

PRESS RELEASE

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Regional leaders commit to reaching Net Zero at least five years earlier than central government

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Register for launch event (11am, 10 December):

https://uk100-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_JTm6ppuQV-WJAV4cuhFcA

- One year ahead of the COP26 climate summit, network of 100 local leaders urge government to go faster, and give them more powers to tackle climate emergency
- On Thursday, 41 cross party local leaders will explicitly commit to cut their own emissions to Net Zero by 2030, and their community emissions by 2045, five years earlier than Whitehall
- The authorities represent 20.4 million people across England and Scotland - around a third of the population
- New Cities Race to Zero alliance between UK100, C40 Cities, WWF, GCoM and CDP aims to recruit 1,000 cities globally to commit to keep global heating below 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement.
- Editors - Note regional quotes below from Leaders/Mayors in Bath NES, Birmingham, Bristol, Bury, Cambridgeshire, Cornwall, Cotswold, Edinburgh, Enfield, Glasgow, Gloucestershire, Greater Manchester, Leeds, Leicester, Leicestershire, Lewisham, Liverpool City, Liverpool City Region, Milton Keynes, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oldham, Oxford, Plymouth, Reading, Solihull, Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Staffordshire Moorlands, West Midlands, West of England, Wiltshire, Westminster (see Editor Notes)

41 regional leaders from Edinburgh to Cornwall will today commit to going further and faster than central government in a race to zero by pledging to eliminate emissions in their communities at least five years earlier than Whitehall. The event will launch a year of activities ahead of the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow.

Co-ordinated by the UK100 NGO, the group of city mayors and council leaders will sign the '**UK100 Net Zero pledge**' which explicitly commits them to neutralising their emissions by 2030 and those of their residents and businesses by 2045:

"We will do everything within our power and influence to rapidly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. We will bring our council emissions to Net Zero by 2030 and we will work with our residents and businesses to bring our wider communities' emissions in line with Net Zero as soon as possible (and by 2045 at the latest). We will continue to lead the UK's response to Net Zero, going ahead of the government goal and taking the first steps with urgency. We will make substantial progress within

the next decade to deliver Net Zero. With greater powers, we would go further, faster.”

COP26 High Level Climate Action Champion, Nigel Topping, will meet with the group today (Thursday 10 December) to discuss the importance of local leadership in the UK in enabling greater commitments to be made at COP26 in Glasgow.

The group of cross-party leaders will work together over the coming year to push for more funding and powers from central Government which will enable them to go even “further and faster” in the journey to Net Zero.

Polly Billington, Director of UK100, said: “These ambitious local leaders have pledged to do everything within their power to reach Net Zero emissions as soon as possible in a way that benefits their communities with new jobs and skills. From Edinburgh to Cornwall, local leadership, alongside funding and powers is key to winning the Race to Net Zero.”

Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol City Council, (Labour) said: “The UK100 Net Zero pledge helps cities to share learning rapidly with other local authorities and work with national government on effective solutions to contribute to the UK’s Net Zero Target. We will only succeed working together with our citizens, businesses and other institutions and collaboration is essential for that success.”

Cllr Adam McVey, Leader of Edinburgh City Council (SNP), said: “Edinburgh’s net-zero by 2030 target recognises the climate emergency we are facing and the need for urgent action to tackle climate change. As Scotland’s capital and economic centre we want to lead the way in demonstrating what cities and local authorities across Scotland can do.”

Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham (Labour) said: “We are proud to be supporting the UK100 Net Zero Pledge and making the case for urgent collective action to tackle the climate emergency. With the eyes of the world on the UK ahead of COP26 next year, local authorities can support the Government to set an example for the rest of the world – but we require the funds and flexibility to act quickly and drive the change we need to see.”

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, (Conservative) said: “The West Midlands Combined Authority is committed to tackling climate change and is working towards achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2041. UK100 offers a fantastic opportunity to work with other local and combined authorities across the UK, creating the policies we need to achieve our emissions target and unleash a green industrial revolution.”

Cllr Julian German, Leader of Cornwall Council (independent) said: “The climate emergency represents an existential threat to the very fabric of human society. It is more important than ever that individuals, organisations and governments at all levels show the leadership required to tackle this emergency head on, and the Net Zero Pledge is a strong articulation of the pace and ambition required.”

Councillor Dine Romero, Leader of Bath & North East Somerset Council (Lib Dem), said: “We are introducing the first Clean Air Zone outside London in March 2021 to reduce levels of nitrogen dioxide in Bath in the shortest possible time. To achieve our ambition for B&NES to become carbon neutral by 2030, we are providing the leadership to effect change locally on the ground as well as pressing for system change and the resources needed from central government. Being part of UK100 is important in strengthening our arm.”

The authorities **represent 20.7 million people**, almost a third of the UK’s population, including all tiers of local government, all regions in England, and Glasgow and Edinburgh in Scotland. Five city region mayors have also committed to the pledge UK100 is joining C40 Cities, the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM), CDP, ICLEI and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to mobilize an unprecedented coalition of cities committed to setting and achieving science-based targets and implementing inclusive and resilient climate action ahead of COP26 in Glasgow. This is the Cities Race to Zero effort, with the goal of recruiting 1,000 cities to the Race to Zero.

The leaders have agreed to limit the use of offsets and use them only as a last resort when reducing emissions to Net Zero at source is not possible. They will aim for their offsets to be as local as possible. Leaders have also committed to annual reporting of their progress, from 2022 onwards.

For more information / bids, please contact:

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Full List of signatories

Authority

Signatory (Leader)

1. Bath and North East Somerset Council, Cllr Dine Romero
2. Birmingham City Council, Cllr Ian Ward
3. Bristol City Council, Mayor Marvin Rees
4. Bury Metropolitan Borough Council, Cllr Eamonn O'Brien
5. Cambridgeshire County Council, Cllr Steve Count
6. London Borough of Camden, Cllr Georgia Gould
7. Cornwall Council, Cllr Julian German
8. Cotswold District Council, Cllr Joe Harris
9. City of Edinburgh Council, Cllr Adam McVey
10. London Borough of Enfield, Cllr Nesil Caliskan
11. Glasgow City Council, Cllr Susan Aitken
12. Gloucestershire County Council, Cllr Mark Hawthorne
13. Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Mayor Andy Burnham
14. Royal Borough of Greenwich, Cllr Danny Thorpe
15. London Borough of Islington, Cllr Richard Watts
16. Leeds City Council, Cllr Judith Blake
17. Leicester City Council, Mayor Sir Peter Soulsby
18. Leicestershire County Council, Cllr Nicholas Rushton

19. London Borough of Lewisham, Mayor Damien Egan
20. Liverpool City Council, Mayor Joe Anderson
21. Liverpool City Region, Mayor Steve Rotheram
22. Milton Keynes Council, Cllr Peter Marland
23. Newcastle City Council, Cllr Nick Forbes
24. Nottingham City Council, Cllr David Mellen
25. Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, Cllr Sean Fielding
26. Oxford City Council, Cllr Susan Brown
27. Plymouth City Council, Cllr Tudor Evans
28. Reading Borough Council, Cllr Jason Brock
29. Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Cllr Maria Crompton
30. Sheffield City Region, Mayor Dan Jarvis
31. Solihull Council, Cllr Ian Courts
32. Somerset County Council, Cllr David Fothergill
33. South Gloucestershire Council, Cllr Toby Savage
34. London Borough of Southwark, Cllr Kieron Williams
35. Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, Cllr Sybil Ralphs
36. Stevenage Borough Council, Cllr Sharon Taylor
37. Stroud District Council, Cllr Doina Cornell
38. West Midlands Combined Authority, Mayor Andy Street
39. West of England Combined Authority, Cllr Tim Bowles
40. Westminster City Council, Cllr Rachael Robathan
41. Wiltshire Council, Cllr Philip Whitehead

UK100 Net Zero Pledge Text

The people who live in the cities, towns and villages we serve deserve warm homes, secure and affordable energy, clean air and water, and local and seasonal food. They deserve access to thriving nature and healthy landscapes, and to live in a place they can be proud of.

As local leaders across the UK we see the challenges our communities face. We recognise our responsibility to tackle the climate emergency and protect our environment to secure the future for them and for people around the world.

In 2019, the UK Parliament passed legislation to bring all greenhouse gas emissions to Net Zero by 2050. This was to keep in line with international commitment in the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees. But science tells us we need to start now and make rapid reductions much sooner.

We will do everything within our power and influence to rapidly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. We will bring our council emissions to Net Zero by 2030* and we will work with our residents and businesses to bring our wider communities' emissions in line with Net Zero as soon as possible (and by 2045* at the latest).

We will continue to lead the UK's response to Net Zero, going ahead of the government goal and taking the first steps with urgency. We will make substantial progress within the next decade to deliver Net Zero. With greater powers, we would go further, faster.

We will be bold and brave, carrying out strong climate action now and building prosperous, secure and more resilient communities that are healthier, cleaner and safer, in ways that follow the science and are practical and achievable.

We pledge to assess our largest impacts on climate change, prioritise where action needs to be taken and measure and monitor progress towards targets. We will reduce our emissions at source and limit the use of carbon offsets, to play our part in the global effort to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

As local leaders, we are uniquely placed to help tackle the climate emergency. We are closer to the people who live and work in our communities, so we have a better understanding of their needs. This means we can collaborate with them to build consensus for the solutions we need to transition to a Net Zero society that delivers multiple benefits and is fair, just and works for everyone.

We have come together from local authorities across the UK to share knowledge and collaborate with each other, with businesses and our residents to deliver action now. And we will also use our experience of our ability and achievements to advocate to the UK government in order to accelerate the transition to a Net Zero society.

As a nation, we have demonstrated throughout our history that we are able and willing to lead on finding solutions to the challenges the world faces. The success and prosperity of our nation has largely rested on our ability to harness the power of dirty fossil fuels. It is now our shared responsibility to turn this ingenuity to solving the climate emergency in a way that has a positive impact on our communities. We need to ensure our future is better than our past.

ENDS

Editors notes

ALL QUOTES

Bath & North East Somerset Council

Councillor Dine Romero, Leader of Bath & North East Somerset Council, said:

“We are introducing the first Clean Air Zone outside London in March 2021 to reduce levels of nitrogen dioxide in Bath in the shortest possible time. We all want clean air and the zone is a step towards our wider Net Zero ambitions for Bath and North East Somerset to address air quality and tackle the climate and ecological emergencies. To achieve our ambition for B&NES to become carbon neutral by 2030, we are providing the leadership to effect change locally on the ground as well as pressing for system change and the resources needed from central government. Being part of UK100 is important in strengthening our arm in this and supports us to deliver real change for our residents and businesses.”

Birmingham City Council

Leader of Birmingham City Council, Councillor Ian Ward, said: “We are absolutely committed to tackling climate change, in order to provide Birmingham residents with greener, cleaner environments for the future. Given that local authorities across the country are passionate about progressing plans to tackle

climate change, opportunities to come together to pledge our commitment to the cause are crucial. This is why I am proud that Birmingham City Council is signing the Net Zero Pledge and is working with organisations like UK100 to achieve net zero carbon as soon as possible.”

Bristol City Council

Marvin Rees, Mayor of Bristol City Council, said: “Bristol City Council and its partners are hugely ambitious for cutting emissions and making our city more resilient, as shown in our One City Climate Strategy. The UK100 Net Zero pledge helps cities to share learning rapidly with other local authorities and work with national government on effective solutions to contribute to the UK’s Net Zero Target. We will only succeed working together with our citizens, businesses and other institutions and collaboration is essential for that success. I look forward to the UK government working with local government as we help lead the world at COP26 next year.”

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr Eamonn O’Brien, Leader, Bury Council, said: “At Bury Council, we recognise that climate change presents a significant challenge to the health and wellbeing of our community. We suffered major flooding in 2012, 2015 and in February this year. This emphasised to us, the importance of taking action and is why we were keen to sign up to the “Cities Race to Zero”.

“We know that we must take responsibility now to protect ourselves, our families and future generations from the dangers of climate change. We have declared a climate emergency and we have set an ambitious target to be carbon neutral by 2038. We were the first council in England to propose a Deposit Return Scheme, we have pioneered SUDS using street trees, banned fracking on our land and the release of sky lanterns. In the next two years, working with City of Trees we will plant over 25,000 trees in Bury, and we are looking to build an “eco housing” development to showcase alternative housing.

“This target of keeping temperature rise to 1.5 Celsius, as set in the Paris Agreement is a major challenge, but we know we need to get a grip of this situation to protect ourselves and our families from the danger and disruption we could face. Climate change is a long lasting and universal problem that will affect everyone and those most impacted will be our most vulnerable residents. It will be the young people who will have to deal with our legacy into the future and we owe it to them to take the drastic action required. The cost of not doing enough is high but the challenge we face brings a huge opportunity to improve our health, economy and our environment. I know that the people and businesses of Bury have the necessary spirit and determination to face this challenge head on and that by working together we can achieve the level of change we need to protect our future.”

Cambridgeshire County Council

Cllr Steve Count, Leader of Cambridgeshire County Council, said: “Cambridgeshire’s Cleantech and Agritech research and business sector are at the

forefront nationally, working hard on new innovations to reach net zero carbon emissions. I am keen for all of us to share knowledge and learning, not just from the pioneering organisations here in Cambridgeshire, but also information and idea sharing with other UK100 members who are tackling issues on the ground. As leader of Cambridgeshire County Council, UK100 is supporting my leadership of a new Countryside Climate Network, which brings predominantly rural Local Authorities together to share best practice. Our rural areas have much to offer in the 'Race to Zero' and I look forward to sharing this with COP26 and showing how climate leadership at the local level really can make a difference."

Cornwall Council

Julian German, Leader, Cornwall Council, said: "The climate emergency represents an existential threat to the very fabric of human society. It is more important than ever that individuals, organisations and governments at all levels show the leadership required to tackle this emergency head on, and the Net Zero Pledge is a strong articulation of the pace and ambition that is required. Cornwall Council remains steadfast in its commitment to drive the actions required to accelerate the transition to a low carbon society, and values the role that UK100 is playing to keep the climate emergency high on the agenda and push for the systemic changes that are now of critical importance. Given the UK's role in hosting COP26 in 2021, this offers us the opportunity to cement our leadership that can act as a beacon for global action. We all have our part to play."

Cotswold District Council

Cllr Joe Harris, Leader, Cotswold District Council, said: "I commend UK100's initiative on the Net Zero Pledge and Net Zero Local Leadership Club. Cotswold District Council is a founding member of UK100's Countryside Climate Network, because we believe the fight for a liveable planet is the defining challenge of our age. We're determined to step up to that challenge. As a rural District we've got distinct strengths and weaknesses in meeting that challenge, so we look forward to working more closely with UK100 in sharing ideas and achievements with our fellow rural councils."

City of Edinburgh Council

Cllr Adam McVey, Leader of City of Edinburgh Council

"Edinburgh's net-zero by 2030 target recognises the climate emergency we are facing and the need for urgent action to tackle climate change in order to secure a more sustainable future for our citizens. As Scotland's capital and economic centre we want to lead the way in demonstrating what cities and local authorities across Scotland can do when it comes to addressing key issues like climate change and poverty.

"Moving towards clean energy for the city is key to achieving a sustainable future for the people who live and work in Edinburgh. Along with every local authority in Scotland, Edinburgh faces a challenge in the way we power and heat our homes and buildings in the future and we want to work with city partners and citizens to develop

low-carbon solutions. Decarbonising transport in the city will also make a significant contribution towards reducing emissions. Through our 10 year vision for city mobility and our City Centre Transformation plan, we've already started looking at the way we travel around Edinburgh. We're changing roads and pavements to make it easier for people to move around the city in a way which is good for their health as well as the environment.

"Being part of a network like UK100 will help us to work closely with and learn from others about the best ways to address some of the key challenges which lie ahead and the opportunities available for Edinburgh to make the transition to Net Zero by 2030."

London Borough of Enfield

Cllr Nesil Caliskan, Leader of Enfield Council said, "As Leader of Enfield Council, I am committed to tackling the climate emergency and have made sure that it is a theme in our Council Plan. Supporting this is our ambitious Climate Action Plan, with targets for the Council to be net zero by 2030 and the borough by 2040. Making the Net Zero pledge reaffirms these commitments and shows that we want to be leaders in moving to a low carbon future, alongside the other organisations in UK100. UK100 continues to be a forum for Enfield Council to learn from others, share our knowledge and showcase our achievements. Going forward it will be an important network which supports recognition and delivery of our climate action ambitions. As we head towards COP26, groups like UK100 will be crucial to making the UK government, and governments around the world, take real action, including investing now in a green recovery, and to do it faster, so that together we can address climate change and secure a sustainable future for our citizens."

Glasgow City Council

Cllr Susan Aitken, Leader of Glasgow City Council, said: "There's such tangible willingness within the family of cities, at international and UK level, right now to share and collaborate on critical policy discussions and find common cause on solutions to global climate challenges. UK100 is an ideal platform to build on – and accelerate – that. As Glasgow and our peers put in place the solutions to address the physical and social legacies of our industrial pasts - and as we seek to build new, decarbonised economies and communities - partnership is ever more critical. Future generations will look dimly on us if insularity and narrow agendas form barriers on climate action.

"The privilege and responsibility of hosting COP26 has given Glasgow the opportunity to help lead that global movement committed to a fairer, greener and more just planetary course. UK100 and signing up to the Net Zero pledge means all our cities, regions and local authorities have an opportunity to take their place at that table and have their voices heard. It's an opportunity for all of us to show real leadership on the climate emergency and prioritise economic, social and environmental justice. For all our people."

Gloucestershire County Council

Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of Gloucestershire County Council, said, “Gloucestershire County Council has already cut our own carbon emissions by 97% - now we all must play our part in the vital task of cutting the emissions of the county as a whole. This is a recognition of the urgency of doing so, and the council’s role in leading that process.”

Royal Borough of Greenwich

Cllr Danny Thorpe, Leader of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, said: “Royal Borough of Greenwich has set an ambitious target to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030, and we've just published our draft plan on how we aim to get there. This year has shown us that when it comes to the things that truly matter, no one can do it alone.

“The effects of climate change are likely to affect our elderly, vulnerable and poorest residents the most. That’s why we’re proud to be joining the UK100 network of local authorities focused on climate in the run up to next year’s UN Climate Change Conference.”

London Borough of Islington

Cllr Richard Watts, Leader of Islington Council, said, “Islington Council declared a climate emergency last year and we have just published our net zero strategy, Vision 2030. This sets out our ambition to become a net zero borough by 2030 and the actions needed to achieve it. We recognise that urgent action is needed to address the threat posed to humanity by climate change, as well as local issues such as high levels of air pollution. We also know that the council cannot do this alone, and that working with other local authorities through networks like UK100 will be key to delivering several parts of our strategy and pressing the government for the right support.”

Greater Manchester Combined Authority

Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham said: “We are proud to be supporting the UK100 Net Zero Pledge and making the case for urgent collective action to tackle the climate emergency. The coronavirus pandemic forced us to adapt the way we live, work and travel. It has also presented an unprecedented opportunity to put sustainability, innovation, and fairness at the heart of our economic recovery. With the eyes of the world on the UK ahead of COP26 next year, local authorities can support the Government to set an example for the rest of the world – but we require the funds and flexibility to act quickly and drive the change we need to see. From cleaner energy, to greener homes, to environmental protection, there are a host of solutions that can be prioritised right now.

“In Greater Manchester we are committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2038, and have already signed up to the UN Race to Zero campaign. We don’t underestimate the scale of the challenge or the action needed, but this is no longer just a question of ambition – it’s nothing short of an obligation to the future of our planet.”

Leeds City Council

Cllr Judith Blake, Leader of Leeds City Council, said: “I am delighted that Leeds is leading by example as one of the first local authorities to sign this new and ambitious Net Zero pledge. Tackling climate change is one of our key priorities and this pledge recognises the wider commitment and urgent action that is required. The UK100 network provides an opportunity to work collectively to solve the unprecedented challenges currently facing local authorities on the road to net zero. In the run up to the COP26 summit, it is vital that together we engage nationally to reduce these barriers and achieve a fair transition to a cleaner economy.”

Leicester City Council

Sir Peter Soulsby, Leader of Leicester City Council said: “The climate emergency affects us all and everyone has a role to play in mitigating its effects. In Leicester, we are proud to have published our first Climate Emergency Strategy and action plan setting out an ambitious vision for how our city needs to change to become carbon-neutral and adapt to the effects of global heating by 2030, or sooner. We are under no illusion about the enormity of this challenge and we know that we cannot do this alone. By coming together with other local authorities as part of the UK100 Net Zero pledge, we will have a stronger voice in calling upon government to provide the support we need to accelerate this urgent work.”

Leicestershire County Council

Cllr Nick Rushton, Leicestershire County Council Leader, said: “I was delighted to sign Leicestershire up to the original UK100 pledge. Since that time, the Council has declared a climate emergency, agreed a £16M package of measures over the next four years to take action on reducing carbon, such as replacing 68,000 street lights with more efficient LEDs. Our ultimate ambition is being net zero by 2030. Local government can play a vital role in achieving these targets, and being a part of the UK100 family, reinforces the collective message that reducing and eventually eliminating our carbon impact is everyone’s responsibility. Quite simply we cannot do this individually. But together, our future is in our hands.”

London Borough of Lewisham

Mayor Damien Egan, Mayor of Lewisham, said: “Since declaring a climate emergency in early 2019 we have been working on a number of projects to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030. These include research projects to support our housing team to meet zero carbon standards, supporting vulnerable households with their energy use and supporting local organisations in delivering innovative community-based climate projects.”

Liverpool City Region

Steve Rotheram, Metro Mayor of the Liverpool City Region, said: “Since I was elected Mayor, tackling the climate crisis has been one of my top priorities and I was proud that we were the first Combined Authority in the country to declare a Climate Emergency in recognition of the scale of the challenge we face. But we aren’t just

talking about climate change, we're taking firm action to reverse it. We plan on being net zero carbon a whole decade ahead of national targets, are taking polluting buses off the roads and replacing them with hydrogen models and retrofitting our region's homes to make them much more energy efficient.

"Best of all, we're developing plans to harness the power of the River Mersey, our region's lifeblood for centuries, through a tidal scheme that has the potential to generate enough clean, predictable energy to power up to one million homes. I am lobbying hard for Government support but, as far as I am concerned, it should be a no brainer for them. It is part of my plans to establish us as Britain's 'Renewable Energy Coast', building on the impressive energy mix we already have in our region, from offshore wind to hydrogen and solar. We know that we cannot solve the climate conundrum alone – but we are determined to do our bit. If everybody plays their part, we will start to see major progress. It is time for the government to start playing much more of a leading role."

Milton Keynes Council

Peter Marland, Leader of Milton Keynes Council said, "We're delighted to sign up to the Net Zero pledge. Milton Keynes aims to become carbon neutral by 2030 and carbon negative by 2050, eventually becoming one of the greenest cities in the world and the first post-carbon city. Working collectively with UK100 and its partners will help us play our part in tackling the climate crisis.

"We want to build on our achievements including turning non-recyclable rubbish into energy to light more than 11,000 homes, creating hundreds of km of dedicated pedestrian and cycle redways across the city, being the first UK place to build a solar powered house, and the first to adopt energy standards in new buildings.

"Over the last ten years, carbon emissions in MK went down by around a third, but there's still a way to go. Our groundbreaking COVID-19 recovery work incentivises greener economic growth and we intend for MK to bounce back even greener and more sustainably than before."

Newcastle City Council

Cllr Nick Forbes, leader of Newcastle City Council, said: "The Climate Emergency is a global challenge, but one that can only be tackled by inspiring and empowering people to deliver lasting local change. We actively want to drive the green recovery, transitioning our city from two centuries of reliance on fossil fuels and helping our society and economy build forward better. However, to do that we must have support on a national level, and that is why it is important that through organisations like UK100 and this Net Zero pledge we can make the collective asks of Government for the backing we need to seize the unique moment presented by COP26 next year and ensure that 2021 is a real turning point in the fight against climate change."

Nottingham City Council

David Mellen, Leader of Nottingham City Council, said: “Signing up to the Net Zero pledge is an ambitious pledge, but one that seems ever more important. It is our fundamental duty to do what we can in local government to protect our citizens from emergency situations, and we have a duty to take a lead in reducing emissions to protect future generations from the worst potential impacts of climate change. By signing up to this pledge, we commit to leading our communities towards a cleaner, greener and healthier city.”

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr Sean Fielding, Leader of Oldham Council, said: “In Oldham, we know that our net zero commitments are very ambitious. However, the scale of the climate and ecological emergency demands that we act. Doing nothing is not an option. We also believe though that there is a huge opportunity for our residents and businesses to play their part in, and benefit from, the jobs and training opportunities which will come out of the low carbon transition.”

Oxford City Council

Councillor Susan Brown, Leader of Oxford City Council, said: “Oxford has been guided on its course to zero emissions from its 2019 Citizens’ Assembly on Climate Change. The message from Assembly Members was clear. They wanted to see the City move faster than the national target date of 2050 where it was feasible. Therefore, Oxford City Council pledges to support the goal of reaching net zero for the Council’s own emissions, where we pay the bill, by 2030. We also support UK100’s goal of net zero area-wide emissions by 2045 – although the Council is yet to agree a specific date for Oxford with other key city stakeholders.

“However we cannot do this alone. While in the last few years we have managed to reduce our own emissions by 40%, the City Council accounts for just 1% of Oxford’s carbon emissions. To achieve net zero for the city we need to work with partners and stakeholders. So we are today announcing we will be holding a Zero Carbon Oxford Summit on 4 February, involving leaders from the key emitters responsible for most of the city’s greenhouse gas emissions. It will set out a roadmap to zero carbon that includes concrete, collaborative actions and we will agree to carbon budgets for the city that are both achievable and scientifically sound. It is also important for us to continue to collaborate with UK100, and members of the network to share our thoughts and experiences as we move towards this target. By working together we will be able to make a difference both locally and nationally.”

Plymouth City Council

Cllr Tudor Evans, Leader of Plymouth City Council, said: “Plymouth City councillors have pledged to make Plymouth carbon neutral by 2030, recognising the challenges facing our city and our planet. Actions at a city level can drive change that has local, national and global consequences. By working with other cities that have similar ambitions, we will be able to share best practice on the practicalities of taking action to tackle climate change and work together to lobby for change. COP26

will provide a rallying call for action and by working alongside UK100 members we will be able to build momentum that will drive change, inspire action and change mind-sets, for the benefit of all who live in Plymouth and beyond.”

Reading Borough Council

Cllr Jason Brock, Leader of Reading Council said: “We felt it was important for Reading to sign the Net Zero pledge to show our commitment to local action on climate change and to express our solidarity with the many other towns and cities who are working towards the same goals. This is a crucial year for climate action with the UK hosting COP26, so working together through initiatives like UK100 has never been more important. At Reading Borough Council we have already reduced our own organisation’s carbon emissions by 63%, hitting our 50% reduction target three years early – this illustrates what can be achieved and we hope sets an example which others will follow.”

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

Cllr Maria Crompton, Deputy Leader of Sandwell Council, said: “I am very keen that Sandwell plays its part in helping the UK achieve its aim to be net zero by 2050. All councils across the UK have a role in this and we will do everything possible to help achieve this ambition of helping to limit the rise in the earth’s temperature.

“We need to work closely with our residents, our businesses and our communities to meet our own target for Sandwell to become carbon neutral by 2041. We know that UK100 will play a key part through their work in bringing together other organisations and in making the case for why local authorities need more resources from government to tackle climate change.

“Next year will be a defining year for the UK’s reputation as a world leader in responding to the challenges of climate change and, in the run up to COP26 in Glasgow, we want to demonstrate the vital role that local authorities have in bringing together communities and businesses and showcasing innovative work in reducing carbon emissions.

“We are delighted to sign UK100’s new pledge and to have been invited by them to join the COP26 Race to Zero campaign.

“We hope 2021 will bring significant changes in our use of fossil fuels as we turn instead to renewable forms of energy which will play a pivotal role in the UK’s pledge to reduce carbon emissions.”

Sheffield City Region

Sheffield City Region Mayor Dan Jarvis said: “The climate emergency is the greatest challenge we have ever faced and only by taking drastic collective action can we tackle this crisis. Together we are much more than the sum of our parts, which is why I am working closely with UK100 to create a cleaner and greener future for our country.

“Next year I will be joining other Metro Mayors as an Ambassador at COP26, when the eyes of the world will be on the UK and our response to the climate emergency.

“In South Yorkshire I am working hard to create a stronger, greener and fairer economy and society in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. This includes proposals for £200million to support our transition to net zero. We have bold plans to create green jobs, grow the low-carbon sector and invest in clean energy.

“The government must seize this moment to make the transformational investment we need – because the costs of inaction are unthinkable. While they are making some moves in the right direction, the level of investment just does not match the reality of the threat.”

Solihull Council

Cllr Ian Courts, Leader of Solihull Council

“I am pleased that Solihull Council has become a signatory of the UK100 pledge and has joined the growing network of ambitious Local Government Leaders committed to securing radical reductions in carbon emissions for their communities. Solihull Council has made a commitment to reduce emissions from Council operations to net zero by 2030 and Borough-wide emissions to net zero by 2041. We look forward to working with partners to achieve these ambitions.”

Somerset County Council

Cllr David Fothergill, Leader of Somerset County Council, said: “In signing this pledge with UK100 we send a strong message to our communities and to other Local Authorities around the country that we are serious about tackling the issues of Climate Change. Whilst we have gone further in our stated goal to make Somerset carbon neutral by 2030 we very much welcome this new pledge in its increased ambition and would urge all community leaders to join us in pledging to do all that they can to address the biggest issue of our age. By working collaboratively through UK100, we as Local Authorities can join together and learn from each other how best to deliver the changes required to achieve a net zero society and, by having a set of common goals, we can make our voices heard more loudly in lobbying government to match our ambition and to enable us to deliver our aims.”

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

Cllr Sybil Ralphs, Leader of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, said: “Taking action to tackle climate change is a priority for the Council and we have already pledged to make our operations carbon neutral by 2030 and play a leading role in achieving the same target for the Moorlands district. These are ambitious targets which are decades ahead of many international targets of 2050 but we cannot deliver this on our own. That’s why being a member of UK100 and the Net Zero Local Leadership Club is so important – collectively we speak with a far louder voice than we can individually and it is by making our voices heard that we will bring about the removal of barriers and the co-operation we need to see real change. We’re pleased to be amongst the first organisations to sign up as key players. It

sends another strong signal of our commitment to leaving our environment in a better state than that in which we inherited it for future generations.”

Stevenage Borough Council

Cllr Sharon Taylor, Leader of Stevenage Borough Council, said: “We are delighted to join the UK100 Net Zero Local Leadership Club. This pledge supports our net zero council emissions by 2030 ambitions for Stevenage. We want to inspire other local authorities to follow our lead and take steps to protect our community and its environment.”

Stroud District Council

Cllr Doina Cornell, Leader of Stroud District Council, said, “Signing up to the UK100 Net Zero Pledge and being part of this wider network is so important for Stroud District Council as it aligns with our own ambitions to be a carbon neutral district by 2030. We know we can’t do this alone which is why we are working with our communities to plan how to achieve this. It is essential that the crucial role of local government in taking practical and radical measures to bring down carbon emissions is recognised in the lead up to COP26 and we look forward to being part of that in the months to come.”

London Borough of Southwark

Cllr Kieron Williams, Leader of Southwark Council, said: “We have declared a climate emergency and are committed to doing everything we can to make Southwark carbon neutral by 2030.

“We recognise that while we can take strides towards our goal, we can’t fully realise it on our own. This is why we are also inviting residents, business and organisations across the borough, as well as national government, to join us in making the vital changes needed to protect the future of our community and planet.

“Carbon does not stop at Southwark’s boundaries and this is why we are excited to be working with UK100, and councils across London. It is only by working together, on a local, national and international level, that we can fully tackle the climate emergency.”

West Midlands Combined Authority

Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands Combined Authority, said: “The West Midlands Combined Authority is committed to tackling climate change and is working towards achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2041. To do this, we recognise the need to work in partnership with our businesses, citizens and local authorities to create opportunities and overcome barriers to progress. UK100 offers a fantastic opportunity to work with other local and combined authorities across the UK, creating the policies we need to achieve our emissions target and unleash a green industrial revolution.’

Wiltshire Council

Cllr Richard Clewer, Leader of Wiltshire Council, said: “We’re delighted to be a founder member of the Countryside Climate Network and to sign the Net Zero pledge to ensure the important voice of rural councils is heard in the fight against climate change. Climate solutions and green recovery packages have largely missed the rural voice, and we need to be properly funded to support our ambitions as a rural county, so we can create opportunities in the Wiltshire countryside. Carbon neutrality will be extremely challenging to achieve and we will need investment from government to help us meet this goal. COP26 will shine a spotlight on the UK’s role in tackling climate change, and we need to show leadership at all levels, from national to local, to achieve this. There are so many things councils can do to help tackle climate change. For example, in Wiltshire we are investing £195m in new zero carbon council homes and £289m on improving the energy efficiency of all existing council homes by 2032.”

Westminster City Council

Cllr Rachael Robathan, Leader of Westminster City Council, said: ‘I’m delighted to be signing this pledge, which reinforces my commitment to achieving net zero carbon emissions across the City of Westminster by 2040. Since we declared a climate emergency a year ago, the critical importance of keeping temperature rises below 1.5°C has only become clearer. We will need to work together to meet our ambitions – and this pledge will enable that to happen.’

West of England Combined Authority

West of England Mayor Tim Bowles said: “In the West of England, we have already made a pledge to play our part in reducing global emissions and to reach net zero by 2030. We have a climate emergency action plan to meet that target, and an important part of that plan is to work with Government and partners like UK100 to deliver significant and collective action. Hosting COP26 provides a significant opportunity for all regions of the UK to show leadership and take a variety of actions that can have local, national and global impact. We are doing that in the West of England as part of my plans for a green economic recovery, and want to encourage other city regions to do the same.”

About UK100

UK100 is the only network for UK locally elected leaders who have pledged to play their part in the global effort to avoid the worst impacts of climate change by switching to 100% clean energy by 2050.

The most ambitious - our Net Zero Local Leadership Club - are doing everything within their power to get their communities to Net Zero as soon as possible, and by 2045 at the latest.

This is not just good for the planet but for the people they serve, who deserve warm homes, affordable energy, clean air, resilient local economies, and local and

seasonal food. They deserve access to thriving nature and healthy landscapes, and to live in a place they can be proud of.

To accelerate the transition to this Net Zero society, UK100 brings together local authorities, from cities to the countryside, to share knowledge, collaborate, and petition the UK government with their collective power.

They are working together to create flourishing communities, seizing the opportunities of technology to create jobs and establishing a nationwide project of renewal, focussed on local needs and ambitions.

UK100 works closely with elected representatives and policy experts to develop solutions to the challenges all our local leaders face, and to build public support for the transition.

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