



HOPE
FOR
THE
FUTURE

BUILDING DEMOCRATIC POWER

Mid-Strategy Impact Report

January 2025 – June 2026

Supporting communities across the UK to turn climate
and nature concern into political influence



7,600+ people
supported



81 campaigns
strengthened



366 politicians
influenced

COMMUNITIES FOR CLIMATE STRATEGY

2025

You are here

2027

WE'RE HALFWAY THERE!

A note from our CEO

As I write this, I've recently returned from a year of maternity leave and have had the privilege of looking back on everything Hope for the Future has achieved during that time.

What strikes me most isn't the numbers, impressive though they are. **It's the stories.**

Stories of young people confidently questioning decision-makers about issues that matter to them. Stories of parents finding the time, space and support to engage with politics for the first time. Stories of community groups building relationships with councillors, MPs and mayors to drive change in the places they call home.

When we launched our Communities for Climate strategy, we set out with a simple belief: **that the people most affected by decisions should have a meaningful say in shaping them.**

Eighteen months on, this report shows what that looks like in practice.

Across the UK, thousands of people have built the confidence, skills and relationships needed to influence decision-makers. Communities have secured commitments, shaped political conversations and ensured that climate and nature remain on the agenda where it matters most.

What makes me most proud is that this impact has been achieved by an incredible team, board, partners and supporters who share a belief in the power of democracy.

Together, we've shown that when people are equipped with the right support, they don't just participate in democracy, they strengthen it.

As we reach the midpoint of our strategy, there is still much to do. The challenges facing climate, nature and our democratic systems remain significant. But this report gives me real hope for what is possible when communities are empowered to lead.

Thank you for being part of that journey. Your support has helped make every story in this report possible.



Laura D'Henin-Ivers



WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED TOGETHER



In eighteen months marked by increasing political polarisation and growing challenges to climate and nature action, Hope for the Future continued to strengthen the connection between communities and decision-makers.

Across 2025 and the first half of 2026, Hope for the Future helped build the political capacity of the UK climate and nature movement. Through training, coaching, resources, digital tools and direct support, we equipped more than 7,600 people and dozens of organisations with the skills, confidence and relationships needed to influence decision-making long after our involvement ends.

Hope for the Future helped ensure community voices influenced climate and nature decision-making at every level of UK democracy, from local councils and combined authorities to parliamentary debates and national elections.

TOGETHER WE...

7600+

people supported and trained through workshops, events and resources

366

politicians influenced

81

campaigns strengthened

2

flagship programmes launched focusing on underrepresented communities

1

first-of-a-kind platform connecting campaigners, live-tracking community advocacy

80%

people report increased political confidence and political literacy

From parents in Yorkshire shaping conversations about climate and disability inclusion, to young people influencing regional transport policy, to campaigners helping bring climate risk into parliamentary debate on pensions reform, our work demonstrated that when people are equipped with the right support, democracy becomes stronger and climate action becomes more achievable.



A DIGITAL EVOLUTION

A new brand. The same big mission

Over the past 18 months, we've unveiled a new brand and website to better reflect the organisation Hope for the Future has become. While our identity has evolved, our purpose hasn't changed: we're still here to help communities turn climate and nature concern into political influence.

Our new look gives us a stronger platform to share stories of impact, reach new audiences and inspire more people to strengthen democracy through climate action.

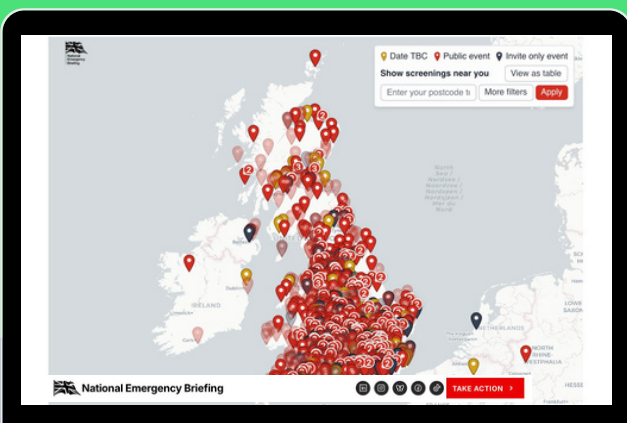
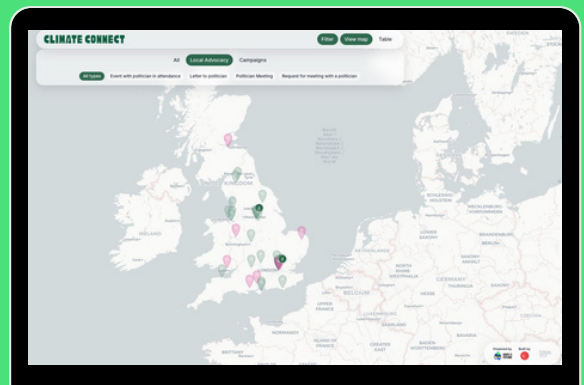


HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Climate Connect

Just as our new strategy period began, we launched Climate Connect, the UK's only shared digital infrastructure for climate and nature campaigns. This one-of-a-kind digital organising platform is designed to help communities and organisations coordinate political engagement, share learning and build greater collective influence.

Already, the platform is being used by the National Emergency Briefing, with more than 1,800 interactions with politicians mapped, creating an unprecedented picture of climate advocacy across the UK.



This is just the beginning. During the second half of our strategy, we'll launch Climate Connect V2, introducing new features that make it even easier for communities, campaigners and organisations to work together to influence decision-makers. Watch this space.

GOAL 1



BUILDING POLITICAL POWER AMONG COMMUNITIES TOO OFTEN EXCLUDED FROM DECISION-MAKING

Our ambition:

Make democracy accessible to the people most often left out of political decision-making on climate and nature

Priority Communities we support



Low income communities



Young people and their caregivers



People most at risk from climate impacts



Disabled people



Diaspora communities

GOAL 1 at a glance

2 new flagship programmes launched

40%

of participants came from underrepresented communities

40

parents engaged with their MP for the first time

150

citizens supported to translate their Climate Assembly recommendations into action

548

parents and children engaged through A Future for All



A FUTURE FOR ALL

The UK's only project designed specifically to bridge the gap between climate and nature democracy, parents on low incomes and parent carers of disabled children. This five-year programme is funded by the National Lottery Climate Action Fund and delivered in partnership with Rea, Contact, Parents for Future and the London School of Economics.

THE CHALLENGE

Many parents told us they didn't see politics as something for people like them. They lacked the confidence, connections and time to engage.

OUR ROLE

With our partners, we combined nature-based woodland performances with advocacy support to build confidence, community and political influence.

THE OUTCOMES

- 63 families engaged
- Children's voices shared at COP30
- Parents who've never engaged in politics before progressing to meet with politicians
- Young participants taking bold action (see Zara's story)



“
**FOR THE FIRST TIME I FEEL LIKE I HAVE THE
POWER TO FIGHT FOR WHAT I BELIEVE IN**
”

Parent participant



SMALL VOICE. BIG IMPACT

After attending one of our A Future for All performances and family workshops, young participant Zara submitted an oral question to Leeds City Council, calling for ethical investment policies and free public transport for children.

A powerful reminder that democratic confidence can start at any age.



14 woodland performances

11 advocacy workshops

300 parents and children reached in underrepresented communities

CLIMATE ASSEMBLIES

Turning deliberation into political action

Funded by Esmée Fairbairn, 2025 marked the first full year of our second flagship project. We're aiming to solve one of the biggest weaknesses in deliberative democracy: turning recommendations into action.

IMPACT AT A GLANCE

150

assembly members supported across three assembly settings

ONE-OF-A-KIND

advocacy toolkit developed specifically for assembly participants

4

MP post-assembly meetings secured, with commitments secured from MP Tim Farron

SUPPORT GENERATED

for amendments expanding powers for local climate assemblies



THE CHALLENGE

Climate assemblies produce thoughtful, evidence-based recommendations, but too often those recommendations fail to translate into action. Participants are rarely equipped to engage decision-makers, and assemblies aren't always designed with the politicians responsible for implementing their recommendations in mind.

OUR ROLE

Working alongside Shared Future, and researchers from Keele and Warwick Universities, we integrate advocacy into the assembly process from the outset, helping participants shape politically actionable recommendations, understand who can implement them, and build the confidence to engage decision-makers long after the assembly had finished.

THE OUTCOMES

So far, participants have secured meetings with MPs, gained commitments to champion assembly recommendations, and helped strengthen support for expanding the role of citizens' assemblies in local decision-making. The learning from this project has also led to the UK's first advocacy toolkit specifically designed for climate assembly participants, creating a model that can be replicated by future assemblies across the country.

GOAL 1



TARGET AUDIENCE SPOTLIGHT:

Youth advocacy and leadership

Young people are the future, and their hopes, needs, and concerns should be central to climate and nature policy-making. Our vision is that every young person has the knowledge, skills, confidence, motivation and community to organise ahead of the next election (when 16 year-olds will be eligible to vote for the first time), and influence climate- and nature-positive outcomes that deliver social and economic justice. That is why young people are one of the specific underrepresented groups we aim to work with under the umbrella of the Communities for Climate strategy, and why in 2025, we took significant steps to grow this area of work.

IMPACT STORY: Young People Influencing Regional Transport Policy

In the Liverpool City Region, students told us they felt public transport services were designed without meaningful input from the young people who rely on them every day.

Through our Changemakers programme, funded by Wirral Borough Council, students from three schools worked with Hope for the Future to identify transport challenges in their communities, gather evidence, develop policy recommendations and build the confidence to engage directly with decision-makers.

As part of the programme, we facilitated a series of political roundtable discussions between students and local decision-makers. Students presented their findings to senior transport leaders including the Liverpool City Region Director of Transport, the Chair of Wirral's Transport Committee, and a senior Network Coordinator from the Combined Authority.

I CAN'T EXPLAIN HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR A COUNCILLOR TO HEAR FROM RESIDENTS (PARTICULARLY YOUNG ONES) ABOUT THE NEED FOR BOLD CLIMATE ACTION. IT REALLY HELPS WITH MY DECISION MAKING AND HELPS STRENGTHEN SUPPORT FOR THE THINGS WE NEED TO DO

Councillor Ed Lamb, Green Party, Wirral

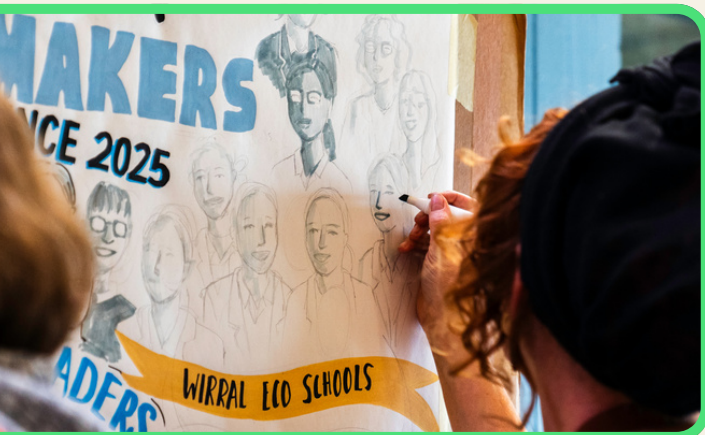


IMPACT AT A GLANCE

- 3 school-based political roundtables facilitated
- Senior transport leaders engaged directly with young people
- 6+ commitments secured from decision-makers
- Young people influencing future transport consultation processes
- Potential representation secured on the Mayor's Youth Forum
- Participants went on to organise meetings with national politicians independently

The Changemakers were supported to present clear, solutions-focused asks to the decision-makers, achieving the following commitments:

- A commitment from the Liverpool City Region Director of Transport to ensure young people are meaningfully consulted on future transport decisions, recognising that young people had previously been overlooked as a key stakeholder group.
- A commitment from transport leaders to improve communication about transport incentives and fare schemes by working directly with schools to reach students and families.
- A commitment to review how ticketing and fare structures can better support affordability and accessibility for young people.
- A proposal to explore representation from the school's Eco Club on the Mayor's Youth Forum, creating an ongoing mechanism for young people to influence regional decision-making.



Perhaps most importantly, the programme created lasting confidence and political engagement among participants. Several students who had previously taken part in Changemakers returned to lead further advocacy activities, including organising a meeting with their local MP and DEFRA Minister, Angela Eagle, to continue pressing for environmental action.

THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH HOPE FOR THE FUTURE GAVE STUDENTS THE CHANCE TO STEP OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM, ENGAGE WITH PEOPLE IN POSITIONS OF INFLUENCE AND REALISE THAT WHAT THEY HAVE TO SAY HAS VALUE.

Teacher

YOU COULD SEE THE PROGRESS THOSE STUDENTS HAD MADE. THEIR ABILITY TO ASK QUESTIONS, RESPOND TO CHALLENGES AND HOLD THEIR OWN IN CONVERSATIONS WITH DECISION-MAKERS WAS REMARKABLE

Teacher



GOAL 1



SPEAK UP! CHANNELLING STORM ANXIETY INTO POLITICAL ACTION IN TRURO

IMPACT AT A GLANCE

26

young people
from 10 schools
supported

8

decision-
makers
influenced

20%

increase in
confidence
reported
compared to
the start of the
project

THE CHALLENGE

Following widespread tree loss caused by Storm Gorreti, young people across the Truro Diocese wanted to protect the nature they cared about. While schools had created opportunities for students to meet local leaders, they wanted to ensure those conversations led to meaningful action rather than simply raising awareness.

OUR ROLE

Hope for the Future equipped students with the skills to become effective advocates. We supported them to research local decision-makers, develop a community manifesto, and transform their ideas into clear, evidence-based SMART asks that they could confidently present to politicians, church leaders and education leaders.

THE OUTCOMES

Armed with their manifesto, students met three MPs, Cornwall Council's Environment Committee, diocesan leaders and local bishops to present their priorities.

Their campaign secured commitments to:

- Launch a Diocese-wide Tree Appreciation Day
- Deliver a community recycling campaign through a plastic sculpture project
- Promote the students' manifesto across the Diocese
- Raise the importance of young people's voices through Cornwall Council
- Take concerns about traffic outside schools directly to Government through MP Ben Maguire



GOAL 2



TURNING CAMPAIGN ENERGY INTO POLITICAL IMPACT

Many climate and nature organisations have strong public support, compelling evidence and ambitious goals. What they often lack is the capacity, confidence or expertise needed to navigate political systems effectively.

Hope for the Future fills that gap.

In 2025, we supported:

36

organisations and campaigns at local, regional and national levels.

As a politically neutral organisation with no policy agenda of our own, we act as trusted democratic infrastructure for the wider climate and nature movement. We help campaigns identify political opportunities, build relationships with decision-makers and convert public support into policy influence.

STRENGTHENING LOCAL VOICES FOR NATURE ACROSS THE UK

Supporting local communities to take action for nature and climate.



Nature Neighbourhoods

Nature Neighbourhoods was a UK-wide programme led by the National Trust, RSPB, WWF and Co-op, supporting communities to take action for nature and climate in their local areas.

Over 15 months, Hope for the Future designed and delivered a tailored political engagement programme, helping community groups understand how local government works, identify key decision-makers and develop effective influencing strategies.

Working with organisations from Plymouth to Edinburgh, Belfast to Newport, we delivered workshops, one-to-one coaching, political research, roundtables and bespoke action plans, ensuring every organisation received support tailored to its local context.

That's where Hope for the Future came in.

IMPACT AT A GLANCE

17

community organisations supported

4

politicians and decision-makers influenced

330+

participants trained

35+

participants trained

14

tailored political action plans

Delivering real political outcomes

Our support helped organisations build stronger relationships with councillors, MPs, MLAs and local authority officers, bringing community priorities directly into local decision-making.

In Manchester, a multi-stakeholder roundtable brought together community organisations, councillors, council officers and national partners to identify practical solutions to barriers facing local groups. As a result, council officers committed to exploring solutions around public liability insurance, councillors agreed to investigate routes for integrating Nature Neighbourhood Plans into local policy, and partners committed to embedding learning into future programmes.

Elsewhere, Community Environment Task secured regular meetings with local councillors, leading to significantly stronger engagement with their council, while Zebra Collective developed a clearer political strategy around community asset transfer.

Building long-term democratic power

Beyond immediate outcomes, the programme equipped organisations with the confidence, skills and relationships needed to influence decision-makers long after the project ends.

By helping communities understand how power works and how to engage with it effectively, we strengthened their ability to shape the future of the places they call home.

A KEY PART OF THIS PROJECT WAS SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS TO BECOME POLITICAL ACTORS.

Beyond training, we aim to leave a lasting legacy with each of the organisations we work with, by embedding long-lasting skills for influence and change. Through this project, we supported:

- Zebra Collective to develop a clearer political strategy around community asset transfer
- Ligoniel Improvement Association began developing a structured political engagement approach across its work

I LEFT WITH GREATER CONFIDENCE, STRONGER SKILLS AND RENEWED MOTIVATION TO SUPPORT LOCAL CLIMATE AND NATURE ACTION

Team member in one of the participating organisations



GOAL 1



IMPACT STORY: PUTTING CLIMATE AND NATURE RISK AT THE HEART OF PENSIONS REFORM

IMPACT AT A GLANCE

74

campaigners trained in parliamentary engagement

2

national advocacy workshops delivered



Climate and nature risk raised throughout parliamentary debate



Government commitments secured on fiduciary duty and fossil fuel transparency



Campaign partners invited into future DWP working group

THE CHALLENGE

Climate and nature risk was largely absent from proposals to reform the UK's pensions system. Campaigners recognised a rare political opportunity, but many lacked the confidence and knowledge to engage Parliament effectively.

OUR ROLE

We delivered:

- two advocacy workshops
- bespoke parliamentary guidance
- messaging resources
- political strategy support for partner organisations

POLITICAL OUTCOMES

- ✓ Climate and nature risk became part of parliamentary debate on pensions reform
- ✓ Government recognised that fiduciary duty requires further clarification to account for systemic climate risk
- ✓ DWP committed to developing new guidance through a multi-stakeholder working group involving campaign partners
- ✓ Government acknowledged financial and climate risks associated with thermal coal investments
- ✓ Commitments secured to improve transparency around fossil fuel investments

WE WERE ENCOURAGED BY GRASSROOTS ENGAGEMENT WITH THE PETITION ACTION AND CONTACTING MPS, AND SENSE A GROWING INTEREST AMONGST CAMPAIGNERS TO ENGAGE WITH MORE COMPLEX ISSUES

JustMoney Movement,
who's campaigners attended our training



GOAL 2



IMPACT STORY: CLIMATE CYMRU: PUTTING CLIMATE AND NATURE ON THE SENEDD ELECTION AGENDA

The 2026 Senedd elections represented a major opportunity to influence the future of climate and nature policy in Wales.

Through our partnership with Climate Cymru, we equipped local organisations with the skills, confidence and resources needed to bring communities and candidates together. Through training, practical support and our Climate and Nature Hustings Toolkit, we helped organisations deliver community-led hustings across Wales, ensuring climate and nature featured prominently in election conversations.

These events brought hundreds of people into direct dialogue with candidates, creating opportunities for communities to raise local priorities and build relationships with future decision-makers.



Importantly, our work did not end on election day. We are now supporting communities to engage newly elected Members of the Senedd, helping turn election conversations into long-term accountability and action.

By strengthening local organisations and creating opportunities for meaningful dialogue, we helped ensure climate and nature remained on the political agenda while building lasting democratic infrastructure for future advocacy.

IMPACT AT A GLANCE

- Climate and nature hustings delivered across 12 of Wales' 16 constituencies
- Hundreds of constituents engaged directly with election candidates
- Candidates from across the political spectrum participated
- Climate and nature issues elevated within local election debates
- Hustings Toolkit accessed 300+ times
- Communities now being supported to engage elected Members of the Senedd during the crucial first 100 days of the new parliament

GOAL 3



MOBILISE COMMUNITIES TO RESPOND RAPIDLY TO OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunities to influence climate and nature policy do not arise evenly or predictably. For this strategy period so far, we've focused on mobilising communities and organisations in ways that were flexible, timely and responsive to the political context, enabling people to take meaningful action when it mattered most.

We supported communities to move from interest or concern into action by providing accessible tools, targeted support and practical guidance to engage politicians effectively. This included responding to national political moments, supporting coordinated action across England and Wales, and developing new infrastructure to make democratic engagement on climate and nature easier and more inclusive.

FROM MASS MOBILISATION TO LASTING POLITICAL INFLUENCE

MASS LOBBY 2025

THE CHALLENGE

The Climate Coalition's Act Now, Change Forever Mass Lobby brought together 5,000 people and 200 MPs. But one conversation alone doesn't change policy, it needs to become an ongoing relationship.

OUR ROLE

We equipped campaigners with the confidence, skills and strategy to make the most of this opportunity. Through workshops, practical resources and one-to-one coaching, we helped participants develop clear policy asks, prepare for meetings with MPs and plan their next steps.

THE OUTCOMES

Participants reported a 22% increase in campaign planning skills, a 20% increase in understanding how to engage politicians, and 73% left feeling more confident engaging with decision-makers.

IMPACT AT A GLANCE



7000+

people accessed our resources

228

people received
1-1 support at
the lobby itself

116

people trained
ahead of
the event

49

people supported to develop long
term action plans to continue
their influence post-lobby

73%

reported increased confidence
engaging politicians



**I'M EXCITED I NOW KNOW HOW TO PUT A CAMPAIGN
TOGETHER. IT FILLED IN THE BLANKS IN MY KNOWLEDGE AND
HAS INSPIRED ME TO CARRY ON ENGAGING WITH MY MP**

Andrew, workshop participant

GOAL 4



BUILDING OUR EVIDENCE BASE

Hope for the Future is not only delivering programmes; we are building the evidence base for effective democratic engagement on climate and nature.

Across all of our work, we continue to ask a simple question:

WHAT HELPS PEOPLE MOVE FROM CONCERN TO INFLUENCE?



By investing in research, testing new approaches and sharing what we learn, we are helping answer that question.

We combine frontline delivery with research partnerships and continuous evaluation, to build a growing evidence base about how communities can engage decision-makers effectively, particularly those groups who have traditionally been excluded from political processes.

OUR POLITICS ROADSHOWS: MAKING POLITICS MORE ACCESSIBLE

One of the most consistent barriers identified through our work is a lack of understanding about how politics works and how elected representatives can be influenced.

To help address this, we continued our Politician Roadshow series, creating opportunities for communities to hear directly from elected representatives and ask questions in an accessible and informal setting.

Throughout 2025 and 2026, we hosted live conversations with politicians including Labour MP Nadia Whittome and Green Councillor Ed Lamb, exploring topics such as local government, climate leadership and the realities of political decision-making.

These events helped demystify politics, challenge assumptions and build participants' confidence to engage constructively with decision-makers.



BARRIERS TO DEMOCRACY: PARENTS

As part of our flagship A Future for All programme, we partnered with researchers from the London School of Economics to better understand the experiences of parents engaging with climate action and political advocacy.

Through interviews and focus groups with members of Parents for Future and Contact, researchers identified four key themes shaping parental engagement:

- Many parents feel overlooked by traditional political systems and are seeking more community-led routes to change.
- The pressures of family life, caring responsibilities and financial constraints often limit opportunities to participate.
- Feelings of isolation can prevent action, while supportive communities help transform concern into confidence and collective action.
- Parents want children to play an active role in shaping the future but need safe, accessible and age-appropriate opportunities to participate

These findings are already informing the design of A Future for All and helping us develop more inclusive models of democratic engagement.

IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH



WE'RE TRYING TO ANSWER ONE OF THE BIGGEST QUESTIONS FACING DEMOCRACY: HOW CAN NEW TECHNOLOGIES STRENGTHEN, NOT REPLACE, COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION? AND SHOULD THEY?



TESTING AI FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN LEEDS

THE CHALLENGE

Artificial intelligence is rapidly changing how people access information and make decisions, but little evidence exists on how it can support democratic participation without undermining community voice. Together with the University of Leeds and Kirklees Council, we set out to explore a simple but important question:

Can AI help communities develop stronger, more actionable recommendations for decision-makers?

OUR ROLE

Hope for the Future designed and facilitated two identical climate mini-publics with residents in Ravensthorpe, Dewsbury. One group followed a traditional deliberation process, while the second had access to an AI tool trained on local climate plans and council data.

Our role was to create an inclusive, community-led process that enabled researchers to compare whether AI could help residents develop recommendations that were more locally grounded, evidence-based and politically actionable.

IMPACT AT A GLANCE

- One of the UK's first controlled studies exploring AI-assisted climate deliberation
- 30 residents took part across two deliberative mini-publics
- Community recommendations submitted to Kirklees Council
- Findings will inform future research into AI and democratic participation

BUILDING THE EVIDENCE BASE

The recommendations from both groups have been submitted to Kirklees Council and are now being analysed by researchers at the University of Leeds.

Whatever the outcome, the project represents an important step in understanding how emerging technologies can support democratic engagement. The findings will help shape future approaches to community participation and provide valuable evidence for local authorities, researchers and civil society organisations exploring the role of AI in public decision-making.

For Hope for the Future, the project demonstrates our growing role as a bridge between academic research, local government and communities, ensuring innovation is grounded in real-world participation and practical political engagement.

LOOKING AHEAD

As this report goes to print in June 2026, the UK has just experienced its hottest June on record. Across the country, communities are already living with the impacts of climate change, from extreme heat and flooding to rising costs and growing pressure on local services.

At the very moment when climate action has never been more urgent, our democracy needs strengthening too. Lasting change will only happen if the people most affected by these challenges have the confidence, skills and opportunities to influence the decisions shaping their future.

Over the next 18 months, we'll build on everything you've read in this report. We'll ensure the people we've trained in the first eighteen months of this strategy go on to influence policy. We'll launch Climate Connect V2, expand our support for underrepresented communities, embed advocacy into new areas of democratic participation, and help even more organisations turn local action into political influence.

But the scale of the challenge demands more. Like many charities, we face an increasingly difficult funding landscape at a time when demand for our work continues to grow. Every investment in Hope for the Future helps strengthen the democratic infrastructure our climate movement needs, not just for today, but for the decades ahead.

The first half of our strategy has shown what's possible. With your support, the second half can help ensure that even more communities have the power to shape the decisions that will define our shared future.

We're looking for funders, partners and allies to help us deliver even more in the second half of our strategy! Get in touch to talk to us about how we can work together to drive climate and nature ambition through democratic engagement.

Email Joel Silver, Director of Policy & Engagement at joel.silver@hftf.org.uk



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