

Climate change = poverty. Strike on 20 September!

See: UK Student Climate Network <https://ukscn.org/>

Freezing winters are one of the predicted signs of climate change, which at the same time can bring unbearable heat that many forms of life, including some of the older folk among us, cannot survive. The Beast from the East in 2018 gave us a foretaste. Unlike snug houses in Scandinavia, homes in Britain are designed for a temperate climate-- and they don't even keep us warm now.

Meanwhile, **food prices** food are already affected by poor crops resulting from extreme and unpredictable weather, with droughts, hurricanes and floods taking place all over the world. And in many places, people are starving. With the Arctic on fire and a smoke cloud bigger than the European Union, it's no wonder that young people are fearful for their future, and asking adults to join them in pulling an emergency cord.

FPA has for eight years been fighting to keep energy affordable and make sure our homes are well insulated and our heating systems are fit for purpose. But with the climate changing even faster than expected, it is two steps forward, ten steps back. Of all the things that can be done against fuel poverty, with its terrible toll each year of death, illness, and ruined opportunities, the most crucial is fighting to reverse the waste and reckless policies that are feeding the spiral of climate change.

It is not too late to help our children win a fighting chance in life. There are three major international conferences coming up in the next year that will set governments' goals for the next few, critical years. A number of governments, world-powerful corporations, and multi-billionaire individuals are determined to protect their fossil fuel interests and deny what all of us can see. Along with many who have watched the science, we believe that the years [2019-2020 are a moment of truth](#). Critical for our standard of living -- indeed, for life itself.

20 September 2019 is the day chosen by an unprecedented international movement of young people, organising all over the world who have been striking from school every Friday for a year now. They are asking adults to join their strike 20 September and support them in whatever ways we can.

FPA members will be striking that day -- for a day, or for an hour, or however we can, and joining the demonstrations. The changes we are fighting for must be brought in in a way that protects the interests of people confronting fuel poverty. We have outlined below what we see as basic principles. **They are just a beginning -- every sector of society must have a voice in what happens on the ground in our communities and in the national and international decisions that affect us all.**

Please join us on 20 September! Contact FPA at this email address if you can join us on the day, and let us know if you have slogans that you'd like us to help promote. Or come along to our AGM on Tuesday 10 September to discuss it.

What we're striking for

- Every government policy and law must be tested against the need to limit global heating to a **maximum of 1.5 degrees**.
- One fifth of carbon emissions in the UK are due to heat for our homes. All homes must swiftly be **insulated** with safe, non-toxic, non-flammable materials, well-installed with ventilation to prevent cold, overheating and damp.
- **New buildings** must be designed and built with climate resilience in mind.
- Residents must individually and collectively have **the power to call to account** landlords, developers, and providers of energy, heat, or new green infrastructure in our homes to ensure that it benefits them and that it really does, in practice, reduce carbon emissions.
- We need an urgent **transition to cheaper, cleaner renewable energy** that does not endanger people's ability to **afford the energy we need** for essentials like heating, cooling, cooking and transport.
- In the interim period, before we reach the goal of cheaper, cleaner green energy for all, and while many homes are still poorly insulated, people must be **protected from energy poverty**, with special attention to the extra energy needs of people who are elderly, disabled, or young children.
- The above suggestions must be **paid for** by the 100 corporations [responsible for 71% of global carbon emissions](#), the banking sector which invests in them, by the military, and by the wealthiest 10% of the global population who are [responsible for 50% of consumption emissions](#). It must not be paid for by taking money from the least well-off in our society.

The transition to an economy that will preserve a liveable climate must also ensure some other protections:

- **Workers in industries based on fossil fuels must be guaranteed opportunities** to instead use their skills and develop new ones without loss of income. This can include meeting the need for urgent home adaptations, renewable energy infrastructure, and

new public transport systems. **The work of caring for people's health and welfare must be recognised and paid.**

- **Extraction of minerals**, rare earth metals and other materials used to produce renewable energy must not be allowed to cause unnecessary environmental devastation, exploitative and dangerous labour conditions, or wars, in countries of the Global South, or anywhere.
- **Industry, agriculture, transport and trade must also be transformed** to sustainably meet the needs of humans and other life. **An end to waste:** of energy, water, mineral and other resources, of consumer products, of labour, creativity, and lives.
- People already in crisis due to the changing climate must be protected immediately. This includes **recognising the rights of climate refugees** and of indigenous peoples, and compensation for the work of **restoring homes and communities** after floods and other extreme weather events.