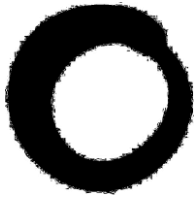


Number
90

Spring
2021



Nottingham
Friends of
the Earth

NOTTINGHAM FRIENDS OF THE EARTH
Down to Earth

Welcome to Nottingham Friends of the Earth. We are one of around 150 local Friends of the Earth groups campaigning for a better environment locally as well as nationally and internationally. **Friends of the Earth** has a reputation for effective campaigns backed up by authoritative research.

A Change for the Better?

Ratcliffe on Soar set to close – but the threat of a polluting incinerator looms



Ratcliffe on Soar's coal-fired power station has been in operation since 1968. The target of a number of environmental protests over the years, the heat has been turned up again following plans to build a huge waste incinerator on the site.

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Why won't Notts Pension Fund consult its members on climate change?



Cause of death: Climate Change. Notts Pension Fund holds an estimated £250m in fossil fuel company shares. Extinction Rebellion Nottingham staged a “Die-In” protest on the steps outside Notts County Council in Sept 2020.

Pressure is increasing on Notts Pension Fund to stop investing in fossil fuel companies.

Before the Fund's AGM in January 2021, a number of groups joined to ask the Fund to take a stand and divest. That included Climate Action Nottingham, DivestNotts, Global Justice Nottingham and Nottingham Energy Partnership.

The City Council also backed the campaign, calling for the Fund (which is managed by the County Council) to consult members on the risks of climate change. But County officers refused, arguing that “engaging” with fossil fuel companies is the way forward. Engaging with people who depend on the Fund for their pensions would cost too much.

That followed a report by Transition Economics which found that local authority pension funds around the country had lost £1.75bn on investments in big oil companies from April 2017 to November 2020. One of the biggest losers was the Notts Fund which lost £81m. That is the cost of engaging with fossil companies instead of engaging with members.

We have been campaigning on this since 2015. This followed a warning by Bank of England Governor Mark Carney that tackling climate change would mean leaving fossil reserves in the ground – causing “stranded assets”. Oil, gas and coal companies would have to write down the value of their fossil reserves.

So there should be no surprise that The Economist reported in December 2020 that “In 2019 energy was the worst-performing sector in the S&P 500... as it had been in 2014, 2015 and 2018.” And following the effects of the pandemic in 2020, “Energy firms’ share of the S&P 500 fell below 3%, from a high water mark of 13% in 2011.” (S&P 500 Index follows the 500 largest US companies. “Energy” means oil, gas, and coal companies.)

Back in 2015, Notts Fund said they would investigate basing their investments on an “ex-fossil” index which would have allowed them to avoid fossil investment. But no action has been taken since. If action had been implemented by 2017 they could have avoided £81m losses.

During 2020, the Fund did at least commission a report on climate risk. This concluded that a

2°C temperature rise would be good for the Fund! The Divest Notts campaign has been pointing out that the 2015 global Paris climate agreement aimed to keep the increase below 1.5°C. A 2 degree increase will cause very serious harm to people around the world, as shown in a report by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in 2018. 2°C is likely to cause:

- 22% of the world's cities will become unbearable to live in.
- Temperature increases will not be uniform around the world – in many areas of the world extreme temperatures will become more common.
- Up to 79 million people will be at risk of flooding.

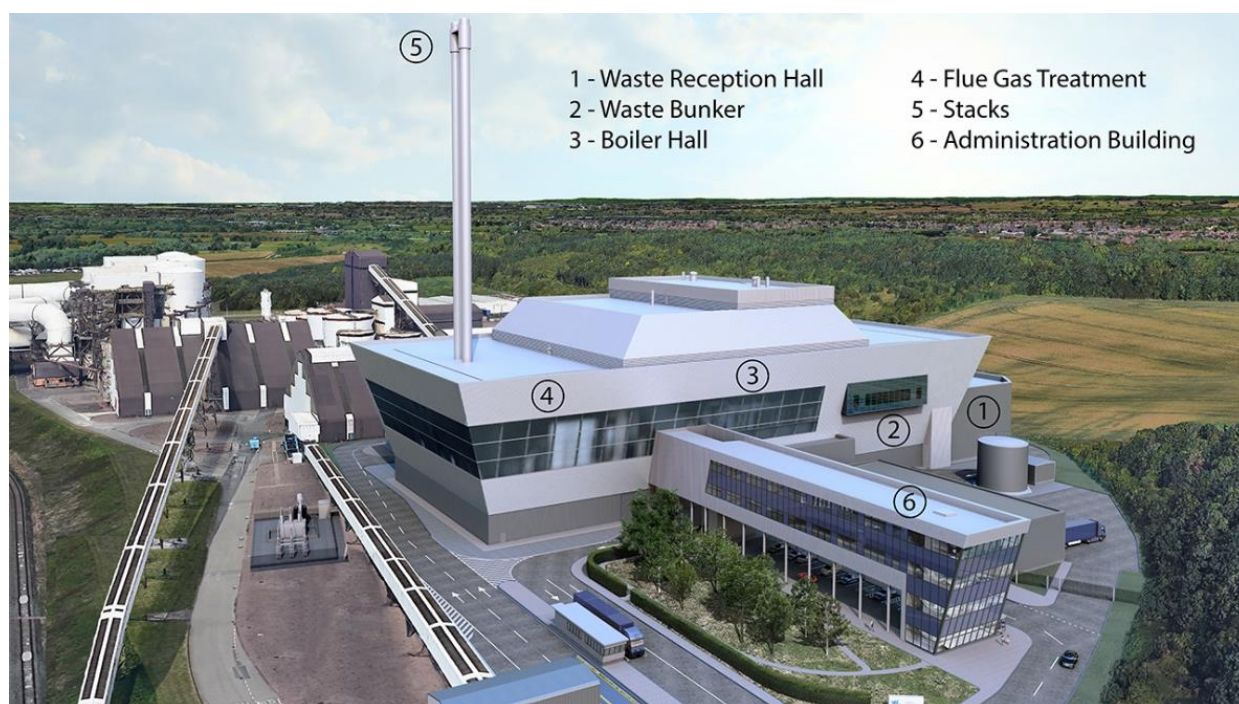
- Thawing permafrost, leading to the release of the potent greenhouse gas methane, increasing global heating even faster.
- Fires and floods will become ever more frequent.
- Food production will be disrupted on a major scale.
- Near total loss of the world's coral destroying the world's richest marine habitat.

That is not the way to secure a future for Nottinghamshire's pensioners!

To keep up to date, there are two Twitter accounts you can follow: @ClimateNotts and @DivestNotts.

Nigel Lee

Object to an incinerator at Ratcliffe on Soar!



Emissions targets up in smoke? The proposed incinerator for Ratcliffe-on-Soar

The good news is that the coal-fired power station at Ratcliffe on Soar has to be closed down by 2025.

The bad news is that the operator Uniper wants to replace it with a huge waste incinerator. They want to truck in 500,000 tonnes waste every year from a 50 mile radius.

It would emit over 450,000 tonnes CO₂ per year – more than 1kg CO₂ per kWh electricity.

That is worse than coal and over 10 times the carbon intensity of electricity recommended by the Committee on Climate Change for 2030.

The County Council will be deciding later this year whether to give planning permission. Objections can still be sent in. Details are on our website at <https://nottfoe.gn.apc.org/RoSincinerator.html>

Nigel Lee

Transportation Decarbonisation

Rapid decarbonisation of transport is essential if the UK is to meet its climate change targets and also reduce the life threatening air pollution Nottingham is suffering. Transport is the largest contributor to the UK's carbon emissions at 27% - and is increasing.

In November, under the Paris Climate Agreement, Boris Johnson committed the UK to a reduction in carbon emissions by 68% by 2030. This requires rapid transition away from petrol and diesel vehicles to greener technology, including Battery Electric Vehicles (BEVs). The Government's 10 point plan to tackle climate change now bans sales of new pure petrol and diesel cars and vans from 2030. The government's Committee on Climate Change (CCC) 2020 report forecasts that the percentages of **total** mileage covered by vehicle types to 2030 will be:

Propulsion / fuel	Year		
	2020	2026	2030
Petrol and diesel	92%	27%	2%
Pure and mild hybrid	3%	17%	1%
All electric	5%	56%	97%

Percentage of total mileage by vehicle type

There are number of common perceptions regarding BEVs, which are fast becoming inaccurate as infrastructure develops and costs drop.

Myth 1: BEVs are expensive. True, forecourt prices of BEVs are higher than an equivalent specification petrol, diesel or hybrid model. However, recent research conducted by the International Council for Clean Transportation has shown that when driven 10,000 miles per year, over just four years BEVs have a lower total cost of ownership, because 'fuel' and servicing costs are much less than petrol, diesel and hybrid cars. Also, there is no Vehicle Excise Duty to pay, and BEVs are subject to the lowest company car tax liability. The current government grant of £3,500 for a new BEV will end in 2022/2023 when BEVs are expected to reach total cost of ownership parity with petrol and diesel cars and vans.



Renault's Zoe – mass market affordable all electric driving with real world range of over 200 miles.

Myth 2: EV range is limited. Most new BEVs have a range of at least 150 miles between re-charging. Continual advances in battery technology means that range is expected to reach 220 to 250 miles by 2030. Some BEVs can already exceed this. Since the average car trip distance in 2019 was just 8.4 miles (DfT figures published in 2020), range 'anxiety' may already be an unjustified concern.

Myth 3: The national EV charging network is inadequate. For the vast majority of BEV owners, battery re-charging will probably be done at home overnight when electricity is cheap – or in some cases, free. The national public charging network is expanding rapidly (see graph below). There are already over 20,000 publically available charging points available, more than the total number of petrol and diesel pumps. Some are free to use. See <https://www.zap-map.com> for locations and much more on BEVs.

However, transport decarbonisation requires a lot more than a 100% shift to electric cars.

Conventional and Electric bikes. Over 50% of all car trips are between one and five miles (DfT figures) so can easily be achieved on conventional or electric bikes (E bikes).



Who needs a car with this? Peugeot's eCO1 E bike has a range of up to 75 miles and at £2,100 it's a lot cheaper!

The health and environmental benefits of cycling are well documented, and the Cycle to Work scheme provider Cyclescheme give a detailed breakdown of costs savings given by commuting by cycle over car:

<https://www.cyclescheme.co.uk/community/featured/how-much-money-does-cycling-save-you>. Using the Government's Cycle to Work scheme to purchase a conventional or E-bike can lead to savings of up to 32% of the actual cost of the bike for basic-rate taxpayers. The practicality and safety of cycling should improve as the Government has recently announced cycling infrastructure improvement a priority in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the extent and effectiveness of these improvements will need to be monitored and Government held to account where provision falls short of expectations.

Electric scooters Offering a solution to 'final mile' transport decarbonisation, the Department for Transport (DfT) and Nottingham City Council's 2020 ongoing trial of 200 WIND E-scooters in the first month attracted over 3,000 users riding over 38,000 miles. See

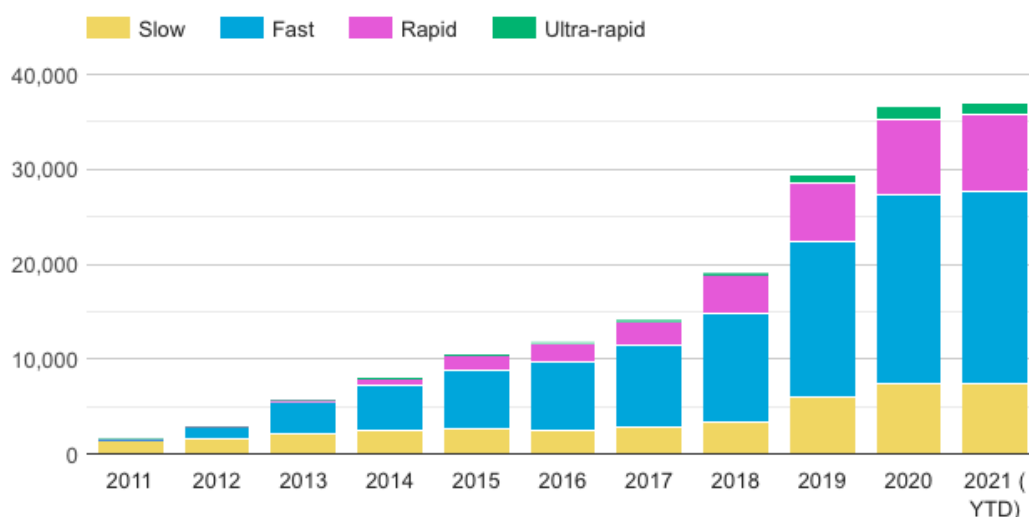
<https://www.transportnottingham.com/a-look-back-at-transport-in-2020/>. Go to <https://fullycharged.show> for authoritative, independent zero carbon electric mobility information.

Public transport electrification. Nottingham's lead in deployment of electric trams and buses in the UK is about to be augmented when it will become the first city in the UK to have a 100% electric bus fleet by 2025. We need to support this by using NET buses and trams whenever possible.

Rail. Government is committed to replacing all diesel-only passenger trains by 2040. The CCC suggest that it is not yet clear what combination of technologies will be optimal for completely decarbonising rail transport. The CCC propose increasing electrified track mileage from 40% to between 55% to 60%, rolling out battery electric and hydrogen fuel cell passenger trains on lightly used routes and fuelling freight trains that traverse the remaining non-electrified routes on advanced biodiesel.

Karl Barrow

Number of public charging points by speed (2011-to date)



Total connectors: 37035, Updated: 24 January 2021



No Off Switch: There has been a significant increase in the number of charging points since 2015, with a 61 percent increase seen between 2018 and 2019.

Climate Action Nottingham

Climate Action Nottingham is a new, youth-led, active and inclusive climate activism group, catering to central Notts, but currently based online. Founded by two women in their 20s who met at a Friends of the Earth welcome event, Climate Action Nottingham's ethos has from the beginning been simple: active and passionate, but inclusive and unobtrusive, campaigning. We hope to create a space for people of all levels of expertise by using a variety of campaigning methods.

We had a very positive and engaged "Kick Off Event" with a diverse group of people, and this was followed by a member-led meeting to decide upon our group's first priorities. Nationally, we wanted to campaign around the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill, which aims to hold the government to greater standards of responsibility, and lobby local MPs to support the Green Recovery in Parliament, as this focusses on ensuring that financial legislation post-Covid does not severely harm the environment. In this regard, we were thrilled to meet with Nadia Whittome MP, to discuss her insights into local climate action and explain our priorities to her.

Locally, we intend to lobby the council regarding some of their vaguer promises on promoting biodiversity and agricultural

protections, and the ongoing urgent issue of fossil fuel divestment. This has been a long-fought campaign in Nottingham, and we hope to add our voice by including members of the community who may feel unsure how to make their voice heard. We were pleased to hear from Deputy Leader Sally Longford that the City Council was submitting a question about this for the Pension Fund AGM. We will pair this with keeping the momentum up going forward, using social media to raise awareness of our detailed research into alternatives and concerns.

We have been honoured by the diversity and engagement of our members, from sixth form students to ex council officers, and have tried hard to ensure we offer an inclusive and accessible environment for all Notts citizens. This has involved changing our meeting times to suit people's childcare needs, to offering alternative methods for people to offer their ideas in the dreaded Zoom format.

If you're at all interested in getting involved, drop us an email at climateactionnotts@gmail.com or a dm on Twitter @ClimateNotts.

Alice Bayes and Charlotte Jones



Climate Action Nottingham's Alice Bayes and Charlotte Jones at a virtual meeting with Nottingham East MP Nadia Whittome.

Nottingham's poor recycling record

Nottingham City has a pretty poor record for recycling household waste. Only around 30% is recycled, compared to over 50% for many authorities.

But did you know that nearly a quarter of the waste that is collected for dry recycling is defined as "residue" – only fit for sending to cement kilns around Europe as "fuel"?

That became clear when we made a Freedom of Information request. The City provided audit data for ultimate destination of dry recyclables sorted at Wastecycle's depot at Colwick (now owned by Enva) in the year 2019-20. Details: <http://bit.ly/FOIstats>.

Half of these "recyclables" were exported out of the UK. Most of the paper was processed in the EU. Almost all of the cardboard went outside the EU.

It is hardly surprising that the City's recycling is poor quality. Waste from our recycling bins is rammed into the same compactor wagons as are used for residual waste.

We have argued for kerbside sorting – separating waste at source into multi-stillage vehicles. That would improve quality control and increase the value of recyplate.

It would mean more jobs on collection, instead of sorting waste on conveyor belts. It would also make it more economic to collect food waste at the same time. That is important to reduce problems with residual waste.

Separate collection of food waste is required by the Environment Bill currently going through parliament. We will be taking this up with the City and County when it becomes law.

Nigel Lee

Green Homes Grant

STOP PRESS! Green Homes Grant extended until March 2022

The Government's Green Homes Grant (GHG) meets up to two thirds of the cost of specified home energy efficiency improvements - from insulation to heat pumps - up to maximum of £5,000 per property (up to £10,000 for homeowners on certain benefits). Our homes produce 27% of the total UK carbon emissions, so the grant provides a means to "do our bit" to reduce a contributor to climate change.

Improvements under the scheme have to be completed by 31st March 2022. Go to the government website at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-green-homes-grant-scheme>.

See also:
<https://www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/energy>

-efficiency/home-improvements

Rollout of the scheme has not been without its problems, however. In recent weeks the GHG scheme has been criticised by approved installers and contractors for delays in processing payments for work done, and an unduly bureaucratic approvals system. Householders have also criticised the scheme administrators for delays of up to four months in getting their applications for work to proceed approved. However, since November 2020, over 17,000 householders have had their applications approved, so it is still worth considering applying for the funding with over a year left until the scheme is set to end.

Karl Barrow

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Waste & Resources: Nigel Lee, 0115 9788059

For general information, please visit our website (see below), or write with an SAE to Nottingham Friends of the Earth, c/o Sumac Centre, 245 Gladstone Street, Nottingham NG7 6HX.

For information about joining the group, please mark the envelope "Membership".

For latest campaign news and contact details, visit
<https://www.nottfoe.gn.apc.org>

National Friends of the Earth: The Printworks, 131-143 Clapham Road, London SW9 0HP (020 7490 1555), or email info@foe.co.uk.

See national website <https://friendsoftheearth.uk> for easy online actions.

Whilst Covid-19 restrictions prohibit our meetings in the Vat & Fiddle, we meet online on the second Tuesday of each month, between 7.30pm and 9.30pm. Please email nottinghamfoe@hotmail.com for details. You would be very welcome.

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AGM Announcement

Our next Annual General Meeting will be held online on Tuesday 9 March 2021 at 7:30pm. Email nottinghamfoe@hotmail.com for details.

We look forward to seeing you there.