

Cllr Louise Pepper

Mr Chairman, fellow members, colleagues and friends.

I'm speaking on behalf of SSE and other campaigning groups all over the world.

We have a global crisis. Severe impacts from climate change are being experienced now. The last decade was the hottest ever recorded. 2019 was the second hottest since records began. Last year saw two major heat waves hit Europe in June and July, with a new national record of 46C set in France. New records were also set in Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and in the UK at 38.7C. **Extreme heat is hitting even faster and harder than scientists anticipated.**

The underlying driver is indisputable. The concentration of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere is increasing more and more as fossil fuels are burned. There is more CO₂ in the atmosphere today than any point since the evolution of humans. By allowing temperatures to rise more than 1.5 degrees, it will have hugely damaging effects for human, plant and animal life across the planet. Australia have experienced one of its worst droughts in decades, their spring was the driest on record. A heatwave in December broke the record for the highest nationwide average temperature, a sweltering 40 degrees. For the past three months, I've watched my antipodean cousin's country burn. Exhausted firefighters have had to fight ferocious fires that have burnt around 18 million hectares, thousands of people have had to be evacuated, they're choking from the toxic atmosphere. Up to half a billion animals and plants have been lost. That figure excludes insects and frogs, so the real sum is almost certain to be much higher. I am not ashamed to admit that I have shed tears over this loss.

Young people across the world are angry. Their message is clear. We're playing with their future. This needs to be urgently addressed. We, the decision-makers, must act now.

UDC have committed to achieving net-zero status by 2030. The UK have committed to achieving net-zero by 2050. A landmark UN report last year concluded that CO₂ emissions must drop 45 percent by 2030-and reach "net zero" by 2050. Britain is not on track to meet its current commitments. Each year that passes makes it more difficult to achieve the necessary targets.

Under no circumstances should we be increasing economic growth and greenhouse gases at the expense of the environment, when we face "unprecedented" challenges from climate chaos, pollution and biodiversity.

Airport expansion will unquestionably add even more greenhouse gases into our atmosphere. Multiple UK airports, including Stansted, Heathrow, Gatwick and Luton- four out of the five largest UK airports by passenger traffic – all currently have planned expansions. The plans announced would increase the country's airport capacity by an estimated 200 million passengers yearly, representing an astounding increase of 70%.

The more planes and carbon we put in the air, the higher chance we have in the future, of habitable places we frequently visit becoming uninhabitable. Subsidising fossil fuels makes no sense.

However, we're fortunate that at local level, we have our local MP Kemi Badenoch's full support.
READ OUT LETTER FROM KEMI.

We decide not central government.

The evidence on new material changes is unequivocal. A rise of anything above 1.5C would mean that coastal flooding, heatwaves and damage to coral reefs would become more severe. The latest figures show that the world has already warmed by just over 1C. Time is running out.

Wealth or health. Profit or planet

We must safeguard our precious planet now and future generations before it's too late. Thank you
