

Proposal for the Town Council to develop and deliver a climate emergency action pledge for Todmorden

It is difficult to see what actions a parish or town council, with their limited powers and small budgets can take to deliver real impact on the climate emergency. However, there is one type of activity for which local councils are better placed to deliver than any other statutory body: mobilising the local community.

I propose that the TTC should develop a pledge to help people in Todmorden to understand where their actions can have a real impact on the local environment and contribute to climate action.

The dangers of the climate emergency have in the last couple of years come to be understood by the majority of people. Many people are concerned, some even scared, but feel powerless and confused about what they can do. The project is intended to make Todmorden people aware of the individual actions which actually can make a contribution to solutions.

The project succeeds if a substantial number of residents promise to change some aspects of their daily life in terms of using less petrol, gas and water. Nudge theory suggests that if friends and neighbours sign one or more pledges other people will want to show what they can do. Even if people only live up to half of the actions they have pledged half of the time this will make a real contribution to climate change.

A *first* draft of the type of individual actions which would contribute to climate mitigation is presented below. The individual pledges are intentionally phrased cautiously. People are asked to avoid doing some things *if possible* or *unless necessary* or in the case of one off actions (like buying a new car) *to explore the possibility* of doing some things. There is no point in asking people to promise to do things which they cannot afford or which are impossible in their situation.

This project is unlikely to involve substantial costs – except staff time. The pledges need to be developed, road tested on a few friends and neighbours, printed and then launched with a local publicity campaign, including a market stall for a couple of Saturdays. The pledge sheets can be run off on the TTC printer and can be run off as needed. Councillors can approach the organisations that they are members of to promote the project.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLEDGE

Your pledge about what you will do for the future of Todmorden and the world

I PROMISE

- Not to drive short distances unless absolutely necessary
- That I will start using a bike or bus/train for short journeys
- Not to fly to destinations in the UK unless absolutely necessary
- To reduce the number of long distance holidays I take
- Never to leave my TV, radio and computer on stand-by
- To use single use plastic as little as possible
- Not to use soil or compost with added peat in my garden
- To reduce the temperature at home by one degree
- To increase the insulation in my home
- That when I need to replace my central heating boiler I will explore the possibility of other heating options than a gas boiler
- That when I have to change my cooker I will avoid replacing it with a gas cooker
- To eat a bit less beef, mutton and lamb
- To try to limit my purchases of seafood to fish caught in areas designated as sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council
- Not to buy clothes I know I will only use a few times
- To give clothes I won't or can't wear any more a second lease of life by giving them away for someone else to wear
- To give clothes and other textiles which can't be worn or used any longer to charity shop rag collections and not throw them in the bin

Signature Date

Tick as many promises as you feel that you can live up to. Tick also anything you already do to pledge that you will continue to do this.

On the next page there is information how much carbon emissions you could save if you fulfil the promises above as well as some ideas about things which will make some of the promises above easier to achieve