

One small step for York, one giant leap for the World

Submission to the Public Inquiry on the 2018 York Local Plan

Joking aside, I believe this submission on the York Local Plan can start something of worldwide importance. Worrying climate feedbacks are mentioned in the accompanying document *The York Local Plan: Climate Change*. These climate feedbacks are eating into the remaining carbon budgets. Keeping to these budgets is one of the few ways to stop climate change becoming completely out of control. These are described in a video on “cascading tipping points” in [the video by Paul Beckwith](#) [1].

The recent Working paper from the Centre for Understanding Sustainable Prosperity (CUSP), [Zero Carbon Sooner —The case for an early zero carbon target for the UK](#) [2], by Professor Tim Jackson adds a UK perspective. The abstract for the paper starts:

This briefing paper addresses the question of when the UK should aim for zero (or net zero) carbon emissions. Starting from the global carbon budget which would allow the world an estimated 66% chance of limiting climate warming to 1.5°C, the paper derives a carbon budget for the UK of 2.5 GtCO₂.

When a remaining UK carbon budget of 2.5 GtCO₂ (2,500 million tonnes of CO₂) is divided amongst the 66 million population, this averages 39 tonnes CO₂ per person. In terms of the composite measure for greenhouse gasses, Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e), this averages 49 tonnes CO₂e per person. (In this submission I have calculated the remaining carbon budget as 64 tonnes CO₂e). As mentioned in other parts of this submission, typical lifestyles envisaged in the York Local Plan will have yearly carbon emissions in excess of 14 tonnes CO₂e, exhausting the 1.5C budget in under four years. In the current climate crisis this is clearly not acceptable. Lifestyles have to change.

York’s population is a small proportion of the UK (approximately 0.3%). The UK’s population is a small proportion of the World (approximately 0.9%). How can the York Local Plan have much effect on the life rest of the World? The answer to this is by showing that it is possible to have pleasant and affordable lives with low emissions of greenhouse gasses. The documents of this submission begin to show how this is a possibility.

The accompanying documents are:

- The York Local Plan: Climate change
- The York Local Plan: Exiling the poor
- Summary of recommendations for the York Local Plan

Geoff Beacon

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Hyperlinks to references

[1] <https://youtu.be/G25dGJ3yUYk>

[2] <https://www.cusp.ac.uk/themes/aetw/zero-carbon-sooner>