

Green City Partnership Board

Green City Partnership Board 2030



- What are the most important things that the Board has done to take Sheffield towards being a sustainable, zero carbon city?
- What contribution are you most proud of that your organisation has made to help Sheffield to become a sustainable, zero carbon city?
- What activities, behaviours or ways of working of the Board and its members have helped make these happen?

thelight
cinema experience

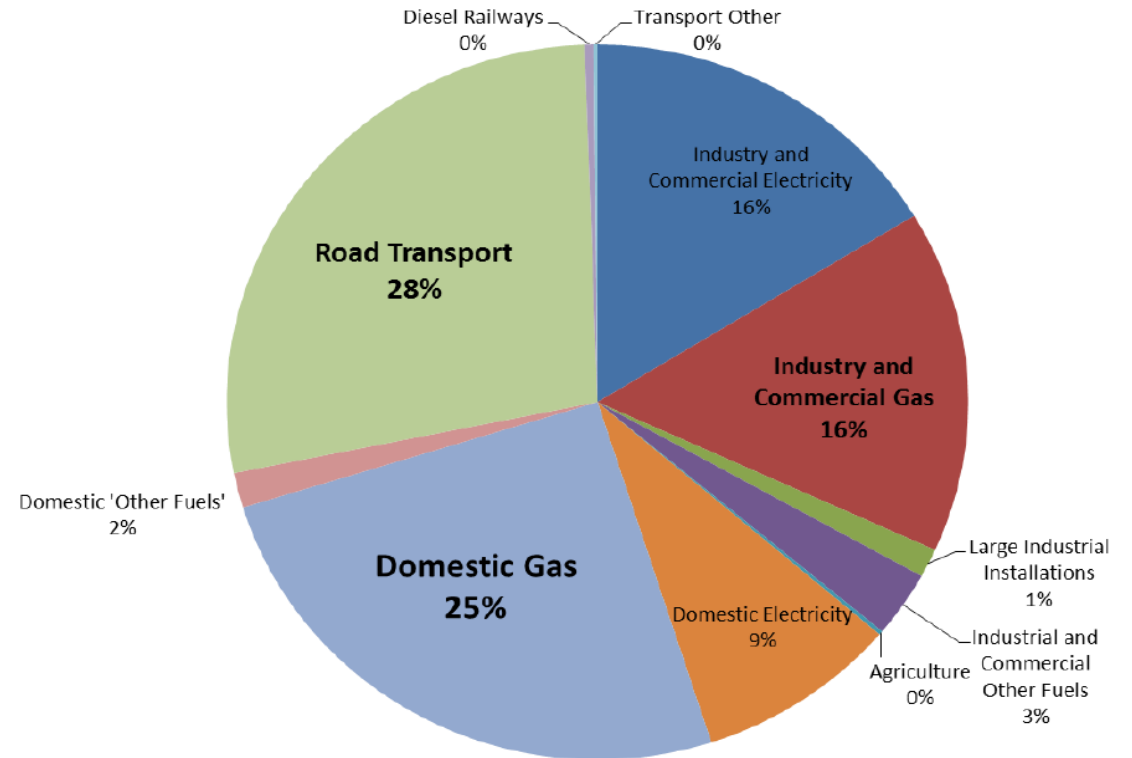
the green room

Sheffield Climate Assembly



Sheffield's climate emergency

- In 2019, Sheffield declared a climate emergency
- Ambition to be Zero Carbon city by 2030
- Undertook initial evidence development with the Tyndall Centre
- Committed to holding a citizens assembly involving Sheffielders from across the city's communities
- A climate response that works for Sheffield



What is a citizens assembly?

- Intensive involvement of a small group of people (50-100 people)
- Representative sample of population
- Dedicated time for participants to:
 - learn about a particular issue using evidence and testimony from expert witnesses;
 - discuss it with fellow citizens;
 - set out conclusions or recommendations

“a group of people who are brought together to discuss an issue or issues and reach a conclusion about what they think should happen.

The people who take part are chosen so they reflect the wider population – in terms of demographics (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, social class) and sometimes relevant attitudes (e.g. preferences for a small or large state).”

Citizens assemblies – strengths

- **About** and **for** citizens – putting citizens first
- Time to consider and debate complex/contested challenges
- Useful to shape policy options and wrestle with binary choices
- Decision makers face-to-face with citizens
- Build the knowledge and understanding of participants – explore, challenge, develop and change opinions
- Insight of public opinion on issues
- Often high profile – give focus and prominence to an issue

Citizens assemblies – weaknesses

- Expensive and time consuming
- Challenge and cost of securing a representative group
- Intensive and demanding – recruitment, planning, delivery, participating
- Needs capacity and expertise
- Its not a publicity exercise – but can be criticised as such
- Not a route for everyone to engage
- May moderate the recommendations away from more radical interventions

What do we need to consider?

The citizens' assembly model creates a unique space within which citizens can engage in complex policy issues.

To make it successful, there are some critical aspects have to be considered...

1. Participants – getting a good sample

- The group of people involved in the Assembly needs to be representative of Sheffield:
 - Demographically – age, gender, ethnicity etc
 - Geographically – recognise the geographic diversity of the city
 - Range of views – recognise range of positions on climate change
- Recruitment can take up to 8 weeks depending on approach
- Need to support and develop participants

How?

- Sortition followed by stratification of sample?
- Telephone recruitment?
- Recruitment through face-to-face and then stratify sample?

2. Balance time with number of participants

- Not quick to deliver – recruitment, planning, evidence base development
- Public involvement – times that work for participants (evenings and weekends – and not *every* evening/weekend!)
 - Eg. UK assembly is meeting x1 a month for 3 months
- Could take 6 months to deliver (start to finish)
- Larger number of participants can increase time and cost (venues, availability, ensure everyone gets an equal voice)

Questions

- How many people would we want to involve?
- Symbolic vs. workable numbers?

3. Cost

- Different ways of getting to the same outcome but Assemblies are expensive to do.
- Increases with number of participants, number of sessions etc.
- Will need external / independent capacity support but will develop our internal expertise
- **Est. £50k - £100k.**

Likely costs to consider

- Recruitment of participants
- Location and logistics - ie. venue
- Facilitation - eg. external organisation
- Participant expenses – including travel, childcare
- Planning – officer time
- Participant gift/honorarium – most citizens assemblies offer a honorarium to participants of around £75 a day in cash or vouchers (need to recognise that this can impact on any benefits people receive)
- Communication and promotion – engage wider population

4. Focus – need to be clear why we’re doing it

- What are we doing it for?
- Clarity of expectations and impact – eg. deliberative vs directive
- What influence will it have?
- What issue(s) will it consider and deliberate on and why?
- Is this to test deliverability of evidenced plans?

OR

- Is it to assess public appetite for a range of possible interventions?

Providing a clear focus

Citizens Assemblies are said to work best when they:

- Look at trade-offs or binary challenges
- Align to the decision-making phase of policy development – ie. using evidence and wrestling with real-world challenges of decision makers.

The Citizens Assembly could look at a range of potential policy choices/ideas to address climate challenge and test support / palatability.

5. Making it a citywide conversation

How do we engage Sheffieldsers that aren't participants?

- **Transparency and openness** – dedicated web content; live streaming; participant blogs/vlogs; media engagement; concurrent Youth Climate Assembly?
- **Test and build population perspectives** – citywide consultation and engagement to develop themes/issues
- **Citywide conversations** – stimulate and facilitate debate across communities alongside Assembly
- **Complementary activity with business and partners** – whole city consideration of how to address the climate challenge.

What have other places done?

Camden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The citizens assembly met over two evening sessions and one Saturday with over 50 participants • Focused on the climate and ecological crisis responding with actions at home, local and national levels
Brent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate Assembly involving 50 people including 16 and 17 year olds meeting three times over two months • A separate Youth Parliament event and a website for other members of the public to submit their comments
Oxford	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic of Climate Change with multiple themes including using less energy, making more energy and moving to net zero • Assemblies held over two full weekends over two months involving 50 participants
Cambridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Took place over two weekends over two months involving 60 participants • Question: How do we reduce congestion, improve air quality, and provide better public transport in Greater Cambridge?
Kingston	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Took place over two weekends over two months with 40 participants • Question: How do we collectively improve air quality in the borough?
UK assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking place over four weekends January-March with 110 participants • Title: 'Climate Assembly UK: the path to net zero' with a focus on greenhouse gas emissions

Suggested next steps

1. Agree focus, role and purpose of the climate assembly
2. Agree our preferred approach and timescales
3. Consider voice and role of wider Sheffield population
4. Develop and agree commission specification
5. Appoint partner and commence delivery
6. Target for first meeting in June 2020.