

UK told to change behaviour to meet climate targets

October 12 2022, by Helen ROWE



Britain this year saw record temperatures of above 40 degrees Celsius (104 Fahrenheit) for the first time.

Britain's approach to changing public travel, heating and food habits is "inadequate" to meet its net zero and environment targets, a parliamentary committee warned Wednesday.

The chair of the House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee Kate Parminter said after a summer of record temperatures, fires and drought, "an immediate and sustained response" was needed.

"People power is critical to reach our [environmental goals](#), but unless we are encouraged and enabled to change behaviours in how we travel, what we eat and buy and how we heat our homes, we won't meet those targets," she added.

" Polling shows the public is ready for leadership from the [government](#). People want to know how to play their part in tackling climate change and [environmental damage](#)."

The committee from the unelected upper chamber of parliament urged the government to use the lessons learned from the coronavirus pandemic to help communicate the need for behaviour changes.

They included areas such as "how we travel, what we eat, what we buy and how we use energy at home", the committee said.

Parminter urged new Prime Minister Liz Truss to urgently "set out her vision of a country where low carbon choices and behaviours can flourish".

The panel's findings follow a warning from another key [committee](#) that the government is failing to make adequate progress to meet its targets.

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC), an independent body established under 2008 climate change legislation to advise the government, said in June that its latest annual progress report found "scant evidence of delivery against... headline goals so far".

Only a year earlier it had praised the government of then premier Boris

Johnson for its new net-zero strategy to be [carbon neutral](#) by 2050, and a series of targets to be met along the way.

Confusion

The average land temperature in Britain had risen by around 1.2 degrees Celsius from pre-industrial levels and sea levels had risen by 16 centimetres since 1900, the body said in 2021.

In 2015, the Paris climate pact saw countries pledge to limit global temperature rises to less than 2.0 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to go down to 1.5 degrees.

Experts believe this can be achieved only by the world hitting the 2050 net zero target.

After she became [prime minister](#) in early September, Truss said she was "completely committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050".

But she also told parliament she had decided to "re-examine" this objective to ensure it was achieved in a way favourable to the economy and growth.

Her early decisions as leader, including a pledge to lift the ban on fracking and to offer new North Sea oil and gas licences, have confused even her own camp.

A cross-party group of pro-environment parliamentarians also wrote to her in early September asking her to give a firm re-commitment to the goal of reaching carbon neutrality.

In response, the government said it remained "fully committed to the legally binding target of achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by

2050".

A spokesman claimed Britain had led the world on [climate](#) change by "driving down emissions by 44 percent since 1990... which is more than any other G7 country".

The government's "Net Zero Review" would "ensure the UK's fight against [climate change](#) maximises economic growth, energy security and affordability for consumers and businesses," he added.

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