

# ACT NOW!

A Youth Manifesto  
for Action on  
Climate Change

SAVE THE WILD.

CAN YOU  
HEAR BIRDS?



# A YOUTH MANIFESTO FOR ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

COP26 is the final chance for world leaders to determine how global temperature rise will be **limited to the 1.5°C target** set out in the 2015 Paris Agreement. The decisions made at this conference will affect the futures of every young person on the planet. As such, they deserve to have a say and it is critical that their views and ideas are heard.

To understand what the young people of the UK want to see happen, the Scottish Wildlife Trust's Young Leaders - all aged between 20-30 years - coordinated The Wildlife Trusts' youth response to COP26. Young people from across the UK were invited to share their views, concerns, questions and ideas in a series of Young People's Nature Assembly workshops and via an online survey. The wealth of content collected via these channels has directly shaped this manifesto which is a call to take immediate and decisive action on the joint climate and biodiversity crises, and to work towards a truly green recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic that benefits people and wildlife.

We ask that you **ACT NOW** before it is too late.

**Alasdair Lemon**

Scottish Wildlife Trust Young Leader

**87%** of young people **do not think that governments are taking enough action** to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle climate change.

"It's not about blame anymore, it's about action. We need action and we need it now. And who better to implement those changes than the government. They need to lead the way and make solid decisions on how we fight this crisis."

Young person aged 19-24 from Basildon

**88%** of young people **do not think that businesses are taking enough action** to tackle the climate emergency.

**70%** of young people **do not think that individuals are taking enough action** to reduce emissions.

# WHAT YOUNG PEOPLE WANT TO SEE HAPPEN FROM...

## GOVERNMENTS

**ENERGY:** An immediate reduction in the use of, and investment in, fossil fuels and greater investment in renewable energy.

**TRANSPORT:** Improvements to public transport (including affordability), the active travel network and electric car charging infrastructure.

**FOOD:** A step change in agricultural subsidies that incentivises sustainable production and encourages a reduced meat diet.

**POLLUTION:** Meaningful penalties given to polluters and increased regulation and taxes for businesses failing to cut emissions.

**HOMES:** Greater incentives for improving the energy efficiency of homes and other buildings, and tighter sustainability regulations for new builds.

## BUSINESSES

**ENERGY:** Redirecting investments from fossil fuels to renewables; a greater focus on reducing emissions rather than relying on carbon offsetting; and using green energy suppliers as standard.

**WASTE:** A significant reduction in the amount of waste produced (particular food and single-use plastics) both directly and indirectly via the consumer.

**TRANSPARENCY:** Greater transparency of the environmental impact of businesses and products to ensure consumers can make an informed choice and to reduce the potential for greenwashing.

**PROCUREMENT:** Ensure that products are sourced as locally and responsibly as possible, and that sustainability is prioritised throughout the supply chain.

**RECYCLING:** Ensure that recycled materials are used where possible and that products are designed to be repairable, recyclable or reusable to promote a circular economy.

## INDIVIDUALS

**QUALITY NOT QUANTITY:** A shift in mindset to buying fewer, higher quality products that are more valued, last longer and can be repaired, upcycled or passed on.

**TRAVEL:** An increase in the use of public transport and active travel and a subsequent decrease in the use of personal vehicles.

**DIET:** A reduction in meat consumption and food waste, and a shift towards buying local, seasonal produce.

**CONSUMER POWER:** Where possible, prioritise supporting sustainable businesses, avoiding unsustainable ones and refusing products that reinforce a convenience culture.

**ENERGY:** Ensure that homes are as energy efficient as possible and that a green energy supplier is used.



We asked young people which nature-based solutions to climate change they think should be high priority.

# HERE'S WHAT THEY SAID...

*“Wildflower meadows in roadside verges and parks”*

*“Preserving peatlands nationally rather than using for compost”*

*“Riverbank woodlands throughout the UK for flood prevention”*

*“Coastal habitats such as seagrass and mudflats”*

*“Plant more trees and protect existing woodlands”*

*“Urban greening to prevent storm water flooding”*

*“Tree-lined streets which act to cool cities down”*

Tell us which nature-based solutions you'd like to see prioritised using [#HelpNatureHelpUs](#)

The Wildlife Trusts' movement is a UK-wide network of 46 Trusts, each an independently registered charity with a shared mission. The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts is the charity responsible for coordinating the movement (registered no. 207238).



The Scottish Wildlife Trust is a Scottish registered charity (charity no. SC005792) and a company limited by guarantee and registered in Scotland (registered no. SC040247).