



Adult Learning Kirklees & Kirklees Council

Commitment to the Environment

2022-2024

Adult Learning Kirklees is part of Kirklees Council and as such follows all KC policies, procedures, and guidance.

All policies will be reviewed annually by the ALK Advisory Board unless there are in year changes required according to legislation or policy change.

Providers will be made aware of any new policies or changes to inform and amend their own policies and guidance. Policies highlighted will need to be devised, reviewed, and revised by the provider annually.

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| Policies created by: Jeanette Palmer Nina Barnes | Date: July 2022 | Date of Renewal July 2024 |
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Kirklees Council our commitment to the environment

Environment and Sustainability

Strategic Director for Environment and Climate Change, Colin Parr outlines our Kirklees commitment and ambition for the environment.

With the ever-present challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and supporting our residents and communities, it's understandable that climate action may not be at the forefront of our minds.

However, the change in our behaviour throughout the Covid restrictions has shown how much we impact the world around us. Earlier this week the International Energy Agency warned that climate emissions are expected to rise globally in 2021 at their fastest rate for over a decade. In order for us to sustain the reduction in emissions seen in the last year we must continue to push forward, to lead by example, and deliver on our climate change and air quality ambitions.

As many of you will know, in 2019 we declared a climate emergency and published our Air Quality Action Plan. Our vision is to make Kirklees completely carbon neutral by 2038. To deliver on our ambitions, our actions include:

- Investing £1 million toward the conversion of the council's fleet vehicles to electric and other zero-emission alternatives, including a pilot home charging scheme.
- Investing a further £1 million to grow our electric vehicle charge point infrastructure, with plans to deliver a strategic network across the district to serve our residents and visitors.
- Developing a new, improved free parking offer for Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles, with a 'Green Parking Permit', in our car parks.
- Planting over 35,000 trees across Kirklees with the help of staff and volunteers, as part of our work with the White Rose Forest partnership. Tree planting is a key part of our ambition to reach net-zero emissions, as they act as carbon storage. We have committed to significant tree planting over the next five years with an additional 64 hectares of council-owned land being identified for new woodland creation.
- Launched our virtual 'Save Food, Save Money' workshops to share easy ways in which we can all reduce our food waste.
- In March 2021, we hosted a successful two-day young people's virtual climate festival which aimed to kick start the climate conversation with our children and young people. The feedback from this event is still being collated but

early indications show that it was a success, with 40 classes joining at peak, and the event materials reaching over 2,000 children and young people.

- Agreed the next steps for taking forward an ambitious Huddersfield Heat Network scheme. The development of our own heat network offers many potential benefits to the town and would initially provide heat and hot water to the council's own town centre premises, as well as key external public and private sector partners in the area.
- Launching Kirklees' very own Climate Commission. The Commission will be an independent body, set up to broadly represent our diverse community and will include representatives from the public, private, and voluntary sectors, who will work together to constructively address the challenges of a changing climate. The Commission is scheduled to launch in June and will be a key partnership for the council moving forward.

So far, we have proven our commitment to the climate emergency by surpassing our carbon reduction target of 40%, two years earlier than planned. Results have shown a reduction in carbon emissions of 53.5% on our baseline emissions for 2019/20.

However the progress to date, whilst encouraging, represents only a fraction of the challenges we face moving forward.

We will continue work collaboratively with others to build on our actions and reach our targets. We are busy developing the Climate Emergency Programme Plan, which will act as our roadmap for how Kirklees will become carbon neutral by 2038.

Key to this will be cultural and behavioural changes within the council to get to a point where we assess any environmental impact as a natural part of any work decisions we make.

We want to tap into your ideas and enthusiasm to help us achieve our carbon neutral aim. To that end, we are working with several of our employee networks to increase staff involvement, raise awareness of the sustainability challenges and opportunities we face, and help design ways of working that benefit the environment.

Other activities we will be doing include, supporting the Green Employee Network (GEN) to increase its membership, promoting volunteering, developing a climate change champions scheme and to develop new learning opportunities for all staff. If you would like to join GEN, or become a climate change champion, please email climatechange@kirklees.gov.uk.