

# INTERIM BRIEFING – COVID-19, RECOVERY AND THE PATH TO NET ZERO

## Executive summary

- Climate Assembly UK was commissioned by six cross-party Select Committees of the UK Parliament to explore how the UK should reach its legally-binding target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- The assembly's 108 participants are together [representative of the UK population](#) in terms of demographics and levels of concern about climate change.
- The assembly members met for six weekends between late January and late May 2020. They heard a wide range of views and evidence about how the UK should reach its net zero target, before engaging in careful, considered and in-depth discussion about the best way forward.
- At the request of both Parliament and assembly members themselves, **the final weekend of the assembly included a brief opportunity for assembly members to discuss the changed context for reaching net zero created by the Covid-19 pandemic and the resulting lockdown and economic impacts.**
- **The assembly's thoughts on this topic are significant. There is no other group that is at once a representative sample of the UK population, and well-acquainted with the sorts of measures required to reach net zero.**
- Assembly members did not hear detailed evidence on the changed context created by Covid-19. This was partly because of time constraints but also because it was too early in the pandemic for the type of detailed information the assembly had heard on other themes to be available. Instead the assembly heard one presentation from the [Expert Leads](#) that provided a series of think points for the assembly to discuss. This presentation is available online [here](#).
- **This briefing has two sections:**
  - 1. Economic recovery: This covers the assembly's views about whether or not steps taken by the government to help the economy recover should be designed to help achieve net zero;**
  - 2. Lifestyle changes: This covers the assembly's views about whether or not, as lockdown eases, government, employers and/or others should take steps to encourage lifestyles to change to be more compatible with reaching net zero.**
- We are releasing these results in advance of Government announcements on these issues. **The assembly's main recommendations on the path to net zero, which are much more detailed than those in this briefing, are not included here. These recommendations, on the topics of how we travel, heat and energy use in the home, what we buy, what we eat and how we use the land,**

where our electricity comes from and removing greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, will be presented in full in the assembly's final report, which will be published in September 2020.

## Key findings

- **79% of assembly members 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that, "Steps taken by the government to help the economy recover should be designed to help achieve net zero."** 9% strongly disagreed or disagreed. 12% were unsure.
- Assembly members' most frequently given reasons for agreeing with this statement included **requests for the Government to: limit, or put conditions on, investment in high carbon industries;<sup>1</sup> rethink and invest in infrastructure; support low carbon industries; make the most of the economic opportunities presented by the path to net zero; deal with Covid-19 and climate change together where possible; and take advantage of the current opportunities for change.** Assembly members who were unsure or who disagreed with the statement tended to emphasise a need focus on economic recovery first and foremost.
- **93% of assembly members 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that, "As lockdown eases, government, employers and/or others should take steps to encourage lifestyles to change to be more compatible with reaching net zero."** 4% strongly disagreed or disagreed. 3% were unsure.
- Assembly members' most frequently given reasons for agreeing with this statement included: a desire for government, employers and/or others to **encourage home working and changes to how we travel**; a feeling that the current "tough and sad time" presented **an opportunity for change that should be taken**; and a suggestion that the **government should provide leadership and information, alongside roles for business and local areas.**

## About this briefing

This briefing includes **(1) official assembly recommendations** in the form of the results of two assembly votes; **(2) verbatim quotes from assembly members** about the rationale behind these recommendations. Please note:

- These quotes are illustrative only – they are from individual assembly members or small groups of assembly members, and represent their views not the views of the assembly as a whole;
- The verbatim quotes are not an exhaustive list of every point made by every individual assembly member. Their value is in communicating, in assembly members' own words, the considerations that they felt were most important on these topics.

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<sup>1</sup> This was both the most frequently given rationale and the most controversial, with some assembly members disagreeing. Please see pages 10-11.

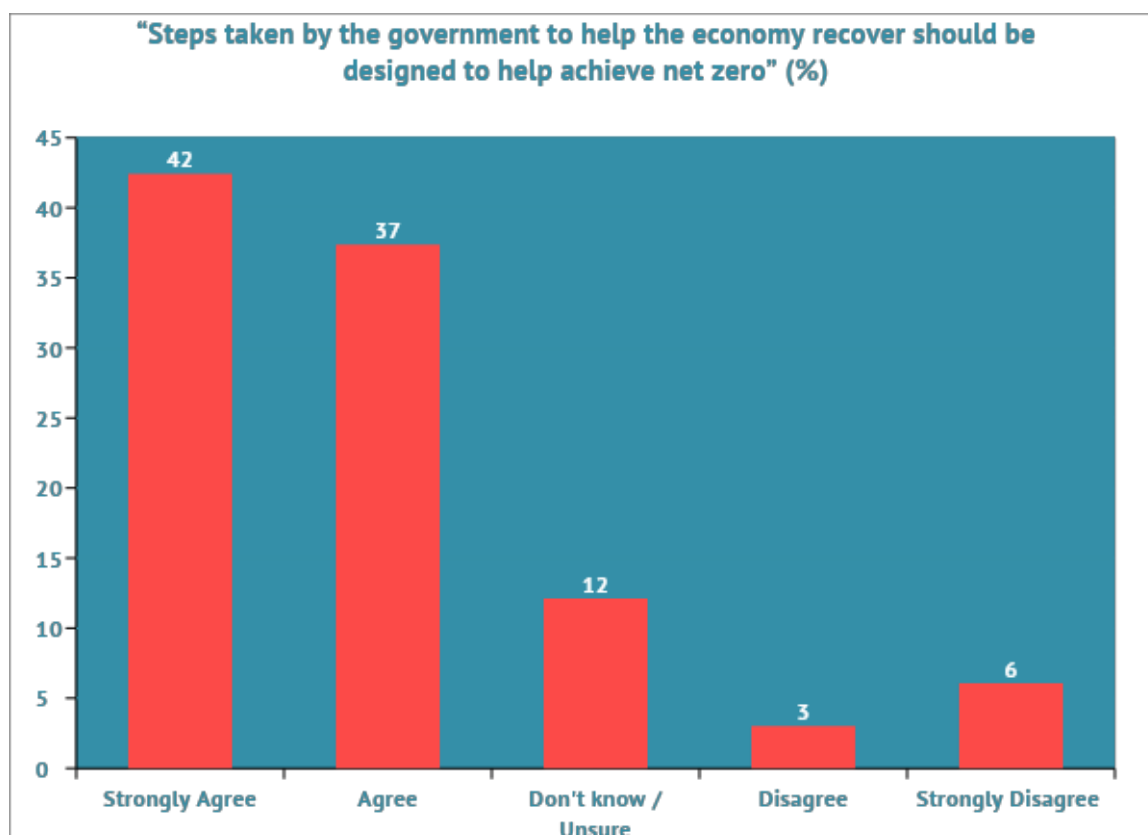
# Interim briefing

## 1. Economic recovery

*“There has never been a better opportunity to change. The Government is tied by law to net-zero. We are at a cross roads of change – train people to take up new jobs rather than pay unemployment benefit, evolve new industries – now is the time to do it. There is no choice.”*

- Assembly member

Assembly members discussed whether or not they felt steps taken by the government to help the economy recover should be designed to help achieve net zero. **In total 79% of assembly members strongly agreed or agreed that this should be the case.** 9% of assembly members disagreed.



Assembly members’ comments during group discussions and on their ballot papers shed light on the rationale behind their votes.

### Limiting or putting conditions on investment in high carbon industries

The idea most frequently mentioned by assembly members was limits to, or conditions on, investment in high carbon industries. Views included:

*“Any money spent bailing out dying fossil fuel industries (the aviation industry, north sea oil) is money wasted on industries that won't survive anyway.”*

*“I don't think oil or gas companies should be given bailouts, you're wanting to stop them anyway, so why support them – support the people who work for them but not the companies – that's because they aren't compatible with net zero.”*

*“Shouldn't actively fund the worst offenders.”*

*“Yes opportunity to apply some pressure to industry and incentives must not prop up old systems.”*

*“[Provide an] incentive to manufacturers to go into green products, minimal support if not green.”*

*“Net zero should be one of the things that the Government is looking at for the economic recovery, alongside other things. For example, when negotiating bail outs or investment, ask for companies’ carbon footprint or put in place net zero requirements.”*

*“Depends on what big industries survive this – they’re going to ask for a lot of money. Government shouldn’t give it too easily. Should have conditions which are green related along with any bailout. Air France agreed to climate change regulation - that’s a good way to do it. One condition would be to get industry to invest in particular technology.”*

*“It would be too easy to just carry on as before and to take advantage of cheap oil and other special offers e.g. cheap travel, cheap clothes, factories churning out cheap goods to ‘get the economy going’. We need incentives to reduce emissions, to improve [the] quality and longevity of products. We need penalties for people who do not consider the environment when building or rebuilding businesses.”*

*“Assist companies who provide climate enhancing services and not climate harming services.”*

**Some assembly members disagreed** with the above or added caveats. For example:

*“Where strings can be attached, do. But...support the economy in areas which lose jobs, like should have happened with the coal mines.”*

*“Retraining is important.”*

*“Some worry about highly trained people (spec. ref to aviation): how are they going to find jobs.”  
“You may have to bail out some industries that are less green in the short term, so that you can invest in greener areas in the longer term.”*

*“It [helping to get to net zero] should be a factor but not the be all and end all. To rule something out just because it doesn’t help net zero is too extreme – e.g. letting airlines go to the wall.”*

*“All industries have a right to succeed and people have a right to be employed.”*

*“Bailouts may be a necessary evil otherwise the economy will fail. We need to support what we have in order to survive.”*

*“Some fossil fuel sectors bring in a lot of money so it’s hard not to support them.”*

*“Bail outs are helpful for small business.”*

*“concern about knock-on effects on supply chains - airports etc.”*

**Some assembly members made different but related points**, for example:

*“Avoiding lock in of fossil fuel use [is] key – best chance to do this is now to avoid going back into the trap of fossil fuels again. That would be disappointing.”*

*“Because oil is cheap - put a tax on oil.”*

## Rethinking and investing in infrastructure

One of the most frequently made points related to rethinking and investing in infrastructure. Some comments here were general, for example:

*“This is an opportunity to rethink infrastructure practically and in a net zero friendly [way].”*

*“Government must steer in the right direction, with the right objectives - after emergency, focus is on infrastructure. So this is a prime time for Government action, and for the right investment in the right places.”*

Others noted more specific ideas - for example, around building insulation, offshore wind, e-vehicles and related infrastructure, broadband, cycling, solar for new builds, safer public transport (e.g. “taxis that have screens and hygiene security”), batteries for energy storage and online libraries to facilitate home study. A small number of assembly members mentioned types of infrastructure where they would not want to see investment – for example “less road building”, “no new airport runways.”

## Supporting low carbon industries

Some assembly members said they would like to see investment in low carbon industries. Overlapping with the points made about infrastructure, assembly members mentioned sectors including the renewables industries (e.g. “Government should bring back incentives for renewables”), “development and deployment” of electric vehicles (e.g. “make them cheaper but allow people choice”), and heat pumps. Other related points included:

*“If people [members of the public] are shorter of money they’re not going to be able to do that [invest in steps that help get to net zero]. Interest free loans? Costs coming down?”*

*“Feels [like] govt should bail out companies with green plans, and in turn their taxes will fund the govt.”*

## Reaching net zero is an economic opportunity

Some assembly members suggested that there are economic opportunities on the path to net zero. Views included:

*“It’s not an either-or matter [economy – climate change] can spend on technologies like wind turbines for e.g. that provide jobs and help the economy to recover.”*

*“Investing public money - everything we do in terms of net zero has got to be approached from an economic point of view i.e. it needs also to help bring money into the country as much as help to reach the net zero target – and this is possible in spending on projects such as renewable technologies and being able to ‘export’ the knowledge and technology to others.”*

*“It’s an opportunity to encourage new businesses, kick start with renewable energy businesses to get to net zero.”*

*“Use this to our benefit - mix together economic recovery and achieving net zero to get what we need.”*

*“Yes – it’s a perfect opportunity, create new work for job losses, new skills for example in turbine installing and manufacturing and make them in this country.”*

*“Any investment in things like wind turbines not only help us get to our net zero target, but it creates jobs and spends the money in the UK which gets money flowing in the economy and helps us both create jobs and increase demand side spending. This is a win/win situation.”*

*“We need a green industrial revolution.”*

## Tackling Covid-19 and climate change together

On a similar theme to the last heading, some assembly members said they didn’t feel a choice needed to be made between dealing with the current situation and meeting climate targets. Comments included:

*“Feels that climate change is as big a crisis as covid, e.g. wild fires across the world, famine, air pollution. Don’t want the govt to put climate change on the back burner because of covid.”*

*“With planning and a bit of structure we can tackle both climate and covid. We shouldn’t go back to where we were before.”*

*“Yes, we should integrate our recovery with green steps, because it’s do-able.”*

*“Well it seems pretty silly to try [to] save the economy whilst shirking from problem solvers [albeit]...because of the costs. I understand we need to hopefully tackle this economic crisis, but it would make sense to incorporate both issues into one as we have made an agreement to hit net zero as that is beneficial for the future. I don’t want to be known as a coward when faced with these issues, and bury my head in the sand. It just doesn’t make the issues change or go away.”*

Others emphasised the continued importance of the net zero target, saying for example:

*“I am very concerned that the Covid-19 pandemic will push the Net Zero target further down the agenda of public policy and this should not be allowed to happen. Net Zero should be at the forefront of the policy priorities going forward and should be woven in to each aspect of the recovery. The benefits of doing this (and the risks of not doing this) should be emphasised to the public at every opportunity so that individuals and employers ... also make the best decisions when returning to ‘normal’ life.”*

## Taking the opportunity for change

Some assembly members felt that the current economic challenges presented an opportunity to do things differently. Rationales included:

*“It’s the way back - economy has to restart, government has an opportunity where people are waiting to get back to normal. There’s not [an] other better time.”*

*“Biggest investments were made after the war (i.e. another time when economic recovery was needed) – fundamentally changed things e.g. education, health, housing. Massive investment but it was needed to push us in the right direction.”*

*“The Govt is being forced to think up the best way forward so can incorporate new ways of thinking.”*

*“The public is learning how to deal with change and we should take advantage of this developing attitude to introduce and enact the substantial changes that will be required.”*

*“It’s a good opportunity to try to change attitudes.”*

*“There is a current public consciousness to climate change and people will be more accepting of change after an event which had such a devastating effect on the global economy and society.”*

## Caveats, uncertainty and disagreement

**Assembly members who chose ‘unsure / don’t know’** in the vote, made the following points on their ballot papers:

*“The government needs to get the economy back up and running. Climate change should not be put on back burner until [the] economy picks up. It should be addressed and preferably integrated into our recovery”*

*“In an ideal world yes. I am sure they will have to help business get back on their feet first.”*

*“The country has to be successful for its citizens to thrive so this has to be balanced.”*

*“This really depends on how long the current situation lasts and the state of the global economy when things improve.”*

**Assembly members who ‘disagreed’ or ‘strongly disagreed’** that steps taken by the government to help the economy recover should be designed to help achieve net zero made the following points on their ballot papers:

*“Again, this will not happen as there is going to be a catastrophic depression that will change matters.”*

*“This will only hinder the recovery.”*

*“I do not think that [the] steps government takes to help the economy recover should be specifically designed to help achieve net zero. If support is needed and it does not meet the requirement of achieving net zero that should not mean it is disregarded. Many more factors should be considered when this decision is made.”*

*“I think coronavirus is a real crisis, and the steps taken to deal with it have been severe. I am not convinced that the climate ‘crisis’ is in comparison a real crisis, and I think it is in many ways a confected crisis. I do not think the science is ‘settled’ with regards to the impacts of man, and our increasing CO2 emissions on the global climate, although I do believe we each have a personal responsibility to live our lives as sustainably as possible. In this regard, I do believe the government can play a role, and positively encourage us to take personal responsibility to live our lives more sustainably. In addition, I think we have to be realistic on what as a nation we can achieve. As far as the UK is concerned, we only contribute around 1% of global CO2 emissions, so the priority should probably be on rebuilding our economy post coronavirus, as opposed to inflecting greater economic self harm through expensive green initiatives, that will have negligible benefit.”*

Some assembly members who 'agreed' that steps taken by the government to help the economy recover should be designed to help achieve net zero noted **caveats** on their ballot papers too. These five assembly members said:

*"Balancing action – there will be a need to formulate a path that will aid the economic recovery."*

*"Agree, but possible to over-do it. A balance needs to be kept."*

*"but not in any way that risks the recovery."*

*"Obviously there should be a focus on balancing the budget and reducing the deficit first. Keeping interest rates low to not crowd out private industry and to try and restore jobs lost. The government should initially encourage a market led approach in this time with changes to regulation and after recovery focus on government led infrastructure projects."*

*"If the opportunity arises to help the economy recover and also to achieve net zero, then the government should take it. However as the country is likely to be in a difficult financial position, it should think carefully before investing in anything and ensure the results will be beneficial."*

Some assembly members also raised caveats during discussions. For example:

*"We're not a nanny state, gov shouldn't tell us what to do. But incentive should be there, not just dictating."*

*"Personal responsibility is key"*

*"Feels economy will get much worse before it gets better. There's so much uncertainty around covid and still need to wait and see."*

*"Not keen on big schemes right now as they may not be used a lot after this is over."*

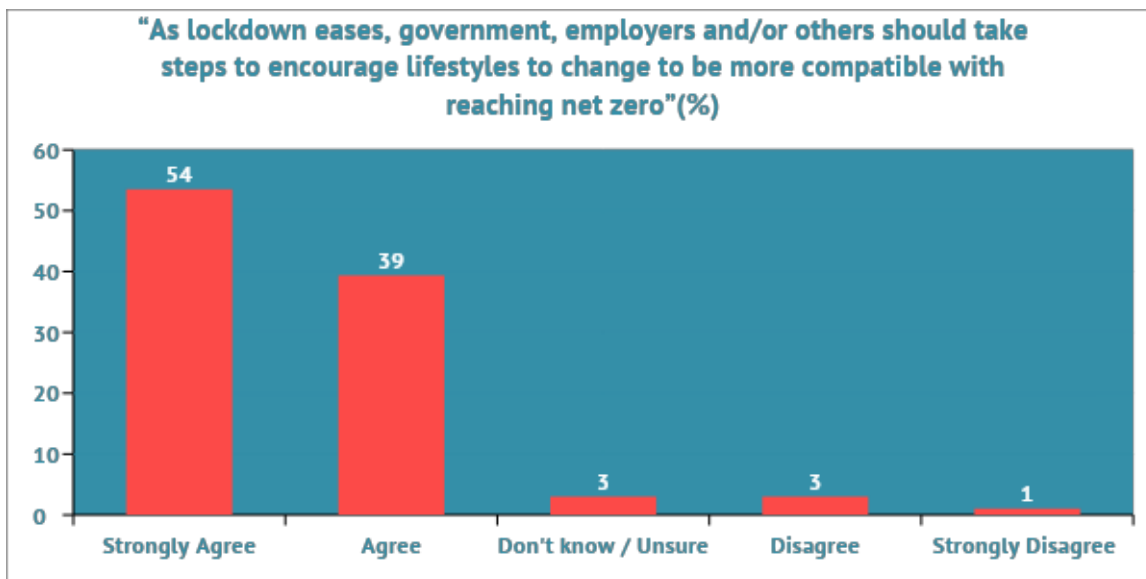


## 2. Lifestyle changes

*“Although this is a tough and sad time for so many we should look for lasting positive change as we begin exiting lockdown. We have learnt that we can change our behaviours, therefore this should be encouraged to continue especially with the net zero target in mind.”*

- Assembly member

Assembly members discussed whether or not they felt government, employers and others should take steps as lockdown eases to encourage lifestyles to change to be more compatible with reaching net zero. **In total 93% of assembly members strongly agreed or agreed that such steps should be taken.**



Assembly members' comments during group discussions and on their ballot papers show their rationales for this recommendation.

### Encouraging home working

Home working was one of the most commonly mentioned themes. Assembly members' views included:

*“Home working is brilliant - less traffic, less flights, quicker - government has to encourage it somehow either with incentives or penalties.”*

*“As employers have adapted by helping workers to work from home where possible I feel this should be encouraged.”*

*“For people who can work from home, and have been able to demonstrate that they can still be productive, companies will be more willing to allow this to continue, and this will reduce the volume of traffic / emissions on our roads. The government could send encouraging messages in this regard.”*

*“I think especially for businesses they can encourage lifestyle changes through working from home and therefore less commuting. This would help with a reduction in driving and surface transport. It may also mean office spaces can be smaller and therefore businesses will be less polluting in the resources they use.”*

*“Companies could have smaller offices, smaller heating, air conditioning and energy bills. They could use these savings to give extra benefits and incentives to their employees to help insulate*

*and heat their homes and pay for the changes that may be needed to reach net zero. This could be a tax free Government backed initiative.”*

*“I don't think it should be forced. No one should tell people what to do, or never to go back to work, but I think people should have the options to work from home and travel less.”*

*“The lockdown has proven that in the modern world work doesn't have to fit such a robust schedule, particularly in white collar jobs. It is very very possible to continue a remote working world to permanently ease congestion and improve life quality.”*

*“Home working should be encouraged: saves time, less commuting; businesses having seen it is possible; it won't be hard for people to adapt to; I'll be able to get a dog!”*

## Encouraging changes to how we travel

Assembly members also frequently mentioned changes to how we travel, particularly in relation to: (1) encouraging and incentivising cycling, making it safer and providing proper infrastructure; (2) a reduced need for business travel, particularly flying. Assembly members' views included:

*“People should be encouraged to continue walking, running or cycling every day, and this hopefully would cut down on the use of cars for short journeys.”*

*“This will require the government and employers to work together to ensure that everyone can go about their lives safely. This will mean massive investments in bicycle networks and walkable city streets. This will allow people to move safely, as well as lead to a healthier population and workforce who will be better able to fight the virus.”*

*“Cycle to Work scheme is for health and the environment. Yes, the government should do things. There's a mandate to do so. They can't use [the idea that we won't listen] as an excuse now, people do listen, especially if the incentives are good.”*

*“...govt should encourage businesses to consider remote video calls/working rather than regular domestic/international business flights, which they'll probably begin to do anyway as in the future it may not make financial sense to fly in the way they have been doing before (less airlines operating means less choice, means potentially higher costs)...”*

*“I think that an employer or the government might look at video conferencing rather than flying or staying overnight in a hotel as a cheaper option which might also help climate change. This should be encouraged if it will also help in reaching net zero.”*

*“It would be a missed opportunity for the government, employers and individuals not take advantage of our aim to achieve net zero as lockdown eases. Everyone has had to adapt to a different lifestyle and certain elements of the lockdown - travelling by land and air - should see a permanent reduction if we change our working practices and how often we really need to take flights.”*

## Taking the opportunity for change

Assembly members recognised that Covid-19 has created a “tough and sad time” and several have been severely personally affected. They did however also note an “opportunity” for change in both lifestyles and how the economy works. Assembly members who voted ‘strongly agree’ made this type of comment frequently:

*“There is a great opportunity to restart the economy on a greener pathway and such chances should be seized upon.”*

*“Because there is going to have to be big changes for the economy to recover and if we can tie Net zero aims into everything that happens on this then it is a great opportunity”*

*“A huge mind-set change has occurred. This is an ideal opportunity to incorporate the assumption that any changes implemented should be compatible with N[et] zero.”*

*“Change has already begun which is a first step and can be built on.”*

*“Now is the time when people are ready to adapt. It’s harder to get people to adapt when they are stuck in their ways.”*

*“People have seen how it is not that difficult to make simple changes like work from home more often so this is the best opportunity to introduce changes that will help us reach net zero.”*

*“We have momentum, there is an opportunity to change things for the better during this time of adjustment and flux. This is a window that we must use before people become weary of more change and exhausted by further upheaval.”*

*“It’s important that we utilize this period of transition and inactivity in certain sectors to reinvent the way our country functions in order to make it more environmentally friendly.”*

Some assembly members also described the current situation as a “huge wakeup call.” Related comments included:

*“Covid-19 has been a salutary warning that homo sapiens are not in total control of the environment and are not omniscient.”*

*“Think it [net zero] should be at the centre of government policy. It’s about flexibility - you need to be prepared for things that are looming. We should start early and make the most of the momentum.”*

Others said “it’s the only way to achieve net zero”, “it’s better for everyone if we embrace it”, or asked “why on earth wouldn’t they.”

## Providing leadership and information

Many assembly members also made suggestions about roles. In terms of the **Government’s role**, comments included:

*“Has to be an onus to do this - some businesses will change, but many will be focused on the bottom line. Has to come from the Government, plus people power/public support. A quiet revolution.”*

*“Government needs to shape the narrative.”*

*“Government are going to have the largest impact on people’s lifestyle, so they need to take the lead. And they are the ones who can invest in new ways of doing things to stimulate demand for it.”*

*“The government needs to start somewhere – a mix of government and private investment beyond us just all doing our bit.”*

*“This is an opportunity to get people to change, and it is important for govt to lead that change.”*

*“That’s why we have government! We expect them to guide us. I hope they’ll learn from the pandemic.”*

Some assembly members also made comments about **information provision**, for example:

*“Government could communicate with every household the way they’ve done with coronavirus.”*

*“Government should inform all households of ways to change lifestyles to aid [the] environment.”*

*“The coronavirus crisis has shown that the public will respond to changes if they have sound, clear and trustworthy information and explanation as provided by our scientific advisers throughout the epidemic.”*

*“Employers can reduce overheads by people working from home (and meeting from home instead of flying round the world), and the government should build on people’s experience of being advised by regularly promoting this message.”*

Assembly members also talked about the **role of businesses**. Some suggested changes that businesses could make, for example “provid[ing] incentives to work from home” or “provid[ing] showers/changing rooms so people can cycle to work and tidy themselves up afterwards.” Others suggested that change was in businesses’ interests because they “will want to reduce overheads” or because they “already value their environmental reputation.” Some felt that change is already underway: “Experience is that all talk between business and trade union is about how [they are] going to do things differently around this.” Others said there “is no reason not to when they have been able to manage so far eg less business travel, more home working” or that “even if 30% of businesses make a change, it could make a difference.” Some suggested that there is a need for government to incentivise change or an “opportunity for govt to advertise to business [the] benefits of being greener e.g. reducing travel.”

Some assembly members said that we “need to concentrate on **local change**, as well as national” or that “Government should [take steps to encourage lifestyle change], and local authorities too. People did take notice [during the lockdown] so they do have influence and people will listen [to them].”

## Points made less frequently

Points made by smaller numbers of assembly members included the following.

### Encouraging healthier lifestyles

Some assembly members felt that steps should be taken to encourage healthier lifestyles, with some noting that conditions like diabetes and obesity put people more at risk from Covid-19. These comments tended to focus either on transport – for example “encourage walking/cycling which is good for the public health where it is possible to do so” – or diets: “Now is a really good chance to tie-in the way we eat with net zero, obesity etc, prevalence of take-aways, how badly we eat in this country, how much we waste.”

### Supporting individual choice and differing needs

Some assembly members talked about the importance of allowing individual choice and catering for different needs. Rationales included:

*“Leading by example but the reality is that it’s in an individual’s choice – to follow or not – giving the opportunity to help individuals to make the right choice by providing all the information/resources to make those choices.”*

*“How changes are introduced is key and need to find a balanced approach that recognises the needs of different people - cannot be one size fits all.”*

*“Feel like there’ll be 2-halves – those who are able to make these changes to how they work (conference calling etc and this will also open up job opportunities for those who otherwise would not be able to – physical limitations) and then there are those whose lives are linked to social interaction e.g. a yoga teacher who needs to interact with their participants, or teachers in schools – hard to socially distance in these settings. Or for those for whom social interaction is important for their mental health and well-being. These sorts of circumstances will have a bearing on how people change or not. Needs an awful lot of thought to what is possible or not possible and both have to be solved mutually – one cannot be to the detriment of the other.”*

*“These should only be suggestions, and incentives to encourage a lower carbon footprint.”*

One assembly member said that change should be “encouraged yes, forced no.”

### Providing incentives

Some assembly members said there should “100%...be incentives/penalties - people won’t do things just by themselves. If everyone is doing it then people will do it - if it’s clear for people to follow.” Similar comments included:

*“Need incentives to encourage people to do the right things – what’s in it for them?”*

*“But will have ‘to bribe people’ eg enhanced bike to work schemes and make it really obvious and easy.”*

*“Many people want to change but will be carried along by others who do not understand or who are not aware of the impending problems.”*

### Promoting green industry and jobs

Some assembly members suggested this is a “great opportunity to push Green industries, new industries – focus on these in the future and not go back to dying industries. And for those who have lost jobs provide the means to re-train and gain jobs in these areas.” Others mentioned specific industries that they would like to see supported, or suggested that “if businesses [are] not green then government should not help them but find other ways for people to be employed.”

### Disagreement, uncertainty and caveats

A small number of assembly members **disagreed or strongly disagreed** that “government, employers and others should take steps as lockdown eases to encourage lifestyles to change to be more compatible with reaching net zero.” These assembly members said we need to “make plans for long term changes”, that “we have come out of ‘Total Lock-Down’ too soon” or that it “will not be foremost in their [government, employers] expectations.” Some assembly members also felt strongly that it was too early to be discussing what should happen next at this stage of the pandemic.

Assembly members who voted **“don’t know / unsure”** said:

*“At the moment the focus will be on tackling the virus and finding a vaccine. As we regain control though, the government should assess and plan what changes need to take place.”*

*“It is very difficult to say if governments, employers or others should change as it depends on how they were acting before and governments and employers don't necessarily have the same opportunities to make changes.”*

*“This really depends on how long the current situation lasts and the state of the global economy when things improve.”*

Assembly members who agreed that government, employers and others should take steps to encourage lifestyles to change also had **some caveats**. Individual assembly members said they “agree, but possible to over-do it. A balance needs to be kept” or “only where it makes economic sense. The economy must take priority over the global CO2 agenda.” Other individuals said it “should not affect reductions in people’s incomes” or that we need to “be careful how we do it because the economy is in rough shape. Unemployment needs addressing in the short term.”

## Conclusions

Climate Assembly UK’s members are significant. There is no other group that is at once representative of the UK population, and well-acquainted with the sorts of measures required to reach net zero.

The level of agreement amongst assembly members, while not total, is therefore noteworthy:

- 79% of assembly members ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that, “Steps taken by the government to help the economy recover should be designed to help achieve net zero”;
- 93% of assembly members ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that, “As lockdown eases, government, employers and/or others should take steps to encourage lifestyles to change to be more compatible with reaching net zero.”

Assembly members’ rationale for these recommendations provide an insight for government, employers and others into the type of steps and decisions that the public would support and their reasons for doing so.

Climate Assembly UK’s full report, to be published in September, will provide a full and much more detailed picture of how a representative sample of the UK population thinks the UK should get to net zero.