

CLIMATE ACTION

Climate Action Groups – 2020 Strategy

1. Introduction

This document is intended to provide Climate Action Groups with a common understanding of our collective campaign strategy and timeline for 2020. As the year progresses, we may need to adapt this strategy, so we'll review it every quarter or when major external events occur (like another general election). Throughout the year we'll be asking Climate Action Groups for views on the strategy, the timeline and any changes that should be made.

2. Our goals

Long term impact

A broad and diverse coalition has led an unstoppable tide of action for urgent and radical climate action. Acknowledging its enormous historic responsibility, the UK has made a fair and just contribution to averting climate chaos by implementing key climate solutions. As a result, the climate justice movement is stronger and more powerful and the UK economy has been transformed for the better with green jobs, clean energy, warm homes, and thriving nature.

By December 2020:

- The UK government has committed to taking urgent action in line with our six key solutions. (NB, exact campaign ask to be decided – see below).
- Councils across the UK have committed to taking urgent action by creating and implementing ambitious Climate Action Plans.
- Our network grows, diversifies and can lead and win local campaigns, mobilising its power collectively to influence national change.
- An increasing number of the UK public think that climate is a top priority, know what the solutions look like, feel empowered to act and are consciously making climate a deal-breaker as individuals and as citizens.

Campaign 'ask'

While we know the [six key solutions](#) that the UK government must focus on if it's to tackle climate change effectively, we need to be clearer on exactly what we are calling on the UK government to do in 2020 (eg, implement a specific piece of legislation, strengthen an existing law, pledge a certain amount of money, create a 'climate test' for

all legislation etc). We also know that we won't achieve such a big ask alone. Therefore, we'll spend the beginning of 2020 working with allies from across the climate movement, such as the school strikers and other NGOs, to collectively agree a central campaign ask for 2020. We hope to share this with the wider network by March. If you would like to contribute ideas, please post them on Slack.

People power

We can only achieve long-term, systemic change if we build and utilise the power of the people. Climate change is caused by a small number of powerful people with a vested interest in the continued destruction of our planet. This elite power can only be matched by ordinary people working strategically together, at local, national and global levels. If we're to achieve the big changes our planet desperately needs in 2020, we must focus on building and using our people power more strategically than ever before.

To do this, we're taking a 'networked change' approach, where our network of independent Climate Action Groups unite behind one centralised strategy, adapting and owning the strategy within our own communities, and collectively mobilising at key moments to put pressure directly on the UK government.

3. Our campaigns

In 2020 we will focus on two campaigns. The council campaign, which will be owned by individual groups at the local level, and the UK-wide campaign, which we'll collectively work towards.

The council campaign: Climate Action Plan for councils

Councils up and down the country have declared climate emergencies. But what happens next? We need councils to turn their political promises into concrete action by adopting a Climate Action Plan – leading the way where the UK government continues to fail.

To help get them started, we've created a [template Climate Action Plan](#) for councils in England and Wales, with 50 concrete steps they should take.

But councils need to know local residents want action – that's where Climate Action Groups come in. We need groups to run their own local campaigns to convince their councils to adopt an ambitious Climate Action Plan. The 50-point plan can be adapted to suit your area – after all, you know best what your community needs.

As more and more communities and councils take climate action across the UK, pressure will mount on the national government to do the same.

You can read more about how your group can lead a council campaign [here](#).

UK-wide campaign

While we believe that communities and councils taking action on the climate crisis locally is an important part of the solution, ultimately we see this as a stepping-stone to pressure the UK government to act. In the end, they're the ones with the most power to

drastically cut UK emissions and ensure the UK pays its fair share to support others around the world coping with the devastating impacts of climate change.

This year we'll continue to push the UK government to take urgent action on our [six key solutions](#): transport, energy, buildings and homes, trees and food, consumption and international justice. In March this year we'll launch a more detailed ask of the government, which will be created in collaboration with colleagues from across the climate movement. (see more above in 'Campaign ask').

We'll work together as a network to ensure that the UK government listens to our demands. This will happen with a combination of lobbying MPs in our constituencies, and taking part in mass demonstrations and moments alongside the wider movement – for example, during climate strikes or the COP26 climate talks in Glasgow.

4. Our network

Who we are

Climate Action Groups are made up of people in a community who are passionate about tackling the climate crisis. Our network is made up of existing community groups that register to be part of the network (such as faith groups, Friends of the Earth groups, anti-fracking groups), and brand new groups that have formed under the Climate Action banner (eg, Climate Action Croydon). At the time of writing (Jan 2020), there are 153 registered Climate Action Groups, made up of 63 brand new groups, 34 Friends of the Earth local groups and 56 other existing community groups.

Our ambition this year is to support more brand-new groups to set up, and support existing groups to develop and win local campaigns. We will continue to support people to run 'kick-off events' where they live, bringing the community together to talk about the climate crisis and how they could take action together. We'll also reach out to people newer to the climate movement through our 'Groundswell' mobilisation events in cities across the country. And we'll continue to reach out to existing community groups that are keen to work on this unified strategy.

Diversity and representation

Just like the wider environmental movement, our network is not representative of the UK. We're mostly white, middle class and older. In 2020 we must work hard to change this situation, not only because it's fundamentally the right thing to do, but because we need all people and all voices to win. We need to make sure our network is a welcoming and empowering space for all. In particular, we need to ensure that the voices of people from black and minority ethnic communities and young people are amplified.

Our role in the movement

2019 saw a huge growth in the number of people taking action to tackle the climate crisis – with the youth strikers and Extinction Rebellion inspiring thousands of people to get involved. It's crucial that our Climate Action network understands its place in – and its contribution to – the wider movement.

We hope to occupy a space in the movement that is complementary to the work of other groups. The Climate Action network aims to attract people who're passionate about

working with their communities to tackle the climate crisis and who want to build a fairer, greener country together. We want to attract people who've never been involved in climate action before, and who'd prefer their activism to remain within the law. We want to involve people who're looking for a space to promote and demand positive solutions to the climate crisis, both at the local and national level. And we'll create a safe and inclusive space in which all people are valued and can contribute. The Climate Action network is supported by Friends of the Earth, so we aim to leverage the power of a national organisation with a large supporter base and the expertise of its policy, research, campaigning, media and communication teams.

Throughout all our work, we must continue to work closely with our friends across the movement who share the same values and goals as we do. We must be generous with our time and expertise, and make sure we listen and learn from others.

5. Our moments

Council campaigning (ongoing)

As described above, these campaigns will be owned by Climate Action Groups and will run to their own timelines. We'll continue to share success stories throughout the year and at strategic times use these stories and wins to show the UK government the extent to which there's demand for climate action across the country. We know that pushing for councils to change their policies can be slow, so we recommend groups set themselves smaller milestones to keep up momentum and motivation amongst members. These include focusing on growing and diversifying your group by holding outreach events, or getting involved in practical projects which bring the solutions to life (eg, tree planting days to show the council it should double tree cover on its land).

UK campaign launch (March)

We aim to launch our campaign ask in March. This will include an event in Parliament, where MPs can hear more about the campaign and pledge their support. We'll also get groups to talk directly to their MPs in constituencies and gain their support, including asking their MPs to take action in Parliament.

Climate Action Groups weekend (April)

This spring we'll be hosting a weekend gathering for Climate Action Groups. It'll be an opportunity to come together with others from across the country to share learnings and insight, and draw on each other's brilliant experiences. We'll learn new skills and explore tools to make sure we can run powerful and impactful campaigns. We'll make plans for the next year and explore how best we can work with the movement in our fight for climate justice. The gathering is for up to 2 people from each group, who'd like to develop their skills as key organisers. We'll be sharing more details and the process to apply via Slack soon.

Groundswell events (May - June)

Bringing more than 1000 people together, our regional Groundswell events will connect new and existing activists with local organisers from across their area, together driving forward

the local climate action movement to win a post carbon future. We'll host events in York, Manchester, Birmingham, Peterborough, London and Bristol.

Local and mayoral elections (7 May)

On 7 May 2020, local elections will be held in 118 English local councils. There'll also be elections for 8 directly elected Mayors and the London Assembly. Where elections are taking place, it's a brilliant opportunity to get candidates to commit to taking urgent climate action if they're elected. Throughout April we recommend groups organise hustings and meet candidates to influence their policy positions in the run up to these elections. We'll provide resources and guidance to help groups with these activities.

Lobby of Parliament (June - TBC)

We want to make sure that MPs know the strength of our movement and hear directly from their constituents. That's why in summer we'll work with allies to explore the idea of having a mass lobby of Parliament, where climate activists from across the country go to Westminster to meet their MPs and spell out exactly what we need them to do to tackle the climate crisis.

Climate Live concerts (September)

In the autumn, the youth strikers' movement is organising a series of music concerts called "Climate Live". They aim to organise concerts worldwide, to push climate action, raise awareness of the people on the frontlines of ecological breakdown and grow the global movement of people fighting for climate action. Our network of Climate Action Groups will continue to support the youth strikers, both their regular climate strikes and these concerts.

COP26: Glasgow (9- 19 November)

In November, COP26 will be coming to Glasgow. This is the international body which sets the trajectory of national and international climate policy for years to come. It's a huge opportunity to shine a light on the actions of governments and crucially, to come together in joint actions to show the strength of our movements. It's a unique opportunity to connect international struggles, learn from one another and link up, creating an even more powerful international movement. Together we'll come up with ways that Climate Action Groups can join the mobilisation in Glasgow, as well as organise solidarity actions at home.

Other moments

We'll continue to collaborate and support the wider climate movement throughout the year in any way we can. As the year progresses, it's likely there'll be more opportunities we should take part in.

Extinction Rebellion is planning another rebellion in 2020 – likely to happen in late spring/early summer. While operating under the banner of a Climate Action Group, members must adhere to the Friends of the Earth policy on [protest and non-violent direct action](#). It precludes any involvement in organising, participating in, or promoting illegal action while representing a Climate Action Group. However, we've great admiration for the work of Extinction Rebellion, and think it's necessary for different

parts of the movement to push for change using different tactics. So Climate Action Groups will go on having constructive dialogue with our XR friends, share intel and learnings, and collaborate on legal campaigning activities throughout the year (both at the community and national level).

6. Our timeline

	UK campaign	Local campaigns	Wider movement
January	Welcome new MPs	Climate Action Plan for councils	
February			
March	Launch UK government ask		
April	Climate Action Groups weekend	Local and mayoral elections 7 May	
May	Groundswell events		Green New Deal day of action (TBC)
June	Lobby of Parliament (TBC)	Climate Action Plan for councils	XR Rebellion (TBC)
July			
August			
September			Youth strikers' Climate Live concerts
October			
November	COP26: Glasgow		COP26: Glasgow
December			

7. Support

Peer support

We're part of a network of almost 150 groups, made up of talented and skilled people who can offer peer support. The place to access this is Slack – a simple online communication tool. The support team will also be posting updates and messages on Slack, and will be on hand to answer your questions – so please join up. Join Slack at foe.uk/climateactionslack.

One-to-one support

We have a team of expert organisers across the country, ready to support groups to take climate action. If you don't know who your regional organiser is, ask on Slack or email climateaction@foe.co.uk.

Training and webinars

Throughout the year we'll host training and webinars so we can all campaign with confidence – see takeclimateaction.uk/training-join-webinar-and-brush-your-campaigning-skills. We'll also send invites via email and Slack.

Resources

You can find a whole range of resources and guides at takeclimateaction.uk. If you can't find what you're looking for, ask on Slack and we'll try to make it for you.

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