

YORKSHIRE: A CLIMATE CONSCIOUS COUNTY



Green energy 'to give 158,000 jobs by 2050'

Helping firms to embrace future technologies



Chris Rea

Chris Rea is founder & MD of AESSEAL and founder of Betterworld.Solutions

THE SMOKESTACKS and satanic mills that have blotted Yorkshire's landscape since the first industrial revolution are slowly giving way to gleaming factories of the future as business leaders begin to embrace environmental technologies.

At Betterworld.Solutions, we want to speed up this process by sharing cutting-edge examples of best practice in business and help Yorkshire lead the way in the next industrial revolution with off-grid manufacturing sites run by solar panels, ground source heat pumps, voltage optimisation and batteries.

We believe this is the standout economic opportunity for our region and that's why we are backing *The Yorkshire Post* Climate Change Summit 2021 – to put environmentally friendly business behaviour at centre stage as the UK recovers from the pandemic.

If you need any evidence of the importance of this agenda, look at the crippling floods, droughts and heatwaves taking place across our planet.

It is not as if company directors have any other choice. Talk to global financiers and they will tell you that a company's environmental characteristic will soon be the most important determining factor of its financial value.

They are looking to the future and can see the power of environmentally conscious consumers in forcing change. The young will not buy from companies that are not environmentally friendly. They will not work for companies that are not environmentally friendly. And they will not forgive us for destroying their world.

Business leaders are not malicious or evil. They just don't know about the environmental ideas and applications readily available to them.

At many companies, there is a disconnect between the directors in the boardroom with obligations to their shareholders and the engineers in the field with their operational expertise and experience.

All too often, the person with the knowledge about unnecessary waste or pollution is the technician on the factory floor.

A small investment that would help could come from another department's budget. But nothing is done because the decision-making chain is broken.

The choice we face at the crossroads...

IN AMERICA there is a saying when you come to a fork in the road, you should take it.

Well we're now at a fork in the road when it comes to climate change.

We might be tempted to choose the easy route as it could allow us to carry on pretty much as we are. But that route really isn't going to take us far and there may be no way back.

The other route looks more challenging but it could take us to somewhere we've always wanted to get to.

The science is clear that if we carry on as we are we'll pretty soon cross a crucial tipping point where climate change will become self-fueled.

After this point, ongoing warming will trigger natural cycles that lead to further warming. All the evidence tells us we really don't want to go there.

In Yorkshire we've already felt that future, with more frequent and intense flooding and messed-up weather patterns that disrupt our communities, infrastructure and economy.

The majority of countries have set targets to decarbonise their economies. We can argue whether these are ambitious enough – and the international climate talks in Glasgow in November will focus on upgrading them.

But these targets to cut carbon are the new reality and they aren't going away. Ignoring them will put thousands of jobs in high-carbon sectors such as steel or glass at risk while also meaning we miss out on huge opportunities in a future green economy. So what's the other

Betterworld.Solutions aims to bridge this gap by encouraging companies to commit to environmentally-friendly investments and share their experiences.

The project started at my company, AESSEAL, as part of our transition to net zero and has spread to other like-minded Yorkshire manufacturers including Grippe, OSL Group and Powerstar.

It is now going global with the international engineering giant DMG MORI and its 12,000 employees. Steve Finn, the UK managing director, told me: "Since joining, it became quickly apparent that sharing best practices opened opportunities for our company to further reduce our carbon footprint."

The approach is simple. We encourage companies to adopt, publish and operate an investment policy that prevents global warming.

This prompts boards to prioritise sustainable projects over other capital programmes with a similar return on investment. It invites staff, suppliers and other stakeholders to submit proposals for sustainable projects for consideration by directors who must respond in writing within three months. It shows how climate-friendly projects can also be business-friendly.

Carbon offsetting schemes will not be enough. As demand rises, availability of the underlying resources will fall and the price of schemes will increase beyond the ability of companies to afford them. It is economics in action – the science of scarcity. Betterworld.Solutions exists to show business leaders what they can do now to start reducing their carbon emissions. Otherwise they will lose their right to operate.



Andy Gouldson

Professor Andy Gouldson is director of The Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission

route and where could it take us? Some of the features of that way forward are clear.

We need to work rapidly towards the point we're not emitting carbon and to make the most of the new opportunities open to us in a net zero world.

And we need to do this in a fair and inclusive way, by working with the high-carbon industries, and the areas and places that depend on them, to help them transition into net-zero world.

As we're locked into some level of climate change because of the emissions already in the atmosphere we also need to become more "climate ready" as we prepare for the more frequent and more intense extreme weather coming our way.

And we need to do this in ways that protect nature and the eco-systems that underpin our way of life.

So which route should we take? The superficially easier one that leads us further into trouble – or the seemingly harder one that leads to a more prosperous, resilient, greener future?

FUTURE

THE CHALLENGE of reducing carbon emissions and safeguarding our environment for future generations will be the subject of a major conference later this year.

The Climate Change Summit will be staged on Tuesday November 9 in Leeds and will bring together a range of politicians, business leaders, academics and media.

Timed to coincide with the UK holding the United Nation's COP 26 event in Glasgow, *The Yorkshire Post* is bringing the debate to the region to discuss the challenges that Yorkshire faces and discuss the best way forward to achieve our shared goals.

The conference will take place at Leeds tech firm AQL's Salem Chapel venue, bringing together around 150 to 200 attendees and speakers to the live event, which will then be broadcast to the wider virtual audience.

Both the live and virtual offerings will be fully interactive, ensuring engagement regardless of your location.

The event will cover a range of areas including energy, skills, manufacturing, agriculture and connectivity.

Yorkshire is already home to a number of green energy initiatives and investments, with off-shore wind and carbon capture among the areas the region is leading on.

Recent figures from the Local

Government Agency predicted as many as 158,000 green energy jobs could be created in Yorkshire alone by 2050.

The event already has the backing of several leading businesses, with Rotherham engineering firm AESSEAL on board as headline sponsor.

Chris Rea, founder and managing director of AESSEAL, is backing the summit.

He said: "We believe the transition to a net-zero economy is the standout opportunity for our region and that's why we are back-

“The transition to net zero is a standout opportunity for our region.”

Chris Rea, founder and managing director of AESSEAL.

ing *The Yorkshire Post* Climate Change Summit 2021 – to put environmentally friendly business behaviour at centre stage as the UK recovers from the pandemic.

"Yorkshire can lead the way in this next industrial revolution, with factories of the future run by solar panels, ground source heat pumps, voltage optimisation and batteries.

"If you need any evidence of the importance of the climate agenda, look at the crippling floods, droughts and heatwaves taking place across our planet."

Mr Rea is also the founder of Betterworld.Solutions, an initia-

MEET THE SPEAKERS

Chris Rea, Founder, Betterworld.Solutions and founder and managing director, AESSEAL
The Betterworld.Solutions initiative encourages companies to adopt and operate an investment policy to prevent global warming. Businesses have opportunities to improve the environment and prevent global warming but sometimes fail to identify them. Our suppliers, co-workers and customers can bring environmental sustainability initiatives to our attention, but only if we make listening to them a business priority.

Professor Adam Beaumont, Founder & Chairman – aql
An innovator with a strong cyber-security background, Professor Beaumont is founder of communications specialist aql and CEO of Isle of Man-based telecommunications company BlueWave. An active angel investor, Adam founded NorthInvest which propels co-investment in tech start-ups across the North.

Andy Gouldson, Professor of Environmental Policy at the University of Leeds & Director of Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commission
Has worked on a range of issues relating to environmental policy and management since 1990. Since 2008, his focus has been on climate change and promoting low-carbon, climate-resilient development. Throughout his career he has worked with policy makers, development agencies, businesses, NGOs and communities in the UK and internationally.



tive which is designed to show how climate-friendly investments can also be good for business.

It does this by sharing cutting-edge examples of best practice in the use of readily available en-

vironmental technologies. Also joining as sponsors are logistics operator Hermes and banking giant NatWest.

A spokesperson for NatWest said: "As the leading bank in the UK for business customers, and

one of the largest for retail customers, we have a significant responsibility in tackling climate change.

"While we understand that we must think long term, we also know that we must act quickly and in partnership with both the private and public sectors.

"We are delighted to support *The Yorkshire Post* Climate Change Summit.

"We know there will be some excellent discussions on how Yorkshire businesses and the wider community can work together to fight climate change."

Mark Casci, business editor of *The Yorkshire Post*, said: "Climate change has, without question, rocketed to the top of business leader's priorities in recent years.

"Yorkshire is blessed with a geography and skill network that makes it an ideal destination for many green energy industries.

"The region as a whole has the potential and capacity to create well-paid, high-skilled jobs in this sector for generations to come.

"The green agenda will create the latest industrial revolution and, just as it did in the first industrial revolution, Yorkshire will be a worldwide powerhouse on this most vital of societal changes."

■ Earlybird tickets to our 2021 Climate Change Summit are now available until Friday, September 3. Visit: www.yorkshireclimatechange.co.uk.

OUR SPONSORS

<p>Betterworld.Solutions The purpose of the Betterworld.Solutions initiative is to encourage companies to adopt, publish and operate an investment policy to prevent global warming. Our businesses have opportunities to improve the environment but we sometimes fail to identify them. Our suppliers, co-workers and customers can bring sustainability initiatives to our attention, but only if we make listening to them a business priority.</p>	<p>aql Founded in 1998 by Professor Adam Beaumont, aql is a trusted communications provider specialising in secure and reliable wholesale access to fixed and mobile networks for government, enterprise and innovators. The company is responsible for over 100 million telephone numbers for UK ISPs and operators. aql routes millions of SMS text messages per day and operates a wide-reaching connected national network.</p>	<p>The Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission statement The Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission statement is: "Advancing the region's climate leadership and accelerating climate resilient, net-zero development through an inclusive and just transition." Read more about its mission, right, and watch their launch video via YouTube to find out what they do.</p>	<p>NatWest NatWest serves customers in England and Wales, supporting them with their personal, private, business banking needs. As the leading bank in the UK for business customers, and one of the largest for retail customers, we have a significant responsibility in tackling climate change. While we understand that we must think long term, we also know that we must act quickly and in partnership with both the private and the public sectors.</p>	<p>Hermes Hermes UK, which has roots in Yorkshire, is one of the UK's leading consumer delivery companies. The company has experienced sustainable double-digit growth for the past 10 years, consistently reinvesting profit into its proposition, infrastructure and people, including developing an award-winning app and building a nationwide estate of more than 5,500 ParcelShops and InPost lockers.</p>
--	--	---	---	---