

COUNCIL MEETING – DEPUTATION/PETITION REQUEST FORM

NAME OF DEPUTATION/PETITION LEADER: Dorothea Hackman, on behalf of Climate Emergency Camden	
ADDRESS: 	
TEL:	E-MAIL:
Name and contact details of other proposed attendees (maximum of 4 plus deputation leader): 	
Does any member of the deputation have access requirements? If so, please tell us what they are: 	
Have you submitted a deputation request to the Council before? If so, please give details of the topic and the meeting to which it was submitted: 	

Deputation on responding to the accelerating climate and ecological emergency

Thank you for accepting this deputation from Climate Emergency Camden. We are here to advise Camden Council to set up a climate and ecological task group as well as a climate and ecological scrutiny body as a matter of urgency.

A cross-party, cross-departmental task group could lead on:

- reducing greenhouse gas emissions, enhancing biodiversity, and cutting pollution;
- preparing for impacts and emergencies associated with worsening extreme weather events; and
- developing a borough-wide public information campaign.

Why the urgency? As you will undoubtedly have noticed, our world is heating up fast.

The UK has already experienced three heatwaves this year. The May heatwave broke the record for the hottest day in May: 35.1°C. The June heatwave brought us a record of 37.7°C and ‘tropical nights’ during which temperatures did not fall below 20°C. During those nights, high humidity added significantly to heat stress, as our bodies could not cool down sufficiently. Between 22 and 28 June alone, the heat caused an [estimated](#) 862 excess deaths in the UK. July ushered in a third heatwave.

The Met Office [prognosis](#) is clear: extreme heat events, such as heatwaves and record-breaking high temperatures, are growing longer, more intense, and more frequent as the climate warms.

We have known for some time that successive or compound heatwaves significantly increase the risk of excess mortality, acute illness, infrastructure failure, drought, flooding, wildfires, and crop failure. We also know that heating causes more heating.

But it was only this year that scientists were able to [demonstrate](#) that the rise in global temperature has not been steady, as previously thought. In fact, the data show a statistically significant [acceleration](#) of global warming since about 2015.¹ We’re heating the planet faster than we thought.

This acceleration means that irreversible damage could arrive sooner than expected.² It is particularly worrying in view of other climate research, which indicates that critical ecosystems could collapse by 2030, threatening UK food security.³ These are catastrophic risks, heightened due to accelerating global warming.

Reducing these risks requires accelerated decarbonisation across the board, at the national and local levels. Scientists have long stressed that every avoided 0.1°C of warming counts.

Climate Emergency Camden acknowledges that Camden Council has outlined budgetary and other constraints on decarbonisation in its [Third Climate Budget](#). We have also taken note that the Council aims to meet these challenges by engaging ‘everyone living and working in Camden’ through its Climate Action Plan.

But accelerating global warming calls for redoubled climate action, coupled with augmented emergency planning. We therefore look to the Council to be more ambitious and more strategic, including by considering Scope 3 and embodied emissions in Council decision-making.

¹ The acceleration is likely to continue so long as Earth's energy imbalance grows. This imbalance grows as the atmosphere absorbs ever more heat from the sun than it radiates back into space. The past 20 years have witnessed a doubling of the energy imbalance, as greenhouse gases have trapped increasing amounts of heat in the atmosphere, pushing temperatures higher. The rapid rise in the energy imbalance came as a 'shock' even to some scientists, as most climate models had forecast less than half the increase. See, for example, <https://theconversation.com/earth-is-trapping-much-more-heat-than-climate-models-forecast-and-the-rate-has-doubled-in-20-years-258822>; <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/12/04/climate/climate-change-acceleration.html>; <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/26/climate/climate-heat-intensity.html>; <https://www.theclimatebrink.com/p/the-great-acceleration-debate>; <https://essd.copernicus.org/articles/17/2641/2025>.

Sea levels also rose faster than expected and sea surface temperatures are growing faster than previously predicted. See <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/26/climate/climate-heat-intensity.html> and <https://www.nasa.gov/missions/jason-cs-sentinel-6/sentinel-6-michael-freilich/nasa-analysis-shows-unexpected-amount-of-sea-level-rise-in-2024>.

² The acceleration finding implies a heightened risk of triggering tipping points, such as the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation, or AMOC. If we reach 2°C of warming, which could happen well before 2050, this ocean circulation could [collapse](#). AMOC collapse would rob the UK of its mild climate: London would experience even hotter summers but freeze for three months in winter. AMOC collapse would lead to the end of large-scale agriculture in the UK, as well as severe water shortages.

³ The Joint Intelligence Committee's recent national security [assessment](#) draws attention to the 'realistic possibility' that critical ecosystems will 'start to collapse by 2030 or sooner' due to climate change and other drivers, with 'catastrophic implications' for the UK, including food insecurity.

We urge Camden Council to take two steps to meet this moment:

1. Set up a properly resourced, cross-party, cross-departmental climate and ecological task group.⁴
2. Set up a climate and ecological scrutiny body to review Council policy and operations in the light of the climate and ecological emergency.⁵

Thank you.

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⁴ As suggested above, a properly resourced, cross-party, cross-departmental climate and ecological task group could lead on designing, monitoring, coordinating, and improving Council efforts to:

- reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance biodiversity, and cut pollution;
- prevent, reduce the risk of, and prepare for impacts and emergencies associated with worsening extreme weather events, including heat-related health effects, flooding, water shortfalls, drought, and food shortages; and
- develop and maintain a highly visible, borough-wide public information campaign to engage Camden residents and businesses in climate mitigation and adaptation efforts.

⁵ Camden Council could set up a climate and ecological scrutiny body by:

- amending its Constitution to allow for more than five scrutiny committees and thus the establishment of a Climate and Ecological Scrutiny Committee;
- setting up a Climate and Ecological Scrutiny Panel, for instance under the Culture and Environment Scrutiny Committee; or

establishing a unique body in response to the climate and ecological emergency, as was the case when the Council set up the Covid-19 Oversight Cross-Party Panel, which met monthly from 11 May 2020 to 17 March 2021, received a report from the executive, and accepted deputations.