

Climate Change Plan - Scottish Government consultations- Quakers in Scotland submitted response.

CCP Supporting documents:

Climate Change Plan:

You can view the whole plan in web form or as a document here: [Scotland's Climate Change Plan – 2026-2040 - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotland-climate-change-plan-2026-2040/pages/introduction.aspx)

Policy change CCP annexes:

Most of the policy changes are in the annexes which can be found here: [Supporting documents - Scotland's Climate Change Plan – 2026-2040 - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotland-climate-change-plan-2026-2040/annexes/pages/introduction.aspx)

Consultation questions:

You can view the consultation questions here but they are also below in this document [Draft Climate Change Plan - Scottish Government consultations - Citizen Space](#)

Consultation questions

Section 1: Delivering a Just Transition

The following questions concern the Delivering a Just Transition section of the Plan, more specifically: communities, skills, workforce, employers and adapting to climate change.

Question 1: What are your views on our approach to delivering a just transition for people and communities?

OVERALL THOUGHTS:

As Quakers in Scotland, we welcome the opportunity to respond to the draft Climate Change Plan (CCP). Moving towards net zero is both urgent and necessary, and we appreciate the Scottish Government setting out policies to meet the new five-yearly carbon budgets to 2040. We believe it is vital that this plan is passed before the next election, and we welcome its early publication to support that goal.

However, we are concerned that the overall approach does not fully convey the urgency of cutting Scotland's emissions at a time of rapidly worsening climate disruption. We worry that political considerations continue to limit the willingness to speak honestly about the scale of change required. Others share these concerns, for example a December 2025 report by *Our Scottish Future* includes testimony from civil servants noting that "the requirement to avoid alienating any public support ... stymied politicians' willingness to think about any idea that might require substantial short-term unpopularity" and that such political caution has become "an established way of thinking" since 2014, limiting scope for necessary but unpopular action (p.18). (<https://ourscottishfuture.org/new-report-says-government-in-scotland-is-broken-and-sets-out-plan-to-fix-it/>)

No significant emissions reductions have been achieved so far in the 2020s, and the public needs a clear explanation of why the next five years will be different. For this reason, the CCP must provide a far more detailed and measurable breakdown of actions for each sector. Greater clarity is essential for public understanding, business planning, and accountability.

We also believe the plan should demonstrate greater openness and integrity. It must be as accurate and transparent as possible. Our response offers suggestions on how this can be strengthened. As Quakers, we are guided by the values of peace, equality, truth, simplicity, and sustainability.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND UNDERSTANDING:

The CCP calls for a "collective effort" from individuals, communities, businesses, and government. This principle is central to a just transition, but the plan's approach is too tentative about how it will cultivate that shared effort.

To succeed, people in Scotland must understand the truth of the climate crisis, what actions are needed, and how these actions will make a meaningful difference. Government-led public information campaigns are essential as local climate hubs

and websites such as *Let's Do Net Zero* risk reaching only those already engaged. Without widespread communication, the shared understanding required for difficult future decisions by the government to address climate change will not be achieved. Furthermore the CCP relies heavily on consumer choices which will be very difficult to encourage without a shared understanding of the fundamental underlying reasons.

CONSUMER CHOICE OR MANDATORY CHANGE

The societal changes ahead are profound. To name a few, we need extensive change across domestic heating, transport and diet. The draft CCP relies heavily on price incentives for individuals rather than greater regulation to force change. Regulation can carry political risk due to potential backlash but in the absence of universal public understanding of why changes are needed, relying solely on consumer choice may be insufficient to meet our carbon budgets. An example of this is with domestic heating. The Heat in Buildings bill would have driven but also enabled necessary changes. Instead the now 'soft' approach risks downplaying the urgency of climate change and offers limited certainty for businesses and individuals choosing to invest in the 'right choices.' As we move closer to 2045, pressure to mandate change will increase and so it is vital that public understanding increases now.

CLIMATE AND NATURE

The climate and nature crises are global and interconnected. The CCP should explicitly acknowledge that its purpose is to minimise climate disruption as far as Scotland can. While we welcome the inclusion of cost and economic benefit analysis, achieving net zero is not fundamentally about economic growth, it is about long term wellbeing and planetary health, for example through the development of a robust circular economy.

Funding is an enabler or a constraint depending on political choices. We support approaches rooted in the polluter pays principle, ensuring those individuals and businesses with the broadest financial shoulders and those who have the highest emissions contribute the most.

A JUST TRANSITION — FOR WHOM?

Throughout the CCP, the question arises: A just transition for whom? Should not the interests of future generations be weighed against those of current workers, such as those in oil and gas? Should Scotland accelerate emissions cuts now to avoid greater harm later?

The plan does not yet reflect the full scale of risks associated with inaction or delay. Although achievability matters, the CCP still lacks sufficient urgency and detail on how these reductions will be delivered.

TRUTHFULNESS AND TECHNOLOGY

We are particularly concerned about the plan's reliance on unproven technologies such as Carbon Capture, Utilisation and Storage (CCUS). The IPCC identifies CCUS

as among the least effective and most expensive options for achieving 2030 goals, and no global projects have exceeded an 80% capture rate (<https://ieefa.org/ccs>). Yet the CCP assumes that 45% of Energy-from-Waste sites will install CCUS at 90% capture by 2032. This is unrealistic and risks delaying change in sectors where there are proven ways to reduce emissions such as in domestic heating and agriculture.

Research by the Quaker United Nations Office warns that overpromising Carbon Dioxide Removal technologies has misled governments and delayed essential action (<https://quno.org/resource/cdr/>). Although the Climate Change Committee states CCUS is now necessary, it has repeatedly criticised Scotland for over-reliance on speculative technologies. Planning to rely on CCUS for 25% of emissions reductions by 2036–40 risks locking Scotland into costly, uncertain solutions for decades to come.

The CCP must begin with rigorous truth-telling about the limitations and risks of negative emissions technologies. Proven, scalable emissions-reduction methods should be given much greater priority.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

The CCP's international section describes past action but does not propose future commitments. This falls short of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, which requires the plan to set out policies for supporting climate action in developing countries, including through finance, expertise, and technology transfer. It must also explain how Scotland's actions will contribute to sustainable development and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Given cross party support for loss and damage funding in the Scottish Parliament, for example as shown in the debate in November 2025, ongoing commitments to international climate finance should form a core part of the plan. Additional, targeted taxation based on the polluter pays principle could help fund this. We very much welcome the introduction of a private jet tax in the January 2026 budget and would like to see this intention committed to in the CCP also..

As a Global North, fossil fuel producing country, Scotland has a historic and ongoing responsibility to reduce emissions rapidly. Without deep domestic cuts, our moral debt to those already experiencing climate driven loss and damage will continue to grow. Supporting the Fossil Fuel Non Proliferation Treaty (<https://fossilfueltreaty.org/>) would be a meaningful and integrity-based step forward. We must get our own house in order if we are not to undermine the good work done to fund loss and damage.

HEALTH AND CLIMATE

We welcome the CCP's recognition of links between climate policy and health, but these references remain limited and largely domestic. A credible "just transition" must engage more fully with the wide-ranging health impacts of climate change.

Climate change harms health in many interconnected ways. This includes rising climate-related anxiety, especially among young people; and growing pressure on local, national and global food systems, which drives inflation and disproportionately affects lower-income households.

Stronger climate action can significantly improve health. Measures such as home energy efficiency and retrofitting reduce emissions while tackling cold, damp, and mould thus cutting respiratory illness and helping households lower fossil fuel use.

All these issues sit within the broader concept of planetary health: human wellbeing depends on the responsible stewardship of natural and societal systems. Without this holistic perspective, neither health nor climate goals can be fully met.

References:

- Amnesty International has highlighted global health and human rights harms linked to fossil fuel infrastructure:
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/11/fossil-fuel-infrastructure-rights-critical-ecosystems-at-risk/>).
- Research by the UCL Institute of Health Equity for the CCC shows clear overlaps between health, inequality, and Net Zero, including recommendations on air pollution and housing:
(<https://www.instituteoftheequity.org/resources-reports/sustainable-health-equity-achieving-a-net-zero-uk>).
- The UK Health Alliance on Climate Change also proposes policies relevant to the CCP that integrate health into climate action: (<https://s41874.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/UKHACC-MANIFESTO-Scotland-FINAL.pdf>).

SUMMARY

In summary, we welcome the draft Climate Change Plan but believe it requires greater honesty, urgency, and clarity to meet the scale of the climate and nature crises. The plan must give the public the understanding needed for transformative change, reduce over-reliance on unproven technologies, strengthen its international commitments, and fully integrate health and wellbeing considerations. Above all, Scotland must act with integrity. We must take bold, transparent decisions now to protect future generations and contribute fairly to global climate justice.

Question 2: We recognise that workers face particular impacts from the Plan, and we have outlined our approach to supporting the transition of the workforce, including skills for jobs. What skills, training and qualification provisions will be most important in a net zero future and what more could be done to support them?

We believe the most important skills, training and qualification needs for a net zero future lie in four urgent sectors: heat in buildings, transport, agriculture and land use (including peatland and nature restoration), and renewable energy. These areas cannot wait until closer to 2045 as much progress needs to be made. We welcome existing funding and initiatives but think the CCP must be more ambitious to accelerate emissions reductions, create long-term sustainable jobs, and demonstrate the tangible benefits of a just transition. Climate justice and social justice are inseparable, and we would like to see particular ambition in agriculture and land use to jointly address the nature and climate crises.

HEAT IN BUILDINGS: Skills development in this sector is essential to meet emissions targets to 2030, scale up heat pump installation, and retrofit Scotland's traditional buildings. The decision not to progress the Heat in Buildings Bill this session is therefore extremely damaging to workforce confidence, investment, and public understanding of the lifestyle changes required for a responsible climate policy.

We welcome the Heat Pump Skills Fund launched in 2025, but Scotland now urgently needs rapid, accessible training for existing gas engineers to retrain as heat pump specialists, alongside strong apprenticeship pathways. Financial incentives, college-based training, and a clear public awareness campaign on modernising heating systems are essential.

CASE STUDY: LOCAL RETROFIT CAPACITY: NESFIT, a community retrofit organisation in Daviot, Aberdeenshire, has the expertise to support local retrofit work but struggles to access "just transition" funding due to its size and because it is new. The Scottish Government should enable community organisations to access funding more easily as this would strengthen regional supply chains, create local employment and reduce reliance on Central Belt contractors.

TRANSPORT: Transport must deliver major emission cuts in the first two carbon budget periods. Investment in green transport infrastructure creates substantial job opportunities in construction, engineering and maintenance; thus supporting workers transitioning from high-carbon industries.

JUST TRANSITION FOR OIL AND GAS WORKERS: Supporting workers to move from oil and gas into renewables is critical. We welcome the Energy Skills Passport and the Just Transition Fund, and believe the CCP should include a public campaign highlighting successful transitions to build trust, counter negativity, and encourage workers to change jobs.

Question 3: The Plan will bring opportunities and challenges for businesses and employers. How can we best support employers across the private, public and third sectors to make the changes needed and seize the benefits of net zero?

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 4: Our approach recognises that some of the Plan's impacts will have greater implications for particular regions of Scotland. What are your views on our approach to supporting places where the transition presents particular regional impacts?

We think what is missing is that the plan needs to be supported by clear, simple public information campaign which should equip all of us as far as possible with a shared understanding of the climate and nature crises and how they will impact differently on the different regions of Scotland. For example Aberdeenshire is predicted to suffer from chronic water shortages (as has been exemplified in the summer of 2025 when many rural homes had to have water delivered as private water sources ran dry); and how different policies will be relevant for different regions for example, urban compared with rural. Financial fairness must be discussed, we

must address fuel poverty and provide support to individuals so they can change jobs and move into a new industry. These are the issues that come up time and time again when people discuss the just transition. Funding must be found on a 'make polluters pay' basis with no shame attached to the redistributive principle involved; we must come together as a whole society to address the climate crisis with those with the broadest shoulders and who pollute the most contributing more.

Section 2: Sectoral contributions, Policies and Proposals

The following questions concern the Sectoral contributions, policies and proposal sections of the Plan.

Buildings (Residential and Public)

Question 5: How can we decarbonise homes and buildings in a way that is fair and leaves no one behind?

We are very disappointed that there will no longer be a Heat in Buildings bill this parliament. The bill as proposed was designed to provide solutions to exactly this question. Its removal sends the political message that changes in this sector are not a priority, this is in direct contradiction to the high commendations of the original Heat in Buildings policies by the Climate Change Committee.

FUNDING: Support schemes such as the Home Energy Scotland Grant and Loan are essential for low-income households to improve their homes and heating systems and we welcome them. Eligibility criteria should be reviewed regularly to ensure the most vulnerable can access sufficient grants. As an overarching principle, we need a 'polluter pays' principle to be built into a transparent system of financial support to support lower income households to decarbonise their homes. This means using fiscal tools to raise funds from polluting industries and practices, and the wealthier in society.

Early policy clarity will help households and industry plan and invest.

The ELECTRICITY PRICE: Rebalancing electricity and gas prices is critical. Although renewable electricity is now the cheapest energy to produce, this is not reflected in consumer bills, undermining trust in the benefits of renewables. The Scottish Government should continue pressing the UK Government to correct this anomaly. While flexible tariffs and off-peak rates from suppliers such as Octopus and Good Energy offer savings, e.g. (at time of writing) a price of 6.6p per kWh from midnight to 5am, and 6.7p per kWh for EV charging via your home EV charger. To take up such offers relies on extra equipment, such as smart meters which are not an option for everyone, and do not solve the underlying price imbalance.

PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGN: A comprehensive, targeted campaign is needed to explain how homes can be decarbonised, why it matters, and what support exists. Heat pumps and district heating should be promoted wherever suitable, alongside mandatory high-quality insulation and retrofitting to maximise efficiency. Clear guidance is also needed for homes unsuitable for heat pumps, including smart meter improvements, zero-emissions boilers, and simple efficiency

adjustments to existing gas systems. For example, the UK Government explored some of this in a recent study of smart meters (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/smart-metering-policy-framework-post-2025>) .

TECHNOLOGY AND BEST PRACTICE: Heat pumps and district heating are well-established across Europe and provide proven models for the UK to follow. The technology is not new; what is needed is political will, public understanding and the right enabling conditions.

Question 6: How can clean heating systems (such as heat pumps) be made more affordable for everyone?

In accordance with CCC recommendations. We should aim for 40% of Scotland's homes to have low carbon heat, with 23% of Scottish homes running a heat pump, by 2030. We are therefore disappointed to see that based on commitments in the plan only around 20% of homes are expected to have clean heating by 2035.

Therefore, here are some suggested policies to extend the reach of clean heating systems:

FUNDING: We welcome funding such as the Home Energy Scotland Grant and Loan scheme which means that people in Scotland can access some finance to install heat pumps. Given the importance of improving domestic heating for Scotland reaching net zero, we suggest that much more funding is channelled into helping Scottish households switch to low carbon heating solutions like heat pumps. We feel that this is a much better use of government money than putting it into unproven technologies like CCUS. For example, using fiscal financial incentives to make heat pumps more competitive with gas boilers.

IMPROVEMENTS TO HOME ENERGY SCOTLAND: It is not just funding that is a barrier to people installing heat pumps. Getting a grant through Home Energy Scotland has been laborious, takes a long time and is very stressful. We would urge you to please examine with urgency how red tape can be cut in this area.

RENT A BOILER: For people not yet in priority housing or areas for heat pumps; interim solutions can and should be put in place for people. An example is the ability to rent a boiler if your home is part of a street which is intended to be part of a District Heat Network in the coming years, to avoid homeowners upgrading a boiler only to find that it needs to be replaced before the end of its lifespan.

PUBLIC EDUCATION: In addition to these measures there needs to be the launch of a comprehensive public education campaign explaining the benefits and requirements, and the establishment of better training infrastructure and workforce development programmes.

RENTAL SECTOR: By 2033 the efficiency standards for rental sector and owner-occupied properties should be made mandatory, together with compulsory timescales for compliance with heating system upgrades. The effectiveness of these measures can be measured by the annual number of heat pump installations and number of properties covered by district heat networks.

RETROFITTING: Retrofitting for maximum energy efficiency is vital if installation of heat pumps is to address fuel poverty as well as carbon emission reduction, as well as being needed in the cases where a heat pump is not suitable. We therefore welcome the work that has already been done, for example the £3.5 million distributed in the North East and Moray through the Just Transition Fund for retrofitting. Particular consideration should be given to the best way of retrofitting existing housing stock, for example tenement properties. A pilot scheme where some pumps are installed with lessons learnt and shared with the public to encourage others in similar situations to change to lower carbon heating solutions could help. Planning restrictions on conservation area and listed buildings need to be revised to allow energy efficiency measures such as double-glazing and solar panels to be less constrained. We were glad to see in the Energy Supply sectoral part of the CPP that there are plans to build skills capacity around planning and we hope that retrofit constraints are among the issues they will consider. A good example of retrofit work in Scotland is through BE-ST (<https://www.be-st.build/scotlands-national-retrofit-centre>).

NEW HOMES: New homes should have mandatory solar panels as well as clean heating.

Under the New Build Heat Standard regulations, the use of direct-emissions heating systems (primarily gas and oil boilers) is disallowed for new buildings warranted from April 2024 onwards. This is welcome. To make this change more efficient on energy and cost, we recommend that there is also a requirement for solar panels to be included in all new builds.

To make electric heating more cost-effective for users, and efficient for the National Grid, we recommend introduction of grant funding for installation of solar panels and related storage batteries.

Transport

Question 7: Which of the following would be most effective in enabling you to transition your vehicle(s) to zero emissions alternatives? Please rank your choices from highest to lowest priority, where 1 is the highest priority. Please only give one ranking to each option:

If you're responding for an organisation: you may want to consider car fleets as well as HGV fleets.

- 1. Cost of new zero emissions vehicles needs to come down*
- 2. Cost of used zero emissions vehicles needs to come down*
- 3. Reliable infrastructure for vehicles (such as fuel or charging networks)*
- 4. Noticeably cheaper running costs (including electricity, maintenance and insurance)*
- 5. Convenient access to public charging infrastructure*

6. Ensuring an adequate number of trained mechanics available to perform essential maintenance and repairs

7. Access to funding support /low cost finance

8. All of the above

9. Other (use box below)

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 8: How can the Scottish Government support communities to participate in planning of local sustainable infrastructure (such as, walking, wheeling and cycling routes)?

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 9: What action by the Scottish Government would be most helpful in supporting you to live a more climate-friendly lifestyle?

This response covers investment in public transport and active travel, ultra-low emissions zone and progressive aviation taxation.

INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND ACTIVE TRAVEL: It is vital to prioritise substantial investment in integrated public transport networks and active travel infrastructure. The evidence from the Scottish Parliament demonstrates that transport currently accounts for around 33% of Scotland's greenhouse gas emissions. This is accompanied by harmful nitrogen oxides, sulphur compounds, and fine particulate matter that directly damage respiratory health and disproportionately affect economically disadvantaged communities.

Public transport and active travel infrastructure development requires a long-term commitment with measurable milestones. Early implementation phases should prioritise communities experiencing the highest levels of transport-related air pollution, addressing both climate and health justice simultaneously.

Social equity benefits include improved access to employment, education, and services for communities currently underserved by transport infrastructure. Active travel promotion addresses multiple health challenges simultaneously, combating sedentary lifestyles while reducing carbon emissions and other forms of pollution. Furthermore, reduced dependence on private vehicle ownership particularly benefits lower-income households, who spend disproportionate percentages of income on transport. These policies therefore advance both climate goals and social justice principles that align with Scotland's commitment to reducing inequality. They will help get the public onside with climate policies when direct benefits can be seen for many sections of society.

Comprehensive policy must therefore simultaneously address climate targets and health equity through accessible, efficient, and reliable public transport systems that reduce both emissions and air pollution exposure. This is shown with the concept of planetary health which shows that what is good for the health of individuals is also good for the health of the planet (e.g., <https://uoeglobal-health.ed.ac.uk/global-and-planetary-health/planetary-health>).

CASE STUDY: Ember Electric Bus service: a new electric bus service has been established developing routes between the major Scottish cities. Anecdotal conversations suggest it is popular and users are choosing this bus as it is easier and cheaper than driving, especially for those who have free bus passes. It shows that we will choose not to use our cars if the incentive is right. Price is important, of course, but people like the fact that the buses are electric and very comfortable. People prefer to make a low-carbon choice when it is made available and brings other advantages: this is how behavioural changes have to be shaped.

ULTRA LOW-EMISSION ZONES: We welcome the 4 Low Emission Zones (LEZ) that have been rolled out in Scotland since 2020. Something that needs to be added to the CCP is the further rolling-out of ultra-low-emission zones in cities and towns. This will not only reduce emissions but has road safety benefits, as well as clear health benefits as air pollution levels reduce.

Ultra-low-emission zones need to be accompanied by better support for people on lower incomes/with disabilities to change to a less polluting vehicle. With the roll-out of the Edinburgh LEZ, a limited number of grants for £3000 were available (£2000 to scrap a polluting vehicle and up to £1000 to invest in green transport options). Whilst this was helpful; for those who are reliant on a vehicle for business or for health reasons this was not enough to buy a second-hand compliant vehicle, leaving those on the lowest incomes struggling. Even so, the scheme was oversubscribed. It is this kind of scheme that can work, if only when thoroughly and thoughtfully implemented, and we feel this type of scheme is where investment should be prioritised rather than unproven technology like CCUS.

PROGRESSIVE AVIATION TAXATION: It is good to see that the Scottish Government are committed to introducing an Air Departure Tax (ADT) and to see this intention expressed in the January 2026 Budget. Its design should adhere to the polluter pays principles. The CCP needs to be expanded to include specific policies for the ADT in line with the report published by Oxfam in 2024 (<https://www.oxfam.org.uk/documents/900/Cleared-for-Take-Off.pdf>). ADT should be progressive, taxing more frequent flyers a lot more than occasional flyers with due provisions made for highlands and islands. We were very glad to see in the January 2026 Budget a decision to go ahead with a private jet tax, a 'polluter pays' policy we and others such as Oxfam have long been advocating for and which will surely resonate with the public!

While initial capital investments will be substantial, the economic framework must recognise transport transformation as investment rather than cost. 'Polluter pays' mechanisms would generate dedicated revenue streams that partially offset public expenditure while ensuring those with highest emissions contribute proportionately. Revenue from progressive aviation taxation alone could fund significant public transport improvements while maintaining broad public support for climate action.

Waste

Question 10: Are there any additional proposals to support waste sector emission reduction that should be considered across the following 5 areas:

- *Strengthen the circular economy*
- *Reduce and reuse*
- *Modernise recycling*
- *Decarbonise disposal*
- *Other emission sources (including waste water and anaerobic digestion)*

We have not written a response to this question.

Energy Supply

Question 11: What are your views on Scotland generating more electricity from renewable sources?

PHASE OUT FOSSIL FUELS: We support the phase-out of fossil fuels and advocate for redirecting funding towards fair and sustainable solutions to the climate and cost-of-living crises, specifically promoting renewable energy and home insulation.

Scotland should sign up to the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and this should be stated in the CCP in the international section. Endorsement of the treaty doesn't commit the Scottish Government to any specific courses of policy action, but it would send a powerful message to other developed economies about the importance of this treaty for a globally just transition from fossil fuels. It is vital that more electricity is generated renewably and quickly to enable the transition to low-carbon heating and transport.

DATA CENTRES: We are very concerned that the building of new data centres will set us back in our progress towards decarbonising these sectors. If data centres are considered to be an essential part of Scotland's economy, electricity demand will be exponentially increased and vital renewable energy will be diverted into data centre demand. We appreciate that in the Green Industry Strategy that the aim is for data centres to be run on renewable energy and to recycle waste heat. We would like the CCP to outline whether this has happened to date and the specific plans for new data centres. Otherwise, the CCP lacks integrity in this area.

COMMUNITY ENERGY GENERATION: Given the huge increase in demand for electricity in the future the emphasis was on national production of energy in the CCP whereas there is also huge potential in community energy production. When this is done well and run by communities they see financial benefits from having wind turbines, solar panels etc in their communities and this can help reduce opposition to infrastructure and helps Scotland to generate the renewable energy needed.

UPGRADING ELECTRICITY GRID: The increased use of electricity to heat homes will contribute to accelerating electricity demand. It is critical that the electricity grid is properly maintained and updated to be able to cope with these increases.

We appreciate the detail on upgrading the electricity grid. We appreciate the mention that the Scottish Government will engage with the UK Government, Ofgem and the National Energy System Operator (NESO) on actions to help facilitate quicker electricity grid connections for Scottish industrial electrification. We would like to see more detail in the CCP on how the Scottish Government will work with these partners so that progress can be clearly measured and how collaboration can be facilitated. When one side blames the other for a lack of progress it results in a loss of integrity and a lack of public trust in the ability of leaders to work together for our common future wellbeing and security.

We would also like to see detail in the CCP about how communities will be engaged with by these partners when there are proposals for new electricity infrastructure. Meaningful consultation is vital as is adapting plans based on feedback to take into account and try to preserve areas of natural beauty and respond to community concerns. The public has to be taken along with us otherwise there can be strong feelings created in communities such as in Lauder where pylons are planned. Press reporting on this suggests community engagement could have been better, such as by having meetings at the weekend or in the evenings (see <https://www.thesouthernreporter.co.uk/news/environment/giant-pylons-opposition-alliance-formed-4978900>). There needs to be a national plan for where wind turbines and electricity infrastructure will be built across Scotland and plan for how to do this with communities.

Business and Industrial Processes

Question 12: What support do industries need to reduce their carbon emissions while remaining competitive?

We have not written a response to this question.

Agriculture and Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)

Question 13: How can the Scottish Government encourage sustainable land use, that is also productive for local communities?

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 14: What do you think about our proposals for planting trees and restoring natural habitats like peatlands?

We wholeheartedly support initiatives that encourage tree planting and restoring peatlands. We think that where there are success stories these need to be celebrated and promoted to encourage others.

An example is the Leadburn Community Woodland which is a former forestry plantation that lies on the Esk/Eddleston watershed to the south of the Pentland Hills. Bought by a community group in 2007 after the bulk of the commercial timber had been extracted, it now provides a diverse mix of habitats that include ponds, conifer stands, heath, fen, regenerating mixed woodland, and two raised bogs (more

info <https://www.scotlandbigpicture.com/nrn-partners/leadburn-community-woodland>).

Question 15: How can the Scottish Government support farming to become more climate-friendly while continuing to support food production and improve biodiversity?

We have not written a response to this question.

Section 3: Impact Assessments

The following questions concern the Business and Regulatory Impact Assessment (BRIA), Child rights and wellbeing impact assessment (CRWIA), Island Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA), Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment (FSD). The purpose of these impact assessments is to understand the effects of government policy on specific groups, including children and young people, island communities, business and equalities groups.

Question 16

Which groups or communities do you think will be most affected by the transition to net zero, and in what ways?

There is a danger for some climate policies to increase inequality unless there is joined up thinking to ensure that policies also reduce deprivation and poverty. The plan emphasises addressing fuel poverty, which we are glad to see. But unless such hopes are backed by a ‘polluter pays’ fundraising principle, we find it hard to see how the plan will achieve its laudable aims of leaving no-one behind.

Involving communities in community-centred design can also help ensure climate action advances rather than undermines social equity. For example, the Scottish Episcopal Church has helped their churches to be informed and equipped to reduce the carbon emissions of their buildings (<https://netzerochurch.scot/>). The Poverty Truth Network also has a good model for reducing poverty in communities (<https://povertytruthnetwork.org/>). A similar model could be used at national level.

Community based action also builds resilience and hope in communities, something that is key to bring the public along with us and to help reduce eco-anxiety (for example, see British Medical Journal: <https://www.bmj.com/content/383/bmj.p2316>. Powell, R.A., and Rao, M. (2023) and Hickman et al (2021): [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196\(21\)00278-3/fulltext?ref=tangle](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(21)00278-3/fulltext?ref=tangle)).

The public must see positive and meaningful actions to reduce the impacts of climate disruption to get onside with climate policies. This is why this response has focused on good public messaging and truth and integrity.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

But the group that will be most impacted by the transition to net zero, and who profoundly need us to make this transition on their behalf, are our young people and

the generations to come. This group's health, mental wellbeing, working future and survival should be a driving motivation for urgent positive action.

Question 17

How do you think the Climate Change Plan aligns with existing local, regional, or national priorities that you are aware of or involved in?

The CCP is important to set the tone nationally for the reduction of carbon emissions and should encourage local governance structures to work closely with the Scottish Government on this shared vision. For example, the CCP could encourage regional councils to endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty and to declare a climate emergency. For Scotland to reach net zero by 2045 all governance structures must play their part and have aligned carbon reducing policies.

Question 18

If you identified there could be negative impacts of the Climate Change Plan, are there any ways you think we could reduce that negative impact and if so, what would you recommend?

The transition to a low carbon economy is already seen as a process of privilege. While luxuries such as private jets remain untaxed, it will be hard to persuade the voting public that the transition will increase equity. Disillusion with the privileged transition is increasingly felt among those groups already drifting away from democratic process and moderate politics, while these feelings are only encouraged by the messaging of climate deniers. An equitable, 'polluter pays' redistributive approach is essential for the plan to avoid negative impacts, not only in terms of social justice but also politically and democratically.

The other key element to minimise negative impact is courageous public messaging. Scottish Government must prioritise comprehensive public education and transparency. This should headline the fact that the climate emergency is already underway, and that it is man-made, as is the related crisis in biodiversity and the balance of nature. The CCP should be upfront on this, as it is increasingly vital to counter populist scepticism and denial.

This should include nationwide, meaningful, face-to-face public meetings, to build genuine public support for climate action. Online-only information, and even localised climate hub activity, is likely to remain siloed and to reach only small numbers of self-selected groups. A nationwide approach could be hugely positive, allowing local success stories to be shared across and between places.

A comprehensive public campaign should explain directly to the Scottish public how mitigation steps will reduce emissions to slow climate breakdown and how adaptation measures will help us cope with the climate changes already underway. It should also frame the CCP as an opportunity for people to be part of a movement to make the world a better place, for the sake of their children and grandchildren. Strong public messaging is vital because for the CCP to be a success it must persuade the public that it is for them and not just the green lobby. This campaign must be grounded in truthfulness and honesty about both the opportunities and

challenges ahead, including honest assessment of the limitations of unproven technologies such as CCUS.

Question 19

Please share any other quantitative data, or sources of this, to assist in developing the impact assessments:

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 20

Are there any previous examples or case studies we should consider when assessing potential impacts?

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 21

Can you think of any further positive or negative impacts, that are not covered in the impact assessments, that may result from the Climate Change Plan?

The plan relies heavily on unproven negative emissions technologies such as CCUS. There is a risk that a large amount of the finance available for reducing Scotland's emissions will be spent on this and then it will not work, or at least not work to the extent needed. We would therefore much rather that the finance was spent on proven actions such as around transport, heating and land use.

The 'high risk' nature of this over-reliance is not just that it will fail in its contribution to cut emissions, but that the over-reliance and the likely failure will undermine already fragile levels of trust in the Scottish Government to be honest and to protect us all.

Section 4: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The following questions concern the SEA. There is a legal requirement to consult on the SEA Environmental Report ([Environmental Assessment \(Scotland\) Act 2005](#)). The purpose of the SEA is to assess the likely environmental effects of government policy, considers how negative impacts can be avoided or minimised and ways that positive effects can be enhanced.

Question 22

What are your views on the accuracy and scope of the environmental baseline set out in the environmental report? Are you aware of further information that could be used to inform the assessment findings?

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 23

What in your view are the most significant environmental effects which should be taken into account as the Draft Climate Change Plan is finalised?

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 24

What are your views on the predicted environmental effects as set out in the environmental report? Please share any other useful sources.

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 25

What are your views on the proposals for mitigation, enhancement and monitoring of the environmental effects set out in the environmental report?

We have not written a response to this question.

Section 5: Monitoring emissions reductions

The following questions concern the reporting of annual emissions reductions.

Question 26

What are your views on the proposed approach to reporting annual emissions output and how this could support public understanding of Scotland's progress towards achieving our Carbon Budgets?

We welcome a process that might restore levels of trust in government's truthfulness and strengthen the connection between people and politics.

Question 27

How useful do you think reporting emissions statistics at a more detailed level (including at the sub-sectoral level), would be in helping people understand key sources of emissions, and our progress in reducing them?

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 28

How might the use of timely indicators, as proposed, help people to understand what needs to be delivered to achieve our Carbon budgets, and to understand whether progress is on track?

Indicators that are clear on the carbon emission cuts achieved to date and in which sectors, would be useful and would be an encouragement to all as we see the results of climate policies and can see their effectiveness. This is important for the integrity of the CCP, for people to be able to see progress and where there are challenges that need to be addressed.

However, many important aspects of carbon reduction such as peatland restoration and community energy, are already monitored, measured and reported and we would be sorry to see a doubling up of measurement and reporting process in such areas. There is a risk that process might impede progress.

Questions 29-33

The following questions concern the following 14 proposed indicators for monitoring and evaluation of the Climate Change Plan.

1. *Participation in decision making*
2. *Community energy*
3. *Community benefits*
4. *Changes to places*
5. *Fuel Poverty*
6. *Transport affordability*
7. *Socio-economic impact on oil and gas communities*
8. *Impact on household finances in oil and gas communities*
9. *Access to training for offshore oil and gas workers*
10. *Green jobs*
11. *Impact of energy prices on small businesses*
12. *Air pollution*
13. *Woodland creation*
14. *Peatland restoration*

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 29

Please detail any specific changes that would improve any of the 14 proposed indicators, including any data sources not currently included within this framework that could provide a useful indicator of progress towards a just transition in Scotland on an annual basis.

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 30

What are the most appropriate indicators for judging whether we are achieving meaningful public participation in decisions related to the climate? This includes both the quality of the participatory process itself, and the impact of that participation on the decision-making process.

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 31

What indicator would provide the best measure of the impact of net zero development in local communities across Scotland? For example, the impact of the installation of renewable energy infrastructure or other land use changes (e.g. through peatland restoration or tree planting).

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 32

Ensuring positive outcomes for workers who have transitioned from jobs within high-carbon industries is central to delivering a just transition. What specific data or indicators could we use to monitor the extent to which workers in high-carbon industries are securing alternative employment?

We have not written a response to this question.

Question 33

What specific data or indicators could we use to meaningfully monitor the impact of the transition to net zero on the environment and biodiversity across Scotland on an annual basis?

We have not written a response to this question.