

Motion to High Peak Borough Council to declare a Climate Emergency

Proposer: Councillor J. Collins

Seconder: Councillor J. Todd

Climate Change is an existential threat. Humans have already caused irreversible climate change, the impacts of which are being felt around the world. Global temperatures have increased by 1°C from pre-industrial levels. Atmospheric CO₂ levels are above the 400 parts per million (ppm). This far exceeds the 350 ppm deemed to be safe for humanity. Extreme weather events have already caused damage and destruction in this country. Locally the effects of climate change are seen in falling water levels and erratic weather conditions affecting farming and infrastructure. Natural habitats, wildlife and biodiversity are in peril not only from Climate Change but also from human intervention, which in turn is increasing the effects of the climate and biodiversity crises.

Scientists warn that we have little over a decade to implement urgent action to reduce and limit CO₂ emissions before we reach a global tipping point. Action is required at international, national and local level to achieve the carbon reduction levels needed. Councils around the world and in UK are responding by declaring a Climate Emergency and committing the resources to address this emergency.

This Council pledges to:

1. Declare a Climate Emergency
2. Make High Peak Borough Council carbon neutral in its internal operations and the services it delivers by 2030, and work with partners to achieve this target across High Peak
3. Call on the UK Government to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible.
4. Work with partners across the county and region to deliver this new goal through all relevant strategies
5. Work to mitigate the biodiversity crisis in its actions across the Borough
6. To address this emergency, establish a cross-party working group to assist in investigation, prioritisation, drafting and delivery of a plan including targets for CO₂ reduction, working with officer support and drawing on wider expertise.
7. To include a cross section of local people in drawing up this plan.
8. To report back to Council by end of March 2020 with this plan
9. Ensure that all Council committees and scrutiny panels consider the impact on climate change and the natural environment when taking decisions and reviewing policies.
10. Review progress against the target and report back every six months.