

Annual Review

2018/19



**Friends of
the Earth
Scotland**



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Thank you for helping us make a difference

From Friends of the Earth Scotland turning 40, touring the country with our climate workshops, 2018-19 was another big year in many ways.

Our commitment to tackling the climate crisis in a way that embraces social justice continued under the banner of 'Fossil Free Scotland.' This drove significant developments for our work around a Just Transition as well our progress on air pollution and transport.

We once again enabled thousands of people to speak directly to their MSPs, Councillors and MPs to ensure that environmental protection is a cornerstone of their work. Our campaigners have met with Ministers to push for more ambition and worked with civil servants to ensure promises are turned into effective policy.

Despite continued uncertainty around Brexit, as a member of Friends of the Earth Europe and Friends of the Earth International – the world's largest grassroots environmental network – we remain proudly international in our outlook. We're also collaborative at home with partnerships across the third sector and elsewhere being developed and strengthened. We're part of important groups working across diverse issues like plastic pollution, reform of Grouse Moors and our planning system, in addition to backing measures to make our streets safer.

As in each of the past 40 years, we are enormously grateful to our members. Your generous and consistent support continues to make a huge difference to our work and capacity to protect the environment both now and into the future. This review is only a brief run through major milestones in our campaigns and we hope that you enjoy seeing the success you help make happen.



Highlights

Tackling the climate crisis

We worked throughout the past year to build momentum for strong emissions reductions targets to be enshrined in Scotland's new Climate Act. We've continued to play a pivotal role in the Stop Climate Chaos Scotland coalition pushing others to go further and creating a greater collective impact.

We went to the UN Climate Conference in Poland to stand alongside allies from around the world, supported Youth Climate Strikers and delivered workshops on the Bill across Scotland. On the day of the landmark UN climate report we went to the SNP Conference with a spoof newspaper from 2040 showing two different climate futures for Scotland – one good, one bad - and urged the Party to up their efforts.

Highlights from our local groups this year include FoE Edinburgh organising a 'Climate Alarm' rally attended by several hundred people to coincide with the UN conference. Our climate campaigning this year also helped turn SNP support for expansion of Heathrow into an abstention on the final vote, challenged the green-lighting of oil and gas developments in the North Sea and highlighted the climate impacts people are already facing around the world.

Moving on air pollution

Glasgow City Council launched Scotland's first ever Low Emission Zone on New Year's Eve 2018 – as a result of years of our campaigning. While we're disappointed with its level of ambition, we will continue to work with local groups to strengthen it so it can improve the lives and health of people in the city.

We're pushing for forthcoming Zones in Dundee and Aberdeen to be more ambitious and effective.



While Edinburgh Council is taking commendable action on pollution in many areas, we are fighting to get cars included in the new city-wide Low Emission Zone. A key element of the transition to cleaner, healthier transport is having affordable, reliable public transport. This is why we've been supporting calls for buses to be brought back into public control so they are run in the public interest rather than for private profit. Our work with Get Glasgow Moving and others has ensured that the Transport Bill going through Parliament in 2019 includes powers for councils to set-up bus companies.

Fossil free finance

Fossil fuel divestment has won major political backing over the last year thanks to the hard work of local activists and grassroots campaign groups across Scotland. MSPs from our four political parties are now supportive, helping to pressure the Scottish Government and Parliament to divest in the coming year.

Support from the Lord Provost of Edinburgh was a major boost for calls to divest Edinburgh Council's pensions, and the vast majority of Scotland's MPs now back divestment of the Westminster Pension Fund.

With UK partners we've revealed shocking Council investments in fracking firms and shown how shareholder engagement with fossil fuel firms has been largely ineffective. This work has helped create council campaigns in Strathclyde and Falkirk, and a sponsorship campaign in Edinburgh, which won divestment of the Edinburgh Science Festival. The last year has seen numerous divestment protests including within the Church of Scotland General Assembly, at Royal Bank of Scotland, and Edinburgh and Glasgow Councils. Thanks in part to our pressure the Scottish Government has insisted that the forthcoming National Investment Bank will have considerable focus on financing green jobs and we are well positioned to influence the plans of civil servants and MSPs as it develops.



The divestment movement is seeing real money withheld from big oil, gas and coal and a direct impact on these companies ability to extract fossil fuels.

Just Transition

A significant but growing element of our work this year has focused on how we transition to a zero carbon economy in a way that is fair to workers and communities currently dependent on oil and gas. Working with partners in Trade Unions and other environmental groups we have pushed this issue up the political agenda and will continue to work with the new Just Transition Commission that we called for. Our 'Sea Change' report showed how the UK's oil and gas drilling plans, and Scottish Government's support for them, are incompatible with responding to the climate emergency. It also predicted that we can create many more jobs in the clean energy economy than are lost in oil and gas. We've just hired a new Just Transition Campaigner and so are looking forward to achieving even more in the coming years.

Young Friends of the Earth Scotland

In 2018, YFoES began to actively work support local groups and activists in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dumfries. The network was supported by an intern, Abigail, who helped run a national skill-share event for 40 young people from across Scotland.

YFoES got involved in campaigning on the climate bill, with representation on a new 'youth in climate' group formed through Stop Climate Chaos Scotland. And YFoES worked to promote the concept of intergenerational equity, particularly through the Scottish Government's Year of Young People. Members of the network were also active in FoE International by attending events in Europe and building connections with other youth groups there.

Towards the end of 2018, a YFoES network Gathering was held in Stirling with a day of workshops and skill sharing sessions, as well as the AGM at which a new steering group of eleven were elected.

Total expenditure: £620,129