

Wakefield Just Transition Forum

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Climate Action Group Launches in Wakefield

Wakefield Town Hall witnessed the launch of its own dedicated Climate Action Group on Friday 27th September at Wakefield Town Hall.

Members of the public came to the Kingswood Suite to join members of Just Transition Wakefield and some significant guests to hear about the climate emergency and what Wakefield can do about it.

Spokes person, Stuart Boothman, said “Every time we meet, we welcome new people to the meeting. The demand for action and the support for it is visible everywhere – Wakefield district is no exception. To borrow a phrase, the time is now.”

The meeting heard from Mary Creagh MP who spoke about the work of the Environmental Audit Committee in holding the government to account for its environmental record. It heard from the Reverend Tony Robinson, Bishop of Wakefield about the moral imperative to act and from Cllr Olivia Rowley about Wakefield Council’s plans to achieve zero carbon by 2030.

Stuart said “It is clear that we are starting from very near the beginning – we need to see detailed plans for all energy use, all procurement and all council partnerships. And we need confidence that council employees understand the issue and their role in this critical policy drive. 2030 seems a long way away, but this time will fly – we need to see some significant quick wins within weeks to give people confidence.”

The meeting was gripped by a key note presentation from Dr Andrew Rollinson from Extinction Rebellion, Pontefract. Dr Rollinson talked the meeting through the climate emergency and the evidence for the urgency. He finished with a call to action. Stuart said “Dr Rollinson’s words were heard in silence as the seriousness of the message sank in.”

Stuart closed the meeting with an explanation of Just Transition’s aims and objectives. He said “ we have 3 key aims:
Firstly to support and challenge Wakefield Met to deliver the plan and deliver the actions that will enable them to hit their target;
Secondly to support public action and protests to keep the climate crisis on the front pages and keep the pressure on politicians at every level;
Thirdly to inform and engage the public so that when new policies are introduced, they are understood and supported.”

He went on to say “This last is critical for the transition to a zero carbon economy to be successful, but the truth is, we need all three strands simultaneously. We have little time to waste.”

ENDS

Notes for the Editor.

- Wakefield Just Transition Forum is a broad network of groups and individuals from across the district. It includes Wakefield and District Trades Council, Wakefield Friends of the Earth, the Labour and Green parties, faith groups and many others.
- Wakefield Just Transition aims to encourage and enable people, businesses and organisations to move to a zero carbon economy without leaving anyone behind.
- The group can be found on Facebook as “Just Transition Wakefield”
- Speakers at the public meeting were:
 - Mary Creagh MP
 - Dr Andrew Rollinson, Extinction Rebellion
 - Rev Tony Robinson, Bishop of Wakefield
 - Cllr Olivia Rowley, Lead member on the climate emergency
 - Stuart Boothman, Just Transition Wakefield
- For further information, please contact Catherine Porritt at WFandDistrict-TUC@gmx.com, or Stuart Boothman at sboothman@posteo.net
- Attached – Stuart’s words to the meeting.