

## **WEST MIDLANDS CLIMATE COALITION**

### *– Action points for a zero-carbon region.*

The West Midlands Climate Coalition has developed these eleven action points to move towards a zero-carbon region.

**RETROFIT BUILDINGS.** Domestic insulation and heating programs need to be massively accelerated. This is a rapid way to reduce carbon emissions and save households money on their heating and energy bills. The WMCA, alongside its seven local authorities, should implement a comprehensive plan for the retrofitting of housing in its constituencies. They should campaign for adequate resourcing from central government.

**FARE FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT.** Transport for West Midlands should set up a feasibility study into the economic, social, and environmental benefits of FFPT for the West Midlands. The WMCA should bring the region's buses back into public control, following the example of Greater Manchester, as a step towards FFPT.

**END SUPPORT FOR HS2.** HS2 has been a vastly expensive fiasco. It has damaged the environment and squandered resources that could have been used to improve regional and local public transport. If the private sector fails to fund the Old Oak Common to Euston link, the line will become even more of a white elephant. Support should be withdrawn from this vanity project.

**DIVEST THE WEST MIDLANDS PENSION FUND FROM FOSSIL FUEL INVESTMENT.** Pension funds investing in fossil fuels are contributing directly to uncontrolled global warming and in support of a sustainable future for all should invest instead in green renewables.

**END THE INCINERATION OF WASTE.** The continuation of waste incineration is an environmental crime. Plans should be made immediately to increase recycling (including food waste) and to transition to ecologically sustainable degradation.

**CURB AVIATION.** The WMCA should encourage its residents to limit the excessive use of environmentally damaging national and international flights (pending the development of zero carbon planes) to one return flight every two or three years.

**LEARNING.** An informed understanding of the climate and ecological emergency is widely needed to engage the public and identify the best possible actions for the future. All citizens, from a young age, should have access to Lifelong Learning courses across all education settings. Carbon literacy, nature restoration and sustainable living should be embedded elements in all courses including professional development and voluntary sector training. Work-based training and re-training should support a just transition to a new green economy and green jobs.

**PAUSE TRAM DEVELOPMENT.** Trams are more accessible than buses and trains for disabled people and prams, but they are also hugely expensive to build and emit a large amount of carbon dioxide from cement and steel in their construction. New growth of this network should be paused, and the money diverted into upgrading the current regional public transport system, including the opening of new bus and train routes.

**BUILDING A WORKFORCE FOR THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY.** The WMCA should use its resources to collaborate with the region's trade unions, FE colleges, universities, and employers to create and implement a long-term strategy for the creation of green jobs and a just transition for workers in high carbon workplaces as they decline.

**PRODUCE A LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY.** This would support nature recovery across the WMCA; by increasing tree cover, identifying, protecting, and enhancing nature, and eliminating greenspace deprivation in line with the 30 x 30 biodiversity principles agreed at the biodiversity summit December 2022.

**DEMOCRATISE THE WMCA.** The Environment involves every issue and every person, so it is essential to have the widest possible public involvement in decision-making. The aim should be government of the WMCA by an elected WM Assembly. In the immediate future more public participation can be achieved, especially in priority issues including environmental policies, such as:

- a) Co-option onto WMCA bodies, particularly of presently under-represented groups such as women, ethnic minorities, and trades unionists.
- b) Public participation in Scrutiny Committees, with opportunities to speak and with an indicative vote.
- c) Each WMCA Board/Committee (Economic Growth Board, Employment Committee, Environment & Energy Board, Housing & Land Delivery Board, Investment Board, Wellbeing Board) to have an associated Scrutiny Committee.
- d) Inclusive citizens' assemblies and panels on key issues, particularly regional transport, with relevant Board and Committee members.

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