



Press Release

For Immediate Use. 12/10/2021

Wakefield Welcoming Spanish Climate Walkers

Spanish Climate Activists are visiting Wakefield on Friday October 15th, on their way to Glasgow for the UN COP26 climate talks, and being welcomed by the Mayor, the Bishop and Just Transition Wakefield.

The Spanish group left Spain at the end of September, walking well over 500 miles to Glasgow, averaging 20 miles a day. On Friday, they walk from Mapplewell in Barnsley to Leeds, visiting Wakefield between 12 noon and 2pm.

They will be greeted at an event on the Cathedral steps by the Mayor Tracey Austin and the Bishop, Rev Tony Robinson. Speakers will include the walkers themselves, Wakefield school pupils, Cllr Jack Hemingway amongst others.

Stuart Boothman from Just Transition Wakefield said “The UN has declared a ‘Code Red’ for the climate, we have seen global disruption this summer with extreme weather disasters on every continent and the pressure is on World Leaders to cut emissions quickly and to sustain those cuts.”

He went on to say “Global emissions need to have fallen by 50% by 2030 to have any chance of keeping runaway climate breakdown in check, but we are currently on track for 16% emissions growth!”

Maribel Roldón, one of the Spanish Marchers, summed up the strength of feelings of the group, “I believe that the future of humanity depends on what happens at the Climate Change Summit (COP26) in Glasgow in November 2021. It’s our very last chance to take effective action.”

The group will be joining other groups of walkers from all over Europe and from the UK, all converging on Glasgow. On the way, the towns and cities the walkers visit will host rallies and talks, and visit schools to raise awareness and help educate people about the importance of

the COP26 talks, and how people can push their governments to take meaningful climate action.

Stuart finished by saying “We have worked hard to welcome the walkers from Spain, helped by so many people and organisations. We are especially grateful to the Cathedral and the Council, but also to Wakefield College who are preparing food to sustain the walkers on their way as they head northwards. But none of us have given up a month to walk 20 miles a day for the cause! This shows just how critical the state of the climate is right now. We all have to cut climate emissions now!”

ENDS

Notes to the Editor

- In the past 30 years, global emissions have doubled, and are still rising. The world is currently on track for 2°C of warming around 2030, and over 4°C of warming before the end of the century. This would be a humanitarian and ecological catastrophe and must be avoided at all costs.
- Please see attached the press statement from the Spanish group.
- COP26 is the name given to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) talks. COP stands for Conference Of the Parties – an annual conference of all nations signed up to the UNFCCC. This is the 26th such conference that should have happened in 2020, but was delayed by the Coronavirus Pandemic. See <https://ukcop26.org/>
- The event in Wakefield is supported by Wakefield Council including a welcome by the Mayor, Tracey Austin and Deputy Leader Jack Hemingway, a welcome by the Bishop, and a meal cooked by Wakefield College.
- As well as the Mayor, the Bishop and Cllr Hemingway, there will be speakers from local schools, from other young people from a range of backgrounds, from Trade Unions and from other people – who all come from Wakefield and support immediate climate action.
- Just Transition Wakefield was created in May 2019, following the With Banners Held High festival that year. See <https://justtransitionwakefield.org.uk/>
- Just Transition Wakefield started as an alliance between Wakefield and District TUC and Wakefield Friends of the Earth, but now counts many organisations and individuals as active

members (as well as the thousands of trade union members represented by Trades Council).

- Just Transition Wakefield is pushing for the transition to a zero carbon economy to be socially and economically just – so that no-one is left behind as green jobs become the norm.
- Just Transition Wakefield also works with similar groups across the region, specifically through the Yorkshire and Humber COP26 Coalition, through the West Yorkshire Association of Trades Councils and through the regional Friends of the Earth network.

Contact for further comment and detail:

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