We've defeated fracking before. Together, you were one of millions across the country to form one of the most formidable anti-fossil fuel movements the UK has ever seen. And together, we can do it again. But we need to mobilise, and we need to do so quickly.

From getting the word out to MPs to pushing the press coverage, we've got lots of plans already – but we need your help to get this campaign up and running. Your actions helped bring fracking down before.

As recently as March, Kwasi Kwarteng – the newly appointed chancellor – stated that fracking would take years to extract sufficient volumes, and “would come at a high cost for communities and our precious countryside” (see: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-10581569/KWASI-KWARTENG-Switch-power-supplies-win-win-except-Putin.html>).

Kwarteng commissioned a review on fracking that – conveniently – the government has not published, despite today's announcement. All the evidence is stacked against the government, but Liz Truss appears to be covering her ears.

Worse still, the government is considering discounts to local people near fracking sites in what can only be called a feeble attempt to bribe vulnerable rural communities to accept an unpopular, unsafe and polluting process that will destroy their tranquillity.

We know the answers to the energy and cost of living crisis – insulation, emergency support to vulnerable households, and a rapid rollout of clean energy. We can't let the government plunge us backwards again.

With an expected emergency debate on fracking expected in parliament in the new few days, we need to get the word out to MPs quickly.

*[Photo credit: "[Lancashire, UK](#)" by [350.org](#) is licensed under [CC BY-NC-SA 2.0](#).]*

**Barry White**



## Can the 'new' North Yorkshire Council deliver its ambitious climate plans?

In August ACE Settle were invited to hear about North Yorkshire County Council's (NYCC) work to develop a Climate Change Strategy for North Yorkshire. Here is our report on the progress been made.

NYCC were late to declare a Climate Emergency - on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022. Bristol City Council was the first Council to declare a Climate Emergency in 2018, Craven District Council did so in August 2019, and Settle Town Council joined hundreds of other Councils in the UK by making their own declaration on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2021. So NYCC has some catching up to do to achieve their ambition to '...ensure that everything is done to reach our target of net-zero neutrality by 2030'. A copy of the NYCC decision and report can be found [here](#).

NYCC Climate Change Officer Jos Holmes and Craven District Council's Climate Emergency Officer Fiona Protheroe explained that the Yorkshire and North Yorkshire '[Routemap to Carbon Negative](#)' - adopted by the Local Enterprise Partnership this July - is key to the emerging strategy as it already provides a pathway for the region to become carbon neutral by 2034 and carbon negative by 2040. There are however several particular challenges for our region even though business, energy and industry greenhouse gas emissions fell by approximately 500 Kt CO<sub>2</sub>e between 2015 and 2019 (see explanation below). Despite this good news we do not compare very well with other rural regions like Cornwall and Northumberland because of emissions from our motorways and main roads, and with our lower forest cover to absorb CO<sub>2</sub> per head of population. (<sup>1</sup> 1Kt CO<sub>2</sub>e = 1000 tons. *The main difference between CO<sub>2</sub> and CO<sub>2</sub>e is that CO<sub>2</sub> only accounts for carbon dioxide, while CO<sub>2</sub>e accounts for carbon dioxide and all the other greenhouse gases as well: methane, nitrous oxide, and others.*)

Road transport in NY accounts for the highest emissions of any sector (approx. 2000Kt CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2019). Another problem to tackle is the regions high percentage of old, low energy efficient rated housing with their subsequent high fossil fuel consumption. Domestic emissions were approx. 1000Kt CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2019. These high emitting sectors suggest more effort will be needed to decarbonise transport and encourage and support more low-carbon travel - like buses, trains, low emission

vehicles, and cycling and walking. Communities will need financial help to improve insulation in their homes and deal with the rising cost of energy. It was encouraging to hear that a Local Energy Strategy is already in place to help deliver the transition to cleaner energy. The Strategy is 'intended to provide a clear pathway towards a low carbon economy, ensuring that the area is well-positioned to realise the economic, environmental and social benefits from the transition'.

It was good to see agriculture included in calculating industrial emissions, and reference was made to the ongoing debate surrounding livestock intensity and land use, to ensure environmental and financial sustainability. NYCC are working with Grow Yorkshire to help and support farmers understand policies and plan for the future, conduct research to develop knowledge and technologies to make farming sustainable, resilient, and productive etc.

Craven DC's ambition is to be Carbon Neutral across the District by 2030, and they have started several projects to help meet this target, including work on Carbon Neutral Energy, Carbon Neutral Development, Land and Nature, Travel and Transportation, and Low Carbon Waste. The devolution deal for North Yorkshire and York is built around the pledge to become 'England's first carbon negative economy'. The evolving North Yorkshire Council strategy will therefore use opportunities presented through Local Government re-organisation and devolution to increase its sphere of influence; moving from reforming its own organisations practices to use its new powers to influence 'Place Shaping' e.g., in development and transport, 'Showcasing' good practice, leading 'Partnerships' to support change, and 'Involving, Engaging and Communicating' the need for local solutions. It plans to start by embedding climate change thinking into all Local Government Reorganisation proposals, include climate impact assessments for decisions and policies, and incorporate the regions 8 existing climate strategies.

To summarise, the NY Climate Change Strategy will seek reduce emissions, capture and lock-in carbon, help communities adapt to the impacts of a warming climate, and link-up policies to support the diversity of nature, by make use of nature to help combat climate change. Using the 'York and North Yorkshire Routemap to Carbon Negative' become carbon neutral by 2034 and carbon negative by 2040. A public consultation will be launched in late 2022.

Settle ACE welcome the focus now being placed on the climate emergency and encourage CDC and NYCC to get on with the job! However, we caution that people to not underestimate the challenge of reducing CO2 emissions and the impacts this will have on everyday living. ACE Settle clearly say that the progress we have seen so far is too little and too slow. The new North Yorkshire Council needs to back up its climate ambitions with strong policies, adequate funding and a regional publicity campaign. We are all in this together. Carbon emissions are changing the climate faster than we can respond; and adapting to a new warmer climate is now as important as reducing emissions. The greenhouse gases humans have already

released into the atmosphere will be hanging around for many years to come and we urgently need to re-think the way we live to stop adding more and more to the problem. On a positive note, delivering carbon reduction strategies will help people enjoy a better quality of life by developing healthy, thriving places to live, with warmer homes and lower bills, safer roads, and a vibrant and sustainable economy in a world full of nature.

[Photo credit: "[Northallerton - North Yorkshire County Hall](#)" by [David Ward](#) is licensed under [CC BY-SA 2.0](#).]

## Ray Hill



### **About Energy: Acting Locally Thinking Globally – at the Gallery on the Green**

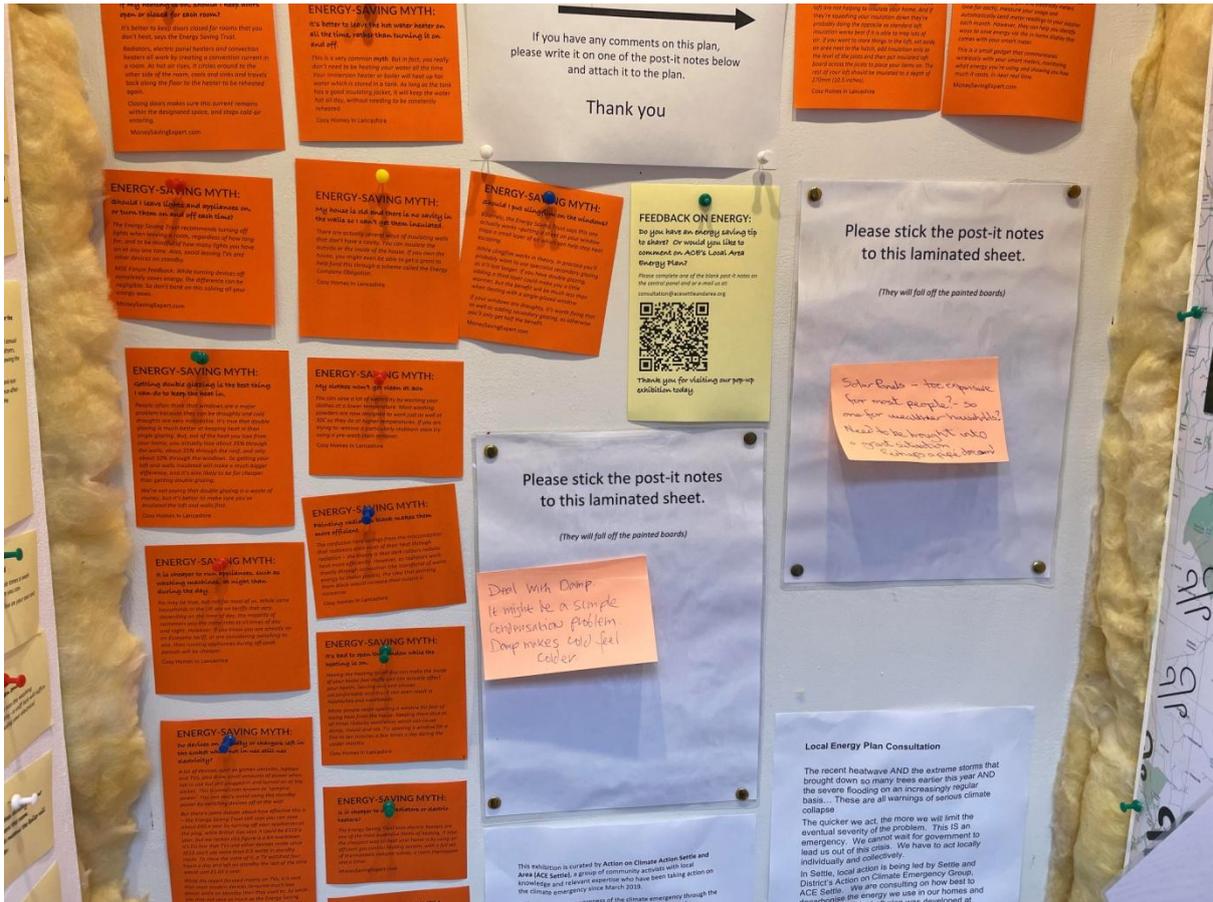
An ideas exchange about cutting energy bills and generating energy locally

#### **September's participatory exhibition at the Gallery on the Green**

addresses the two most pressing issues facing us: how to cope with ever increasing energy bills; and how to build a sustainable, affordable, equitable low carbon future.

The first section of the exhibition is about cutting domestic fuel bills. The curator has assembled the best of advice they have seen in reducing

household energy usage and cutting its cost. Many suggestions will apply to many, but not everyone.



If there's something that works for you but is not included on the board, please use the post-it notes supplied to add your idea to the display. Practical suggestions welcomed, as well as visitors' thoughts on other forms of response.

The second section features the local energy plan that is being developed by ACE.

The recent heatwave AND the extreme storms that brought down so many trees earlier this year AND the severe flooding on an increasingly regular basis... these are all warnings of serious climate collapse induced by global heating.

The frequency and intensity of these events will continue to increase in line with increases in atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations which are trapping heat from escaping our atmosphere. The quicker we act, the more we will limit the eventual severity of the problem. This is an emergency situation and it's up to all of us to act. We cannot wait for government to lead us out of this crisis. We have to act locally individually and collectively.

[Photo credits: Julie Sobczak]

Paul Cochrane



## Little Change with Plastic Packaging

Despite a lot of work by voluntary organisation and pressure to change the issue of single-use plastics little has changed over the last few years.

The latest information, provided by Surfers Against Sewage, on the worst polluters of our rivers and oceans are:

- 1) COCA-COLA – still holds the number one spot! Coca-Cola is responsible for a disgraceful 20% of all food packaging pollution.
- 2) 95% of the top 12 pollution came from food and drink categories. ALL of which are single-use items.
- 3) 50% of items collected could be captured through an all-in Deposit Return Scheme.
- 4) The only supermarket to be in the top 12 list is TESCO.
- 5) No surprise to see Mars, Nestle and McDonalds still in the top 12 and several, well known lager companies.

It's time producers reduce their polluting packaging and switch to re-use and refill!  
AND Governments must introduce policy that holds them to account.

Let each other know about local stations.

Against Sewage, on the worst polluters of our rivers and oceans are:

[Photo credit: "[Single use plastic objects on green background](#)" by [wuestenigel](#) is licensed under [CC BY 2.0](#)]

**Melanie Fryer**

