



A MANDATE FOR CHANGE PRODUCED BY
THE PEOPLE OF YORK

DEMAND A FUTURE

PRODUCED IN CONJUNCTION WITH EXTINCTION
REBELLION YORK



Introduction, Background and Context to the Mandate

On the 21st of March 2019, City of York Council, with no opposition, passed a motion declaring a climate emergency and committing to going carbon neutral by 2030. This also represented the successful conclusion of Extinction Rebellion York's first major campaign. Having recognised the scale of the environmental and ecological crisis we face, the council then gave itself 6 months to investigate and draw up proposals for how it could achieve this target.

At Extinction Rebellion York, we recognised that this declaration, while welcome, was only a first step and needed to be followed up by definite policies and proposals rather than just being an empty declaration. We also recognised, as laid out in Extinction Rebellion's third demand for a Citizen's Assembly to steer climate policy, that people must have a say in any kind of ecological transition that is required and solutions cannot simply be imposed from the top down anymore.

As such, we set about creating and organising an event that would remind the council of their obligations and hold them to account, while also featuring the proposals and demands of the people of York to provide a mandate for implementing the changes needed to make York carbon neutral by 2030. With that in mind, Demand a Future was born.

The Demand a Future event was planned with two primary aims in mind:

1. To hold a People's Assembly where the people of York could come together to produce a document that would provide a set of proposals for the council on what a future carbon neutral York would look like and how to get there.
2. To invite and get participation from as many groups and individuals throughout York as possible.

We quickly recognised that any proposal could not simply be the work of Extinction Rebellion York but had to include as wide a range of people as possible to be truly representative of the community. Demand a Future therefore hosted workshops, speakers and events featuring participants from community groups to faith organisations, unions, charities, fantastic artistic performers and the incredible organisers behind the York School Strikes for Climate.

Such a diverse range of groups and speakers covered a range of issues from the global to the local, emphasising the importance of climate justice and just transitions for people in the global south, and for those most marginalised and affected by climate breakdown in our own communities. According to York Explore estimates, *over 400 people* attended the event.

The assembly itself was organised by having a range of speakers initially talk about different issues relating to climate and ecosystem breakdown. Those in the assembly then broke out into working groups, each examining a specific area requiring change. Said groups each proposed a broad mandate acting as the guiding principle for that area, and then several points as to how that could be achieved or implemented. These proposals were presented by the groups to the whole assembly which then debated them while also offering suggestions that

could modify or be added to the proposals. Once this occurred, proposals were put to a vote. It is worth noting that all mandates presented here were passed with overwhelming majorities, reflecting a broad consensus of those present. We hope that the success of this assembly provides the momentum for more People and Citizens Assemblies to be held around the city on a range of issues and that it highlights the desire for engagement in the decision making process from people throughout the community.

What you are about to read are not simply the mandates of Extinction Rebellion York, but of hundreds of people from York representing a broad spectrum of the community in the city as a whole. Some are members of Extinction Rebellion York but many are not. What they all are, though, are citizens of York desiring an ecological and socially just future, who wish for their voices to be heard and for the people of York to play an integral part in deciding what their future looks like and what must be achieved to make York an ecological city.

Love, Rage and Solidarity
Extinction Rebellion York

Demand a Future: A Mandate for Change

Movement

Mandate:

1. Pedestrianise the city centre (within the city walls) and all future developments (including York Central), excluding disability access.
2. Public transport must be accessible and free
3. Future infrastructure should be carbon neutral
4. Cycle transport in the city should be improved in the following ways:
 - (a) More and improved cycle lanes especially around schools
 - (b) Road repairs to make cycling easier
 - (c) Improve cycling around outer York

Economy

Mandate 1:

1. Circular Economy based upon wellbeing as a measure of success rather than economic growth.
2. Create a repair culture - including the support (i.e. through subsidies etc) of repair shops
3. Encourage independent traders
4. Improve recycling so that everything is recycled even if it is not profitable - particularly plastic
5. Create a circular economy from the design stage
6. Make wellbeing the top of the agenda in all Council policies and initiatives
7. Create a specific definition of wellbeing - must be created by the whole community (i.e. through a Citizen's Assembly or public forum) and be bipartisan
8. Make wellbeing the measurement we use for economic success
9. Must be based around equity

Mandate 2:

York Council should be a part of the One Million Climate Jobs initiative.

Housing

Mandate 1:

1. Housing should be sustainable, accessible and affordable for all.
2. Challenge existing and explore alternative forms of ownership and regulations around housing and land
3. New housing and retrofittings to be built to passivhaus standards with sustainable materials
4. Workers and builders should be reskilled to ensure that the building and retrofitting of houses is sustainable and based around a just transition

Mandate 2:

Council licensing for private renters must have high environmental standards.

Energy

Mandate:

1. Achieve a low energy housing and building stock and maximise sustainable generation by solar and wind power.

National:

- (a) Change in conservation area restrictions to make solar panels and wind turbines permissible
- (b) Raise standards on building regulations to include renewable energy
- (c) Reform lobbying regulations to reduce the influence of vested interests

Local:

- (a) Investigate a local energy grid and local energy storage as in Manchester pilot - adiabatic storage, also looking at expanding this to the wider area
- (b) New houses and council buildings must have solar/wind power as the standard

Food

Mandate:

1. Create a strategy for sustainable food, with the council showing leadership to work in partnership to develop and implement it.
2. Learn from network of sustainable food cities
3. Recognise social value by committing to local sourcing of sustainable food

4. Identify partnerships for collection and distribution or processing of surplus food
5. Address the sustainable production of both food and packaging

Environment

Mandate:

1. A radical, green-by-design approach to sustainable development, where people and environment come first.
2. Environmental green space compensation
3. Education about green spaces and the environment, and include water systems in this education
4. Achieve improvement in air quality via increases in public transport, more trees and better habitats
5. Enquire into reforesting parts of the Stray
6. Preserve ecosystems where possible and if not ensure the ecosystem is fully replaced before destroying one
7. Exclude market mechanisms from the creation of green spaces Pursue carbon negative projects

General

Mandate:

Reinvigorate One Planet York to be focused on carbon neutrality by 2030.

Endnote

Extinction Rebellion York would like to thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to seeing these changes implemented in York for the betterment of our local, national, and global communities.

If you would like to discuss the proposals further, please contact media. xryork@gmail. com or xryork @gmail. com.