

Chair of Edinburgh Climate Commission named

This week the council announced it has chosen the independent Chair of the Edinburgh Climate Commission.

Dr Sam Gardner will head up the body after his appointment is ratified on Tuesday of next week by the council's Policy and Sustainability Committee.

The body is set up along with the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECCI) and funding from the Place-based Climate Action Network.

It will provide leadership, expertise, challenge and encouragement to the city as we head towards our ambition of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.



Dr Gardner is Head of Climate Change and Sustainability at Scottish Power and was Deputy Director of WWF Scotland. He will now appoint his fellow commissioners to serve alongside those already appointed who include :

- Cllr Adam McVey – Leader of City of Edinburgh Council and Vice Chair of the Commission
- Andrew Kerr – Chief Executive of City of Edinburgh Council
- Dave Reay – Director of Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation at the University of Edinburgh
- Clare Foster – Partner, Shepherd and Wedderburn
- Daisy Narayanan – Director of Urbanism, SUSTRANS
- Bridie Ashrowan – Chief Executive, Broomhouse Space
- Teresa Bray – Chief Executive, Changeworks
- Kaisie Rayner – Responsible Investment Manager, Scottish Widows
- Calum Murray – Director CCG Scotland
- Diarmaid Lawlor – Associate Director, Scottish Futures Trust
- Alex Hilliam – Behaviour Change Expert Consultant
- Andrea Nicholas – Chief Executive, Green Tourism
- Civil society representative
- Young sustainability professional nominated by the 2050 Group

The full list of commissioners will be announced before the Commission's first meeting at the end of March.

Adam McVey – Vice Chair of the Climate Commission and Leader of the City of Edinburgh Council said: "I'm delighted to welcome Dr Gardner into his new role as Chair of the independent Edinburgh Climate Commission. He brings a wealth of relevant experience and knowledge to the post and will be a real catalyst for change by leading the Commission's work to help Edinburgh achieve our hugely ambitious net zero target.

"Working together across all sectors to reduce the city's carbon emissions and unlock a truly sustainable future is a massive opportunity for this city. I am looking forward to playing an active role in the Commission as we push for the change needed right across the city in delivering our 2030 ambitions.

Depute Council Leader Cammy Day said: “Climate action is a key priority of this Administration and I am delighted that someone of this calibre will be leading the Commission as it moves forward. I welcome the fact that a core part of the Commission’s work will be ensuring a just transition for Edinburgh’s citizens based on the real experiences of people living in poverty. The positive climate action we take has the potential to increase income in homes, reduce costs and improve wellbeing and we must make sure we take advantage of this opportunity for all our citizens.”

Dr Sam Gardner, Chair of the Edinburgh Climate Commission, said: “It’s a huge privilege to be asked to Chair the Edinburgh Climate Commission, to work with the expertise and experience of my fellow Commissioners and to play a part in ensuring Edinburgh accelerates its response to the climate crisis. The Commission will focus its work on helping to unlock the delivery of the measures we know we must take, not only to tackle climate change but to help build a better future for all of Edinburgh. The scale of the transformation Edinburgh faces is significant but the rewards are even greater; to be successful we will all have a part to play and those with the greatest responsibility must show the greatest leadership. We have entered the climate decade of delivery and this will be the touchstone the Commission will hold itself to.”

The Commission has nine priorities set out :

- New-build housing becoming zero carbon;
- Transforming future city energy generation;
- Transforming city waste recycling;
- Retrofit of heritage, commercial and public buildings;
- Retrofit of domestic housing;
- Decarbonisation of city transport;
- Readyng Edinburgh for climate impact;
- Citizen behaviour change and civil society innovation and activism; and

- Ensuring a just transition to a low-carbon Edinburgh

There will be a round table meeting in Edinburgh later this year when Chief Executives from organisations in the capital will join Andrew Kerr the Chief Executive of The City of Edinburgh Council to consider how to support future community action. In addition there will be a youth summit at Dynamic Earth at the end of this month with over 400 school pupils from all over Edinburgh and a conference Cities Delivering Climate Action will be held in Edinburgh later in the year.