

# Net Zero Action Plan 2024

## CARBON NET ZERO AND WASTE STRATEGY CONSULTATION

### REACHING RESIDENTS ACROSS THE BOROUGH

Our North Tyneside Plan sets out North Tyneside Council's bold ambitions for making North Tyneside an even greater place to live, work, and visit by 2025. It outlines a vision of building a better North Tyneside, looking to the future, and listening to and working better for everyone in the borough.

As an authority, we pride ourselves on listening to our residents and caring about their needs. That's why it's vital to have an Engagement Strategy outlining how we involve communities in decision-making. Our first Net Zero Action Plan, created in 2020, was based on this principle and involved over 100 participants. We aim to continue this collaboration by using the same engagement approach, working with the whole community to shape local policy together.

### CONSULTING THE COMMUNITY

We recognise that the strategy of the local authority towards reaching Net Zero has wide ranging implications for our residents. That's why, following our engagement strategy, we set out again in 2024 to consult the people of North Tyneside on our work. We planned a series of four face-to-face engagement events across the borough, welcoming a diverse range of residents eager to share their views on the Net Zero theme. These events tested the extent to which social and behavioural change is required to reach Net Zero, as well taking views on travel, home heating, the natural world and the management of waste.

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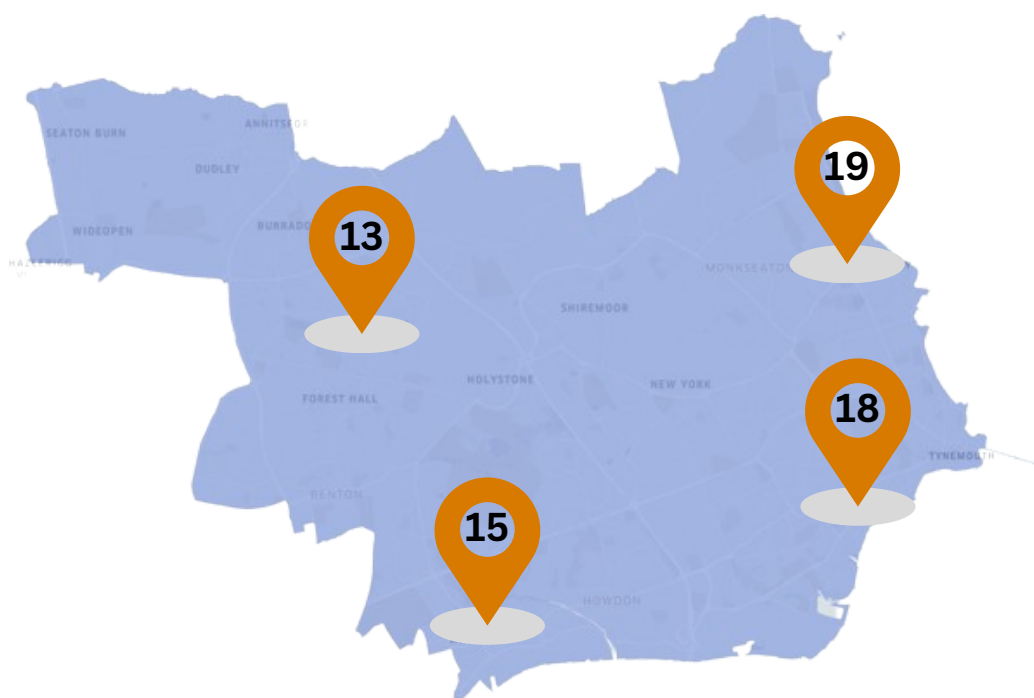
Locations across the borough

9

Officers gave their time to run the workshops

65

Attendees Participated in the workshops



# Heat and Power



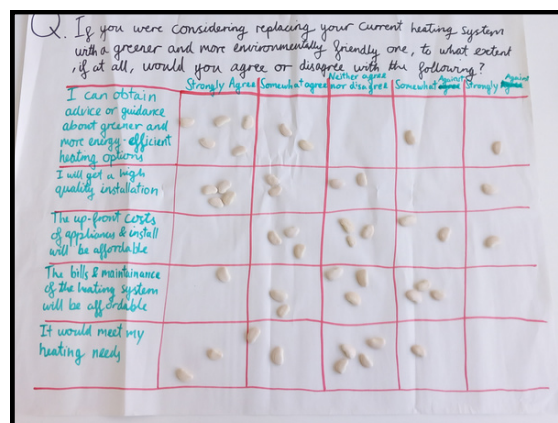
After a brief introduction to North Tyneside Council Net Zero policy and progress, attendees were given an overview of why we need to decarbonise heat and power, and what options are on the table. Consultees were then given the opportunity to vote on key questions significant to this policy area.

## KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- **Insulation:** Concern among participants about the range of insulation measures being implemented across all domestic properties, cost, effectiveness of insulating homes, and the need for prioritisation of insulation efforts.
- **New Developments:** Discussions about whether commercial developers meet green heat standards and the roll out and take up of other heat sources in homes such as air source heat pumps
- **Retrofit Support:** Concerns about the lack of resources for advice and trustworthy installers, as well as calls for more funding.

## SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

- **Cost of current heating too high:** Most residents are unhappy with the running costs of their heating system
- **Lack of green heating:** Apart from North Shields, most residents do not think their heating is eco-friendly
- **Confidence in green heating systems:** Most residents believe that a green system could meet their needs
- **Up-front costs pose greatest concern:** The up-front cost of a heating system was the greatest issue for most participants, particularly those from the North Shields and Wallsend events.
- **Confidence in advice varies by ward:** Residents from the North Shields and Whitley Bay events have confidence in getting good advice on a green heating system. Wallsend and White Swan residents were unsure
- **Uncertainty around running costs and quality of installation:** Many residents are unsure of the running costs of a green heating system and whether they could get a good quality installation.



Counting Beans: Participants took part in an exercise where they voted on home heating questions. This method, alongside Yes/No cards and guided discussion, helped to capture residents feedback on key issues

| Heating Replacement Questions   | Strongly Agree | Somewhat Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Somewhat against | Strongly Against |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1. I can obtain reliable advice or guidance about greener and more energy-efficient heating options | 31%            | 27%            | 15%                        | 19%              | 7%               |
| 2. I will get a high-quality installation   | 26%            | 25%            | 36%                        | 7%               | 7%               |
| 3. The up-front costs of appliances and the installation will be affordable                         | 21%            | 18%            | 18%                        | 25%              | 18%              |
| 4. The bills and maintenance of the heating system will be affordable                               | 21%            | 34%            | 26%                        | 16%              | 3%               |
| 5. It would meet my heating needs   | 40%            | 29%            | 19%                        | 7%               | 4%               |

Results from the Counting Bean exercise across all sessions



Transport officers gave a presentation on the importance of transport, the carbon impact of travel, and delivery of North Tyneside Council transport policy and projects. This resonated with audiences, stimulating two lively discussion activities around electric vehicles and promoting clean transport.

## Activity 1

Do you have an electric vehicle (EV)?  
Are you planning to switch to an EV in the short term?



## Activity 2

Do you think the council is doing enough to promote clean transport?



*Two transport group discussion exercises*

## KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

### • **Transportation Infrastructure:**

- Concerns about the reliability of public transportation, including metro and buses.
- Desire for better integration of routes and ticketing systems.
- Issues around pavement parking.

### • **Electric Vehicles (EVs):**

- Concerns about the cost of EV charging and the affordability of EVs.
- Queries about EV battery lifespan, recycling, and safety.
- Desire for more information on EVs and dispelling myths surrounding them.
- Interest in promoting EV adoption through incentives and infrastructure improvements.

### • **Active Travel and Cycling Infrastructure:**

- Division in opinions regarding cycling infrastructure.
- Suggestions for promoting walking and cycling as alternative modes of transportation.
- Desire for improved infrastructure supporting cycling, including secure storage facilities.

### • **Sustainability and Environmental Concerns:**

- Interest in promoting electric buses and reducing reliance on traditional diesel buses.
- Concerns about the environmental impact of transportation choices, including vehicle emissions and tyre wear.

### • **Communication and Information Dissemination:**

- Requests for more accessible information on transportation options and costs.
- Suggestions for promoting car-sharing schemes and other alternative transportation options.
- Desire for clearer communication regarding the benefits of public transport and active travel.
- Desire for greater awareness of existing transportation initiatives, such as car-sharing programs.

### • **Community Engagement and Local Services:**

- Calls for a village-level approach to addressing transportation needs.
- Interest in promoting local amenities and services to reduce car dependency.

# The Natural Environment



This workshop addressed a topic that residents could relate to personally: their own gardens and the important green spaces they enjoy. It began with a short explanation of green and blue infrastructure and their associated co-benefits as well as an update on council progress in these areas. Participants were then asked to vote on which natural environments they think the council should prioritise, what at-home measures they would be willing to do, and what barriers prevented them from doing more.

## KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- **Green Infrastructure and Home Improvements:**
  - Questions raised on planning permission and cost for home biodiversity measures, alongside support for incentives like tax reductions for depaving driveways and advocacy for eco-friendly practices such as home vegetable gardening.
- **Awareness and Education:**
  - Concerns voiced about low awareness regarding environmental issues like flooding and the environmental drawbacks of artificial grass, prompting suggestions for improved communication strategies to emphasise benefits and positive impacts.
- **Regulatory Measures and Policy:**
  - Discussions focused on regulations around artificial grass, promoting permeable driveways, inquiries about the council's risk register, policies on no-mow areas, and pesticide usage.
- **Environmental Protection and Sustainability:**
  - Calls for protecting the natural environment from litter, graffiti, and promoting climate resilience through tree-lined streets.

## SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

- **Focus on peri-urban environments over urban:** Most residents prioritise wild areas such as woodlands, wetlands and wildlife sites over urban parks, waggonways and allotments
- **Willingness to invest in at home measures:** The majority of participants are agreeable to installing infrastructure such as a No Mow Area, Rain Garden, Water Butt, Downspout Planter, Green Roof or a Permeable Driveway
- **Residents identify barriers to investing in home measures:** While cost is unsurprisingly the chief concern, lack of knowledge, council housing eligibility, sourcing reputable contractors and planning restrictions were highlighted as key barriers over which NTC may have some influence

| Natural Environment          | Prioritisation Votes |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Wildlife Corridors           | 26                   |
| Rivers, Lakes, Wetlands      | 20                   |
| Woodlands                    | 18                   |
| Local Wildlife Sites         | 15                   |
| Sustainable drainage systems | 15                   |
| Urban Parks & Green Spaces   | 14                   |
| Flood Alleviation Schemes    | 12                   |
| Roadside Verges              | 12                   |
| Allotments                   | 11                   |
| Coastlines                   | 10                   |
| Small Biodiversity Areas     | 9                    |
| Waggonways                   | 9                    |
| Agricultural Land            | 6                    |
| Green Belt                   | 5                    |
| Play Sites                   | 4                    |

Summary of votes for Natural Environment areas the council could prioritise

# Reduction, Reuse and Recycling of Waste



The waste engagement workshop provided attendees with an understanding of the borough's waste management strategy and the evolving national policy landscape. Participants learned about our engagement activities, new strategies around the circular economy and upcoming food waste collections. Through interactive engagement, officers explored strategies for driving behavioural change around reuse, the effectiveness of current communications and attitudes towards food waste.

## KEY DISCUSSION POINTS

- **Food Waste:**
  - There was broad positivity for introduction of food waste collections, with concerns and inquiries regarding potential charges (though the service will be free), concerns about pests, and the space for residents to accommodate another bin.
- **Communications:**
  - Issues were raised over the usability of the current map of recycling points, suggestions for improvements like zoom functions and Google Maps overlays, support for communications around reuse, and calls for publicising recycling information more widely and non-digitially.
- **Reuse and Recycling:**
  - Promotion of existing reuse businesses was encouraged, discussion around a localised approach – collaboration with charities for reuse programs, utilising school workshops for repair and reuse, and sorting and redistributing materials collected during bulky waste collections.
- **Waste Management Facilities and Policies:**
  - Discussions concerning the recycling of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), access to recycling centres like Newcastle Household Waste Recycling Centre, and opinions on the effectiveness of the HWRC appointment system.

## SUMMARY OF RESPONSES

- **High levels of support for the implementation of food waste collections:** Nearly all residents would participate in weekly food waste collections.
- **Majority aware of home recycling options:** Most participants felt confident in recycling apart from those in Whitley Bay, where two out of every five did not feel fully aware of their options
- **Waste communications effective but could improve.** Most participants interacted with council recycling tools like the map of recycling points, but further discussion highlighted issues in how this tool conveys information to residents: usability, awareness, and accessibility.

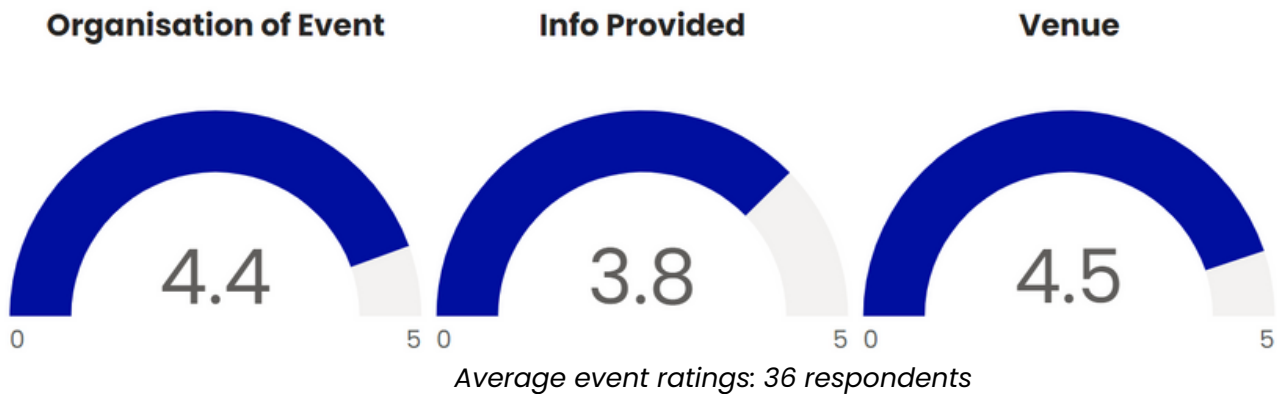
| Question                                       | Average Yes<br>▼ |
|--|------------------|
| Would you use a food waste collection service? | 85%              |
| Are you aware of what you can recycle at home? | 76%              |
| Do you know about the recycling map            | 66%              |

*Summary of Yes/No questions for the Waste workshops*

# Feedback

## GENERAL EVENT FEEDBACK

Significant planning and preparation were put in to ensure the success of the engagement program. This was borne out by the feedback which praised both the choice of venues and the overall organisation of the events. There was room for improvement on providing the right information prior to the event, as some residents felt they needed more clarity on the topics of the sessions.



## WORKSHOPS

In each event, workshops were run on four themes that were identified as being important to residents. Officers gave a brief overview of each theme, then led a focused exercise or group discussion over 25 minutes. These workshops were well received, with most of respondents scoring each workshop either four or five out of five.



## ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK

In our feedback form, we asked residents to provide any additional comments on the event. 40% used this question to praise the event, with particular positivity around the quality of the presented information and the opportunity to share thoughts on council issues.

Of the 30% who shared criticisms about the sessions, most feedback centred around a request for the events to be more frequent and longer. This highlights an appetite for additional engagement from the council around these issues.



Additional feedback: most common words

# Conclusions

## KEY LEARNINGS FOR FUTURE EVENTS

- **Short presentations, long exercises:** after overrunning on the first event, the engagement plan was reworked to provide a more succinct context of the theme, and this enabled a greater opportunity for participants to share a broader range of views on the subject. There was a positive impact on timings and quality of feedback.
- **Focussed exercises keep discussions relevant:** When participants were asked to complete specific exercises rather than open discussions, feedback had greater relevance to the topics.
- **A mix of quantitative and qualitative feedback lead to a more complete picture of opinion:** voting exercises helped capture an accurate snapshot of opinion whereas focussed discussion allowed residents to express ideas that officers had not anticipated.
- **Yes/No cards lead to fast, quality, easily capturable data:** these cards worked well to gauge opinions from residents.
- **There is an appetite for future engagement events:** When officers talked to participants after the event, there were many participants who had an interest in future workshops, particularly a waste-focussed event

## RESPONDING TO FEEDBACK

These engagement events have prompted immediate action from the officers involved in the engagement. We are designing engagement materials to address key knowledge gaps between the local authority and residents in the form of 'mythbusting' communications. Feedback has also been directly incorporated into project planning across each of the four workstream topics.

The authority has a set timetable to update the Net Zero 2030 Action Plan and the 10 year Plan for Waste. This will begin on 2nd April and be completed on 15th July 2024. The final version of this will be presented to Cabinet on 31st July.

The results and analysis of this Consultation and Engagement work including the digital questionnaire will be used to define actions in the Plan where possible.

## WHAT OTHER WAYS HAVE WE ACTIVELY SOUGHT PARTICIPATION?

The authority has endeavoured to provide a range of opportunities for its communities to participate in this important work. In addition to the face-to-face events during 19th -24th February we have:

- Designed a survey questionnaire for residents, businesses and the voluntary sector. This was promoted on social media and by email direct to businesses, residents subscribed to Our North Tyneside Voice, and to local voluntary and community sector groups for them to share with their networks. Paper copies of the survey were available in our six community hub venues.
- Promoted the survey questionnaire to young people who are actively engaged in local democracy
- Actively engaged on a one-to-one basis with residents to target under-represented areas and demographics.
- Promoted the survey questionnaire to young people who are actively engaged in local democracy
- Worked with the elected Youth Council to seek their views in a workshop environment

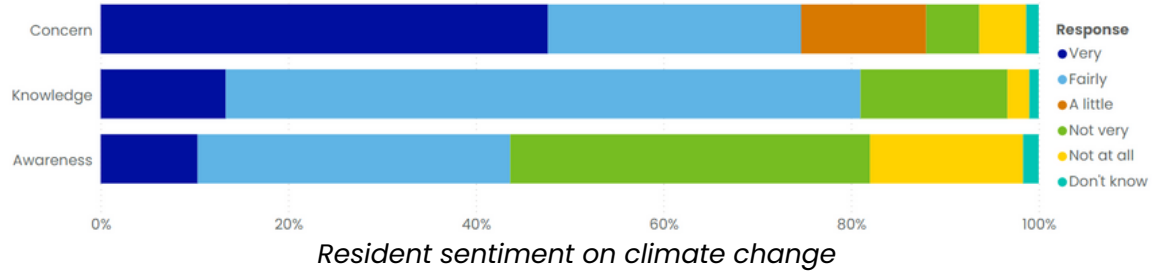
# Questionnaire



## THE WIDER COMMUNITY

North Tyneside Council's consultation included wider opportunities for the community to have its say on Net Zero. Officers designed a survey questionnaire for residents, businesses and the voluntary sector. This was promoted on social media and by email directly to residents subscribed to Our North Tyneside Voice, Paper copies of the survey were available in our six community hub venues.

**301**  
Residents



## SUMMARY OF RESIDENT RESPONSES

- **High levels of concern and knowledge about climate change:** 3/4 respondents feel at least a 'fair' level of concern for climate change and knowledge about the issue.
- **Medium awareness of North Tyneside Council's climate work:** just under half of respondents had some awareness of the council's work on climate change.
- **Foil & soft plastics identified as materials with potential for improved recycling rates.** Foil was the material least recycled by respondents, with a quarter saying they would be willing to change this. 40% would also consider recycling soft plastics at drop off points.

| Question   | Currently do | Would consider doing | Don't do / would not consider |
|--|--------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Shop locally                                       | 89%          | 10%                  | 1%                            |
| Turn your heating thermostat down                  | 83%          | 9%                   | 7%                            |
| Walk or cycle for short journeys                   | 74%          | 15%                  | 11%                           |
| Use public transport                               | 65%          | 17%                  | 18%                           |
| Avoid plastic packaging where possible             | 56%          | 35%                  | 9%                            |
| Purchase pre-worn clothing                         | 46%          | 24%                  | 30%                           |
| Use a home composter for food waste                | 16%          | 52%                  | 32%                           |
| Change your vehicle to an electric or hybrid model | 11%          | 37%                  | 51%                           |
| Install solar panels                               | 8%           | 59%                  | 33%                           |
| Use an alternative heat source in your home        | 4%           | 52%                  | 44%                           |

Resident action on climate change

- **Appetite for green home installations and composting :** Over half of respondents would consider installing solar panels, home composters or a green source of heating in their home.
- **Cost biggest barrier. Lack of green transport and knowledge also identified.** Over half of respondents cited cost, with 20% selecting transport and knowledge.
- **Overwhelming support for food waste collections.** 85% of respondents would support food waste collections



# Questionnaire

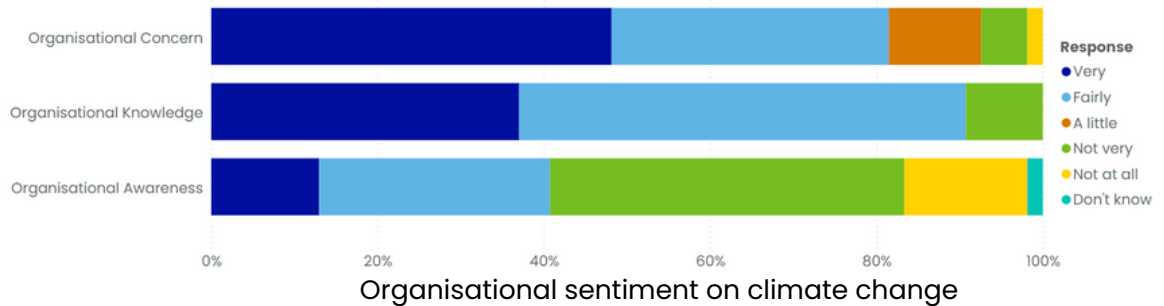


## BUSINESSES AND THE THIRD SECTOR

The council is only directly responsible for two per cent of the borough's carbon emissions, so we need the help of our businesses and local organisations to work with us to achieve this target. To gain an insight into the views of these organisations, the survey was emailed directly to businesses and to local voluntary and community sector groups for them to share with their networks.

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Businesses and third sector organisations



## SUMMARY OF ORGANISATION RESPONSES

- **High levels of concern and knowledge about climate change:** 8/10 organisations feel at least a 'fair' level of concern for climate change and knowledge about the issue.
- **Low awareness of North Tyneside Council's climate work:** The majority of organisations had a low awareness of the council's work on climate change
- **Organisations would consider recycling more Foil and Tetra Paks.** Foil was the material least recycled by respondents, with half saying they would be willing to change this. The majority of respondents would also be willing to consider recycling more Tetra Paks.

| Question   | Currently do | Would consider doing | Don't do / would not consider |
|--|--------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Turn your heating down   | 65%          | 30%                  | 6%                            |
| Promote walking or cycling to colleagues for short journeys                          | 60%          | 30%                  | 9%                            |
| Avoid plastic packaging where possible   | 51%          | 42%                  | 8%                            |
| Promote the use of public transport to colleagues                                    | 46%          | 40%                  | 13%                           |
| Use a local supply chain   | 45%          | 45%                  | 10%                           |
| Use an alternative heat source in your premises (e.g. an air source heat pump)       | 24%          | 54%                  | 22%                           |
| Change vehicles owned by your organisation to electric or hybrid models              | 14%          | 60%                  | 26%                           |
| Install solar panels   | 14%          | 61%                  | 25%                           |
| Promote the benefits of changing vehicles to electric or hybrid models to colleagues | 10%          | 66%                  | 24%                           |

### Organisational action on climate change

- **Appetite for electric vehicles (EVs):** While only a small minority of respondents currently use or promote EVs, the majority would consider changing their fleets and promoting EV's to colleagues.
- **Willingness to consider more green Infrastructure:** Over half of respondents would consider installing solar panels or a green source of heating.
- **Cost biggest barrier. Lack of green transport, knowledge and time also identified.** Over half of respondents cited cost, with 20% selecting lack of green transport, knowledge and time as issues.

## YOUTH COUNCIL

A presentation was given to the elected members of the Youth Council including the Young Mayor as means to provide context and rationale to the work the authority is undertaking on climate change. A range of questions and observations were raised when looking at historical emissions, themes within the Action Plan and on the extent in which technology and behaviour change will impact future emissions. Planning for living with extreme weather events was also a topic of conversation.

The delegates were then invited to provide opinions and concerns about a range of themes associated with a changing climate and its local impacts. This was done in a workshop setting and used a similar range of prompts and participation techniques applied in the other face-to-face engagement events.

## WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

- **Urgency of action:** Members of the youth council expressed a sense of urgency regarding climate change. They feel like the situation may become irreversible and like a “ticking timebomb”.
- **Responsibility and Collaboration:** There was a consensus that individual actions may not be enough, with suggestions made including sharing carbon reduction projects across schools to encourage collaboration.
- **Infrastructure and Renewable Energy:** Participants emphasised the importance of investing in infrastructure for renewable energy generation, particularly in renewable energy initiatives such as solar panels, heat pumps, and electric vehicles.
- **Transport vs Environment:** Participants highlighted conflicting policies in transportation and environmental planning with concerns around the impact of cycleways, public transport near new housing developments and safety issues in waggonways.
- **Electric Vehicles:** Affordability and accessibility of electric vehicles (EVs), especially for wheelchair users, were discussed. There were also concerns about the myths of EV battery safety and the environmental impact of tyre wear and particulate matter.
- **Reuse:** Participants highlighted the environmental benefits of shopping locally and reusing items such as second-hand clothing.
- **Education and Awareness:** Concerns were raised about the adequacy of climate change education in the curriculum.
- **Innovative Solutions:** Suggestions were made for improving accessibility to recycling information for visually impaired individuals through Braille leaflets and brighter-colored domestic bin stickers. Positive feedback was provided for innovative solutions such as the "2 good 2 go" app, which helped youth councillors to reduce food waste.



Workshop feedback: most common words