

The Lincoln Climate Commission

Academic and Professional staff at the University of Lincoln are working with the City of Lincoln Council to produce public engagement tools for the Lincoln Climate Commission.

University of Lincoln research has:

- Outcome #1: Produced a set of tools and materials to aid communication and collaboration on complex climate policies and actions.
- Outcome #2 Produced a consensus- based local framework for actions, to align public policies, research and investment to deliver a net zero carbon and resilient transition for Greater Lincoln.
- Outcome #3 To align and influence local policies and decision-making now and in the future to ensure we meet our net zero carbon ambitions as set out in the Lincoln 2030 Climate Action Plan.

The Lincoln Climate Commission (LCC) was co-founded in 2019 by Dr Andrew Kythreotis (Lincoln), Geoff Stratford and David Greenop (both Transition Lincoln) through an initial approach to the City of Lincoln Council (Kate Bell). Since 2019, university involvement in the LCC has burgeoned with many of the original delivery group members, who work at the university, co-developing the terms of reference, structures, communications and governance of the LCC.

The LCC have prepared the 2030 Lincoln Climate Action Plan (LCAP) to provide an evidence base to inform local, regional and national policymaking to address the climate emergency. The 2030 LCAP has been produced collaboratively by the University of Lincoln, Government bodies, Lincolnshire local authorities and strategic partners from the private sector. Over the Spring of 2022 university staff involved in the LCC were awarded £25k from the QR Strategic Priorities Fund to produce public engagement tools for improved communication, information dissemination and collaboration. This has led to extensive public consultation where the LCC are producing a consensus-based framework of actions, to align public policies, research and investment to deliver a net zero carbon and resilient transition for Greater Lincoln.



Climate Policy – Community Engagement

The Lincoln 2030 Climate Action Plan (CAP) has been developed through strong partnership working and community engagement which has taken place throughout 2021/22. Communicating climate issues and actions can be complex and challenging, particularly when the community have other concerns such as a global pandemic, cost of living crisis and a feeling of being excluded from local decision-making. However public awareness and the effective communication of climate change information are flagged as critical issues in the Paris Agreement on climate change.

From the very outset the LCC agreed that we need to communicate climate policy so it is engaging, accessible and relevant to everyone. Through research and engagement, we have been able to reach out to the community using a range of communication tools and approaches to help address the daily concerns and challenges we all face. Our research has shown that many people feel overwhelmed when faced with climate related issues and that their own actions are insignificant.

The aim of communicating climate issues and actions through the Lincoln 2030 CAP, summary document and promotional clip is to highlight what can be achieved through collaboration. To present complex messages in an accessible format and demonstrate how local climate action can, and is, being embedded into our lives.

- The 2030 Lincoln CAP public survey received 399 responses.
- 86% were very concerned (45%) or a little concerned (41%) about climate change.
- 64% thought it was extremely important (26%) or very important (38%) to tackle climate change.
- Actions deemed important for tackling climate change were: minimising single use plastic (89% said this was very important); encouraging the reuse, repurposing and recycling of waste materials (84%); and making sure that new houses are energy efficient (81%).

Policy influence and decision-making

The research that has been undertaken to prepare the Lincoln 2030 Climate Action Plan (CAP) reveals that collaboration and joint working is the only way we can achieve a net zero carbon target for Lincoln. That no single organisation can act alone or in isolation and local policies, when not aligned, can diminish what we set out to achieve.

In addition to communicating climate change to the wider Lincoln community the LCC has also set out to influence local policy and decision-making on climate change. The LCC consist of policy experts, community leaders and decision makers who have been working together to steer local policies and strategies to deliver climate action.

The aim of the Lincoln 2030 CAP is to provide a clear evidence base and monitoring tool to help set the policy agenda and to deliver actions over the next 8 years.

IMPACT ON POLICY

The research activities for the Lincoln 2030 Climate Action Plan have and will continue to impact on local policy in the following way:-

- Climate change issues will, in part, be resolved through national and local policy. The Lincoln 2030 CAP has been developed by policymakers along with the support of the community to clarify the issues, provide policy recommendations and influence policy to deliver change.
- Evidence of changing local policy and decision-making has emerged since Council's declared a climate emergency and this can be seen through the emerging Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, decisions on planning applications for fossil fuel extraction, Lincolnshire Waste Management Strategy, Lincoln Transport Strategy and the Lincolnshire Bus Services Improvement Plan.
- Communicating the wide range of local policies, education and participation are at the heart of preparing effective climate policy and will continue to impact on the evolving Lincoln 2030 CAP.

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Policy briefing #016

July 2022

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