

THE TABULA PROJECT

A New Perspective on Climate Policy

Contents

Preface		3
A New Perspective		5
A Moment of Truth		7
I	Seeing the Whole	10
II	Integrating Heart & Mind	16
III	Being at One with Nature	22
IV	Healing the Whole System	28
V	Becoming Citizens of One World	34
Setting the Challenge 2026		40
Further Information		42
Metamorphosis		43

Illustrations are from Metamorphosis, a poem and series of paintings which explore the fluidity of the self and the infinitely malleable and changeable nature of consciousness.

Preface



If we are to rise to the challenge of tackling our most serious social, environmental and systemic problems we must start by looking at ourselves.

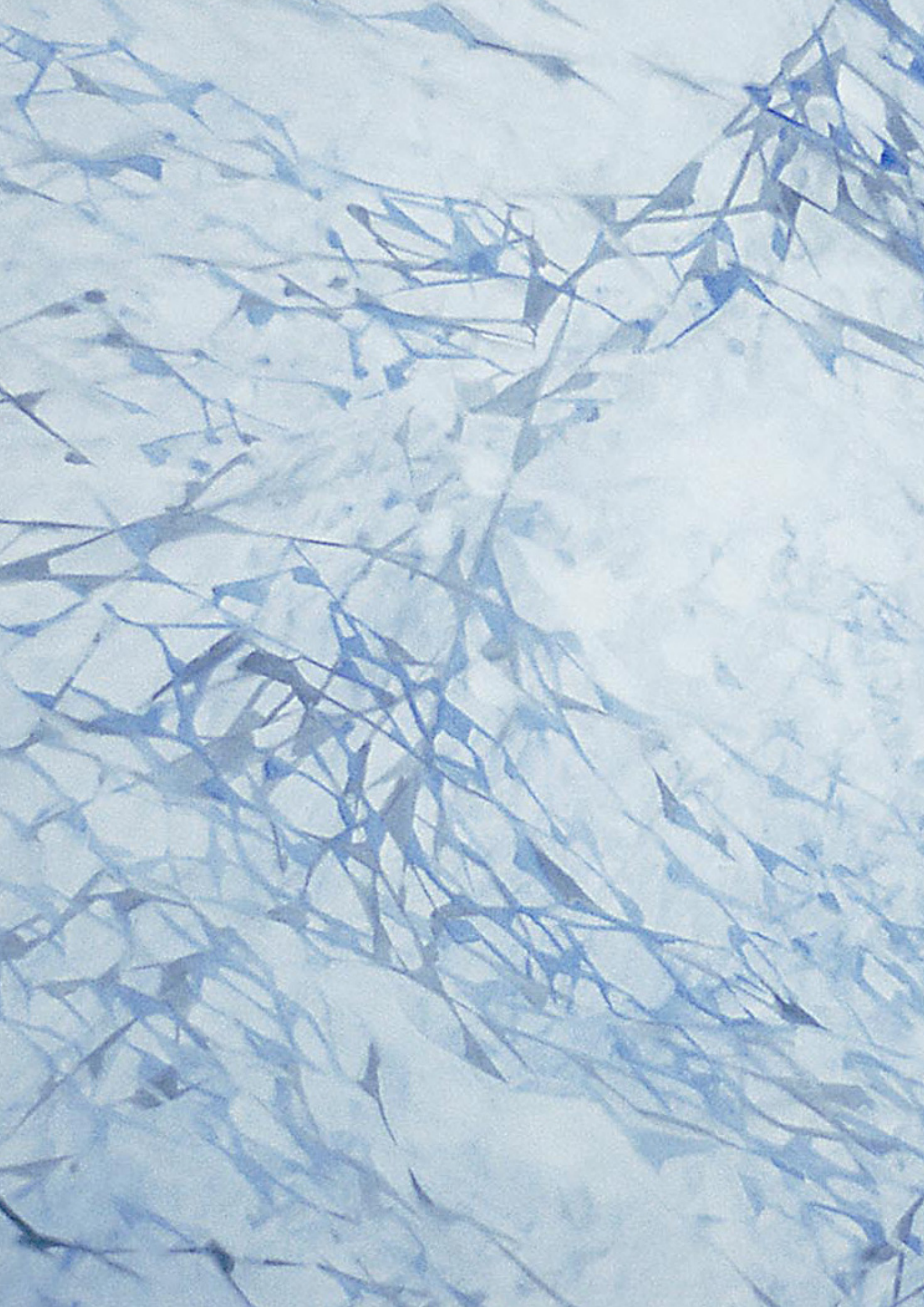
The Tabula Project begins with the assumption that we won't solve our most difficult problems with the same thinking that created them.

This report attempts to draw out the key conclusions from Setting the Challenge, a wide-ranging consultation which spanned the five unprecedented searing heatwaves we experienced in the UK this summer. The consultation applied insights from *The Tabula Project* and included 94 in-depth interviews with politicians and stakeholders on the urgent action needed to tackle our climate and nature crises. I am hugely grateful to everyone who generously gave their time for being willing to participate and open to exploring new ways to address some of our most intractable problems.

Anthropogenic climate change is not the only peril we face. We are living in a period of heightened geopolitical tension. The world order is being upended. Conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East are bringing ever greater dangers. The Iran War and closing of the Strait of Hormuz has been described by the Head of the IEA as "the biggest energy security threat in history". There is concern about the existential risks posed by AI. We are ill-equipped to tackle these threats and are out of alignment with each other and the environment on which we depend. A new approach and a new mindset will be needed if we are to rise to the major challenges we face.

We are a long way from where we need to be. At a very time that evidence of climate change and its impacts is becoming only too painfully apparent, politics is letting us down. We need strong political leadership, but that leadership cannot exist in a vacuum. Strong cross-sector collaboration is also required as it makes political consensus possible and supports an environment conducive to policy and decision-making in society's long-term interest. Our aim must be to foster a realignment not only urgently needed in the context of climate policy, but which would be profoundly beneficial for governments, businesses and across all parts of society.

Claire Haigh
Creator of The Tabula Project
Founder & CEO of Greener Vision
17th November 2026



A New Perspective

The Tabula Project aims to provide a new perspective on the mind. The paintings depict states of consciousness and thought[1], and fundamental questions of existence are explored in the workshops and writings. In applying insights from *The Tabula Project* to climate change, Greener Vision proposes a more open and self-reflective approach. *The Art of Seeing* recommends we start with an honest appraisal of how we view the problem[2]. *Pathways to Net Zero* recommends a whole systems approach to net zero and a radical shift for decarbonising transport[3].

The Tabula Project: A Blueprint for Change[4] set out ways in which our thinking needs to change if we are to rise to the challenge of tackling our climate and nature crises. We need a radical realignment of how we perceive ourselves in relation to others and the environment on which we depend. The report recommends a more open self-reflective approach to decision-making that seeks to create unity rather than division. Policy to address our climate and nature crises would benefit from more holistic thinking and should be underpinned by five 'Pillars of Unity':

I. **Seeing the whole picture**
II. **Integrating heart and mind**
III. **Being at one with nature**
IV. **Healing the whole system**
V. **Becoming citizens of 'One World'**

Setting the Challenge investigated how each of the five pillars could apply in the context of policy and decision making and how they might resonate on a personal level. The full findings are detailed in *Setting the Challenge Consultation Findings*[5].

Seeking to **see the whole picture** was recognised as a worthwhile goal but also as something very difficult to achieve. We are prone to wilful blindness. We tend to look for evidence to support existing assumptions and there are often political constraints around establishing the facts. We can't have a free and open debate on road pricing. We need to become more honest and self-aware about our decision-making, but this is becoming ever more difficult. We are at a hyperpolitical stage. Political consensus on net zero has broken and deliberate disinformation funded by vested interests is undermining public support. Online communication is entrenching divides. Social media and digital algorithms push people deeper into echo chambers.

[1] https://www.claire-haigh.com/
[2] https://greener-vision.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/greenervision-artofseeing.pdf
[3] https://greener-vision.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Greener-Vision-Pathways-to-Net-Zero-2.pdf
[4] https://greener-vision.com/publication/the-tabula-project-a-blueprint-for-change/
[5] https://greener-vision.com/publication/setting-the-challenge-consultation-findings/

Better integration of thoughts and feelings will be critical to winning the battle for hearts and minds. It was generally acknowledged that whilst the climate movement has focused extensively on research and statistics, insufficient focus has been given to communication. Net zero is too often seen as the preserve of the middle class. People will resist the climate message if they are struggling to pay the bills. We need to tell better stories and focus on issues that relate to people's lives. It is important to tell the truth and get across the urgency but to avoid creating the impression that it's too late and ensuring that people feel they have agency. Hope is more motivating than fear. Alternative futures are possible. We need to foster active hope.

Protection of nature is protection our ourselves. The fundamental challenge is to move from an extractive to a regenerative mindset. **Being at one with nature** means creating fairer and more equitable systems that allow both humans and the environment to thrive. Many people see 'green' and 'growth' in opposition, but we can't grow the economy sustainably unless we protect the environment. Nature is not a blocker to housing development but a necessity for building resilient towns and neighbourhoods. It was felt that climate and nature crises should be linked. 'Nature' resonates better than 'climate'. People care about nature, and since Covid there has been greater recognition that access to nature is vital for physical and mental health.

Healing the whole system means addressing the root causes of our problems. How can we hold multiple societal goals together including: addressing the climate and nature crises, reducing inequality, strengthening the economy, national defence and energy security, and responding to risks posed by AI and other disruptive changes? There are difficult trade-offs, and long-term thinking is hindered by five-year political terms and short-term reporting cycles for businesses. Anthropogenic climate change is caused by our dependency on fossil fuels and exacerbated by the failure to price properly for carbon. We need a whole economy transition. The trend towards greater devolution was felt to be positive. It is easier to move beyond government silos and develop integrated plans for good growth at a devolved regional level.

How can we build greater empathy and respect for people globally? Ultimately, we should strive to **become citizens of 'One World'**. However, people don't naturally identify with internationalism, particularly if they are struggling to pay their bills. We need to start with where people are, with their local area and environment. The Paris Agreement was a high point for global cooperation on climate change. A decade later we are in a very different place. There is a key role for 'coalitions of the willing' to accelerate progress and bridge the Global North and South gap. Encouragingly most sectors have targets. We must strengthen other forms of partnership, including those between cities, regions, mayors, governors, states and the NGO sector.

A Moment of Truth

Our first climate duty is to tell the truth. The brutal truth is that the climate crisis is outrunning us. *UN Secretary-General António Guterres, 11 November 2026*

The world is on course to breach 1.5°C before 2030[6]. The outgoing UN Secretary-General describes this as a moment of truth. We can no longer wait; we can no longer have endless discussions in which everybody tries to push the responsibility to someone else. "We know the truth. Now we must act on it"[7]

What will it take to galvanise a response that meets the scale the challenge?

The scorching heat which baked Western Europe this summer was the worst on record[8]. Heat killed a record 50,000 people in European cities. In the UK, 4,354 deaths were caused by the heat. Climate change is blamed for two-thirds of these deaths[9]. England has suffered its worst harvest on record[10]. The UK "has no future" if it fails to act on an ecosystem collapse now threatening national security[11]. Severe geopolitical supply constraints have supercharged the case for net zero.

The business case for accelerating climate action is overwhelming. Stark warnings are coming forward from the insurance industry that the climate crisis poses an existential threat to the financial system and could make entire regions uninsurable. At the same time, the exponential growth in renewables is a major success story. The value of the green economy will exceed $7 trillion a year by 2030[12]. The UK's net zero economy generates £105 billion in GVA annually, is growing faster than the rest of the economy and produces higher paid jobs[13].

Ratcheting up the net zero transition ought to be a no-brainer. However, UK politics and the media environment have become more polarised and divisive. Reform UK have pledged to hold a referendum on net zero and HM Official Opposition the Conservative Party have pledged to repeal the Climate Change Act. A far cry from the near complete consensus achieved in 2008. Nearly 3/4 of UK newspapers didn't mention climate change in articles relating to the record-breaking heat[14].

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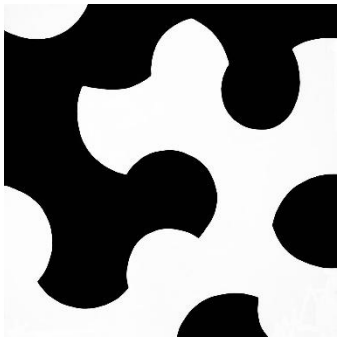
[6] https://www.unep.org/en/publications/report/emissions-gap-report-2026
[7] https://press.un.org/en/2026/sgsm23367.doc.htm
[8] https://climate.copernicus.eu/european-summer-2026-records-extremes-and-context
[9] https://abcnews.com/Health/wireStory/europes-killer-heat-summer-claims-50000-lives-climate-137494487
[10] https://www.edie.net/england-suffers-worst-harvest-on-record-after-extreme-summer-weather/
[11] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nature-security-assessment-on-global-biodiversity-loss-ecosystem-collapse-and-national-security
[12] https://www.weforum.org/publications/already-a-multi-trillion-dollar-market-ceo-guide-to-growth-in-the-green-economy
[13] https://eciu.net/analysis/reports/the-race-for-net-zero
[14] https://eciu.net/media/press-releases/three-in-4-uk-newspaper-articles-on-record-breaking-heatwave-didnt-mention-climate

This is part of a global backlash against environmental policies. US climate rollbacks are threatening the transition domestically and internationally. Across Europe far right parties make fighting climate policy a priority and this is having a chilling effect on the mainstream parties. Division is being actively stoked by misinformation in the media and deliberate disinformation funded by vested interests[15].

What ought to be a perfect alignment of factors for a 'moment of change' appears to be being lost. Ipsos report a significant shift in public concern following a summer of elevated temperatures[16]. However, a YouGov poll found that while the public links hot weather to climate change, it hasn't shifted underlying support for green policies. Two thirds prioritise keeping bills down over reducing emissions[17].

What is the alchemy we need? Political leadership is urgently required but that leadership cannot exist in a vacuum. Strong cross-sector collaboration is also required, as that makes political consensus possible and supports an environment conducive to policy and decision-making in society's long-term interest. "Everybody must do more. Everybody must do more now." (António Guterres)



The key conclusions from Setting the Challenge will be discussed at a Westminster event on 9th December 2026. The event will be attended by Members of Parliament, Council Leaders, and leading figures from the business and stakeholder community. For more information about the event visit: https://greener-vision.com/events/setting-the-challenge-2/

[15] https://www.ipie.info/news/press-release-climate-misinformation-threatens-global-action-says-ipie-assessment
[16] https://www.ipsos.com/en-uk/3-4-britons-74-concerned-about-climate-change-today-following-heatwave-summer
[17] https://yougov.com/en-gb/articles/55086-uk-climate-change-attitudes-unchanged-by-heatwave



I Seeing the Whole Picture

"We face a series of overlapping crises that can only be understood through a single lens [climate change]. During my seven years as Chair of the Net Zero APPG, I saw that policymakers can break these challenges down sector by sector, even if progress is often frustratingly slow. But for individuals, it is far harder. No one can hold the full picture in their mind or fully understand how every aspect of their daily lives connects to the wider challenges we face."

Alex Sobel MP, Chair of Joint Committee on Human Rights, Chair APPG Fair Elections & Chair Global Deforestation APPG

"What immediately comes to mind is that there is a tendency to look for the evidence you want to support your own assumptions or a case you want to make. As a policitian you do not have a disinterested position, it goes deep...

"We rich societies are responsible for the lion share of the current climate crisis, and we have a responsibility towards poorer countries who weren't responsible for it. From a human rights perspective we must encourage mutual respect and dignity."

The Baroness Lister of Burtersett CBE

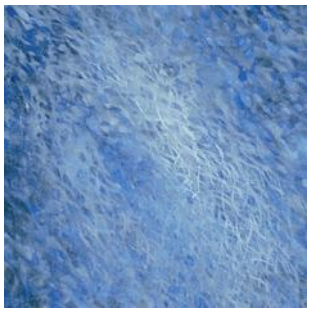
"I've felt a shift in public opinion of late around this agenda. As politicians we have been guilty of triangulating on this agenda and trying to find ways to make it palatable. Green energy is cheaper energy, and this is going to save you energy on your bills. We are making an economic argument but to some extent it becomes disingenuous because there will be costs too. Realpolitik is that there are tough decisions. But climate change is the Number One risk. How do we get that across properly? If we don't act everything could change irrevocably."

Cllr James Gibson, Executive Member for Environment, Leeds City Council

Becoming more honest and self-aware

Are the assumptions underpinning our response to the climate crisis fit for purpose? Too often the lens through which we perceive is faulty. **We should seek to see the whole picture**.

How we think is inextricably linked to our history and sense of identity. We need to become more honest and self-aware about the rationale for our decision-making.

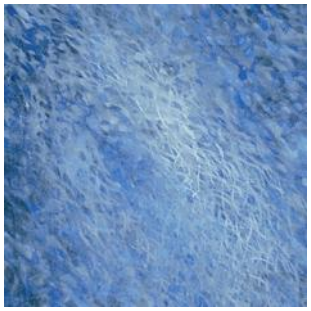




- Navigating complexity 10
- Wilful blindness 11
- Information disorder 12

The Last Rays of Light

Navigating complexity



AI is going to change the world whether we like it or not. How do we prepare for the massive challenge of demographic change? How do we balance the tension between climate and nature demands? We need to see all crises through one lens and not play one crisis off against another. ***Climate change is a wicked problem, a hyper object, "so enormous you can't get your arms around it" and the picture is changing all the time. Multiple actors are all seeing part of the picture which makes it challenging to work in consensus because everyone is seeing something different. Even if there is high level consensus on climate change that's only part of the picture.***

Politics stops us seeing the whole picture. Politicians necessarily come from different parties and bring different perspectives. There is strong pressure on politicians to simplify problems into binary choices. However, this is a faulty way of making decisions for tackling the climate crisis as we need to take a genuinely holistic approach. We can learn from planning, which is an unusual discipline in that it looks at weighing incommensurable factors in a planning balance – ecological impacts, social impacts, transport impacts, housing impacts etc. – and weighing up whether there are more benefits or not from proceeding with a development.

As a civil servant I have made decisions based on not enough information and I am okay with that because decisions have to be made. It is impossible to see the whole picture, we may always be operating in a bit of ambiguity, but lack of perfect information cannot be an excuse for inaction. There may be undesirable consequences of a policy, such as rare earth implications for electric vehicles or bike lanes reducing road space for other road users, but on balance that doesn't mean the policy shouldn't go ahead.

At the same time from an industry perspective where massive investment is required there needs to be a clear path from government on how to get "from one side of forest to the other". Parliamentary cycles and inevitable short termism are not conducive to providing the policy certainty and consistency needed and this stymies progress. ***This is a watershed moment for the industry. We are trying to do in 120 months what we did in 120 years and to achieve that we've got to have clear direction and we are not getting that.***

Greater focus is needed on the fundamental constraints. We do not understand our dependency on the natural world. People think they have a right to tap water to water their gardens in a drought, are outraged when grass verges are allowed to grow wild and think of nature as something to look at or be ignored. There is lack of focus on the real constraints: the hydrosphere, lithosphere, biosphere and atmosphere. We perceive money and economics as constraints, but these are manmade things that we can change.

I feel we will be at a crunch point in nature in five- or ten-years' time. Progress is being made in certain circles on systems thinking, but the tendency is to talk about systems thinking around manmade infrastructure. We are still not grasping the fundamental constraints.

Wilful blindness



We may shy away from realities of what a 3°C-4°C hotter world would look like, but we need to try to face it. We don't want to see the big picture because it's scary but we are not going into any of this unknown. The science has been there for decades. The film *Don't look up* powerfully illustrates our tendency to avoid facing inconvenient truths and wilfully ignore the big picture. Inertia plays a huge part, and our own day-to-day aspirations as well as the power of vested interests influencing government and funding disinformation in the media. But we cannot act as if it is business as usual. We face an existential crisis, and if we don't act now the costs will escalate.

"It's difficult to get a man to understand something, when his salary depends on his not understanding it" (Upton Sinclair). Confirmation bias is central to the problem. We have developed our position on climate change through very divided perspectives. The transition is being weakened by a lack of honesty about the shortcomings and the inability to have a proper discussion. There is a parallel between the obfuscation and misinformation on the one side of the debate and an unwillingness to look at the difficulties on the other. Cost of electricity is too high, for example. Part of that is tax, and that is a policy choice. The transition must work for people, otherwise it won't succeed.

There are also political constraints around establishing the facts. For an analyst, seeing the whole picture is important. "All facts are friendly." However, politics is about winning and using power to achieve ends. We can't have a free and open debate on road pricing. "Analytically we can examine this but politically it is suicide". Moreover, actions have been taken with unintended consequences that were known about. Diesel-gate a decade ago, biofuels today can both be tracked to vested interests. ***As legislators we can be tunnel visioned. We should be more outcome focused and technology neutral.***

Unconscious biases affect policy. 'Motonormativity' – the acceptance of extreme risks, pollution and harms from private cars – means that there is little to no focus on demand changes in policy to decarbonise transport. There is a problem with the "net" in net zero. An increase of millions of tonnes of carbon from a new road may be permitted because savings will be made from an unspecified "elsewhere" in the UK economy. Our focus on territorial emissions leads us to ignore consumption. ***We are exporting our carbon production and patting ourselves on the back. We end up with a low carbon emitting shrunken economy which does not have the desired effect globally.***

How can we avoid unintended consequences in the future? With greater honesty and more evidence-based policy. We need to stop approving new roads, airport expansion and car dependent housing. We are still building homes on floods plains, we are not looking at food shortages and heat impacts coming down the line. More focus is needed on adaptation.

We've got to stop trying to imagine that climate change is something we can find a solution for. We must recognise that we are living with a condition. Whatever actions we take we are still facing quite radical levels of climate change.

Information disorder



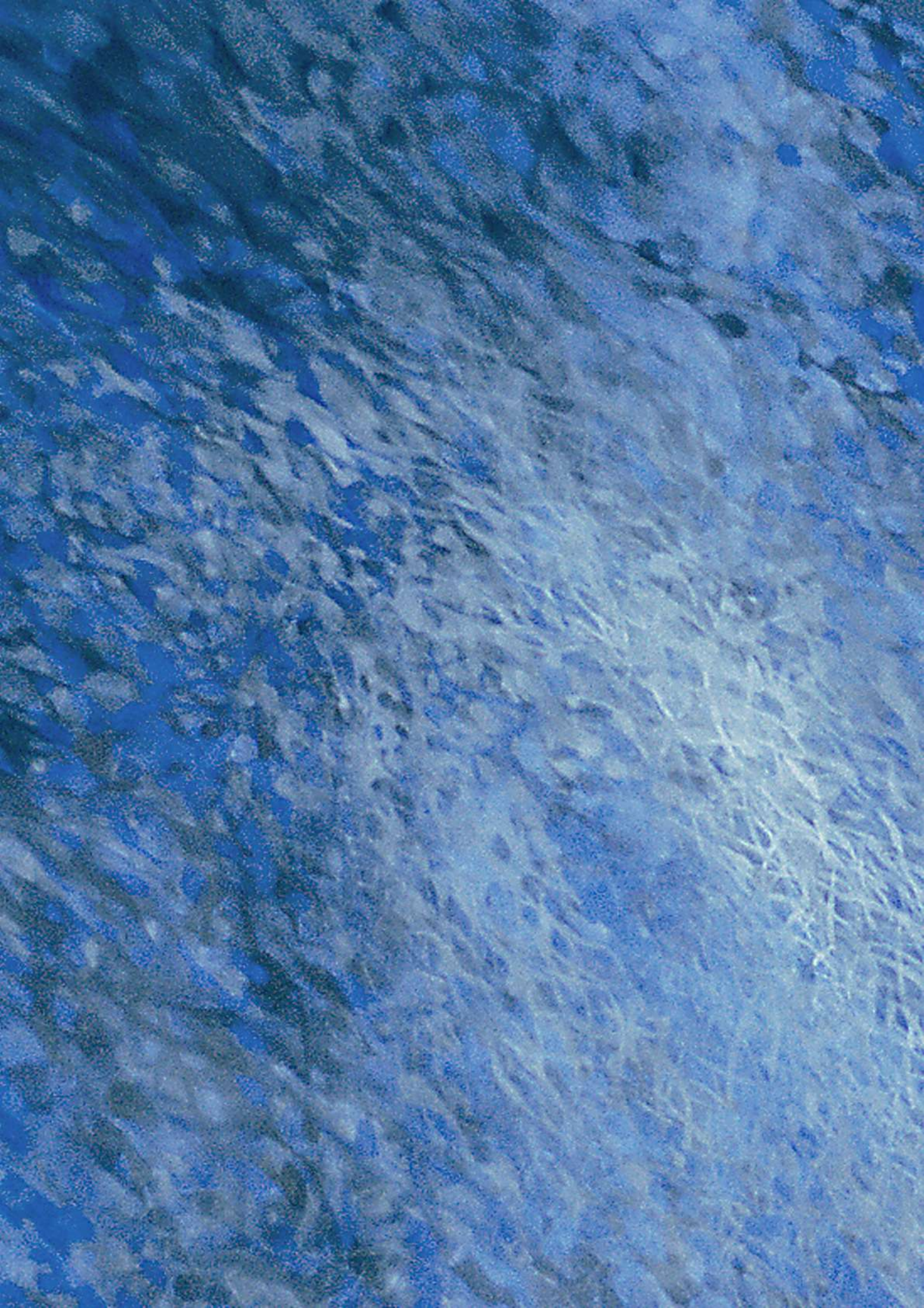
We are at a hyperpolitical stage. Consensus on net zero has broken. Public perception is going backwards. We are losing the battle of words in the media. We need a clear narrative about how the transition will improve lives but deliberately funded disinformation is undermining public support. Wealthy actors are having an outsized influence. The fossil fuel industry is following the same playbook as the tobacco industry and is setting the narrative – e.g. it's better that we extract fossil fuels from our own oil fields than import it. That 'sounds right' – we are going to consume it anyway so better that we do it closer to home. The information environment is corrupted and degraded. ***Elon Musk is using his X platform to foment white suprematist race riots. Government is using X as a share button and Ministers are still on X merrily tweeting away.***

This is becoming an emergency for democracy. The reality is that most people support onshore wind, cycle lanes and LTNs but suffer from pluralistic ignorance: they assume they are the minority because of the polluted information environment. Misinformation and disinformation are extremely difficult to counter. ***It is easy to put out some bullshit. It is so much harder to refute it. Once you say "actually it's a bit more complex than that..." you've lost people!*** In an age of information overload getting your message across is harder than ever. There are many urban myths, misunderstandings about battery technologies. Where do people get truthful information about a market at such an early stage? ***We live in a fishbowl. We are talking to people already informed and preaching to the converted! We need to get outside those circles.***

Feelings have overtaken evidence-based information. The bombardment of polarised views, culture wars, criticism of experts, calls to trust "gut instincts" and information overload make it impossible to see the whole picture. This is compounded by the way we receive information "in bubbles on our phones". Online communication entrenches divides with social media and digital algorithms pushing people deeper into echo chambers. There are fewer physical places where people of different views and backgrounds can congregate. ***As a chronically online teenager, I've seen a massive change from people engaging in climate change around 2020 to more far right extremists.***

Education and communication must be prioritised. The public need better access to information to make the right consumer choices. In Covid the majority did comply because everything was explained. We need a large-scale behaviour change campaign. Messages about the ways we need to change our behaviour in response to the climate and nature crises need to be communicated clearly so that they can be taken on board by public.

We also need to work to counter extremes and polarisation with a more empathetic attitude, which may be especially challenging when people vehemently disagree. Some may bring a Christian or Buddhist mindset to this. ***We need to think outside the box. More LinkedIn posts won't do it – the arts can reach wider.***



II Integrating Heart & Mind

"We are at an inflection point. I don't talk about the net zero transition, I talk about "this really exciting thing". Hope sells better than anything else. Life is getting better. Your electric car is already cheaper than an ICE alternative, we are at the beginning of the exponential S curve on electric vehicles and heat pumps. You want to leave people feeling better about themselves and the world.

"Sales 101 – you have to buy permission from people. If you don't say it's going to save you money, the working assumption is that it will cost you money. We are going to save the world as a by-product of saving people money".

Edward Morello MP, Co-Chair of the Net Zero All-Party Parliamentary Group & Chair of ClimateTech All-Party Parliamentary Group

"I have revised my approach to public speaking. In the past I would have talked about the facts and then offered people the opportunity to play a practical role in making changes in their everyday lives. Now I open every address with "why are you here?" is it the stats or is it the way you feel? Until we connect with people on an emotional level we can't win. The backstop has to be the science, but we have to make the connection with our everyday lives."

Chris Packham CBE, Author & Television Presenter

"Hope and fear go directly to the struggle we have as journalists. How do we balance the terrible risks and say all is not lost. I do believe that we are turning this around. Huge damage is done, but we are remaking the world in a better way. We cannot just dwell on the damage without an element of hope because it becomes emotionally overwhelming, impossible to take on board and disempowering.

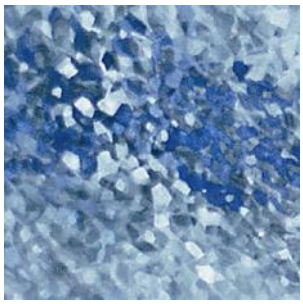
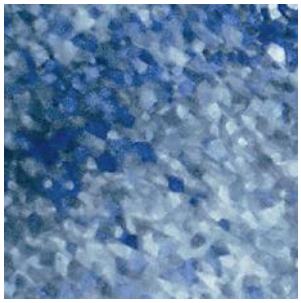
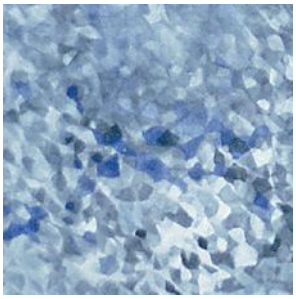
There has to be a dose of realism but we must find an element of hope so people can engage with the story in a balanced way. We've stopped writing doom laden stories because people have stopped reading them."

Matt MacGrath, BBC Environment Correspondent

A battle for hearts and minds

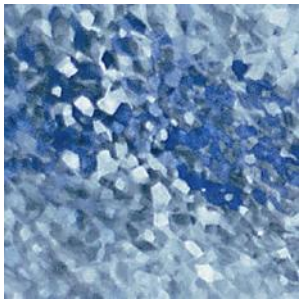
The division between the rational brain and the emotional brain runs deep in our culture. It causes confusion, is profoundly destabilising and leads to poor decision-making.

Better integration of thoughts and feelings will be critical for tackling the climate crisis. We need to combine emotional awareness with analytical reasoning.

- Healing the split 16
- Making it real 17
- Balancing hope and fear 18

Healing the split



The idea that emotion and rationality are opposites is a legacy of the Enlightenment and can be traced to Descartes' dualism. However, both thoughts and feelings are integral to decision-making. Rationality is based on emotion. Most decisions are made from how we feel. A rational evidence-based approach is useful in developing policy, but we need to engage emotion in how we talk about it. The climate movement has tended to focus on research and stats with insufficient focus on communication. Environmentalists tend to be scientists or scientifically based, from a narrow section of the community, and are not very good at telling stories. They've looked at the data created a language that no-one else connects with and concepts which no-one else understands. Net zero is a perfect example of this. ***As a movement, we've overinvested in research and policy but might be about the lose the democratic mandate.***

Scientific facts don't change people's behaviour. The language of figures loses most people. You have to start with where people are rather than where you want them to be. Public information campaigns around aids, seat belts, drink driving all successfully engaged with people in compelling stories. The Brexit debate was dominated by emotive misinformation on one side and fear-based facts on the other. ***We pitched facts and stats against cake! Of course we lost… We need to provide more cake!***

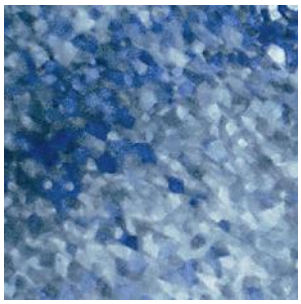
Engagement of feelings is important. People need to feel an emotional connection but not one that is so scary and overwhelming that they feel traumatised and go into freeze. Balance is needed. A personal story hooks people in, then some key figures can be helpful but then, importantly, that needs to be tied with some actions. People can feel paralysed by the overwhelming nature of the crisis. But if you can balance these components, people feel connected, see the reasoning and then what they can do, this enables an action pathway.

I've sat through so many environmental presentations with the graphs of doom. Everything points in a depressing direction, and you get immune to it. There is no point in leading with a gloom and doom message. The great speech didn't start with "I had a nightmare"! All the great orators have great stories and inspiration and have aspirational aspects.

We need to engage with people in a non-confrontational way. The way people form their identities is much more individualised today than it was, so challenging these can feel like a personal attack. Many people would rather live in a world where their emotions and values are supported rather than one that is true but challenging. Once the evidence starts to challenge the narrative frame where they feel comfortable, they retreat rather than engage. However, there must be a way to find common ground. To have integration of values and evidence, there needs to be some form of confronting. The arts can be a helpful vehicle.

The best job I could get on TV would be a climate protestor in Albert Square because nothing is discussed in wider media about these sorts of issues. Everything is siloed.

Making it real



People will resist the climate message if they are struggling to pay the bills. Net zero is too often seen as the preserve of the middle class. The emphasis needs to be on issues that relate to people's lives, building climate resilience and how the transition can save them money and deliver tangible benefits. Local community and environmental issues resonate better than an interconnected world and polar bears. Foregrounding climate change and not explaining that this is fundamentally about nature has been a mistake. There is an increasing divide between those who "get it" and those who don't. ***We talk in an echo chamber. We aren't communicating properly to the public.***

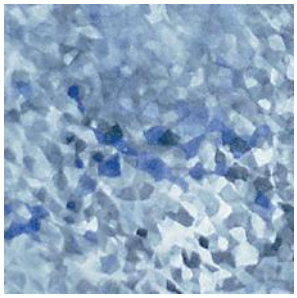
We need to "buy permission" from people. Environmentally friendly products tend to be more expensive. If people haven't got the luxury to care about the environment, it makes them very vulnerable to the fictional anti net zero messages that give them permission to ignore the issue. Tech language has been weaponised. We need to work harder to root the debate in issues that matter to people. ***This is being played out in Aberdeen with jobs in oil and gas sector. We need to think about how we show that life can be better.***

Citizens Panels show that actions requiring heavy upfront costs are not feasible or fair to people on low incomes. There is a clear sense of social justice, that these groups must be supported through upfront grants or interest free loans. Climate change action around some greater good, won't persuade enough people to change their behaviour. ***What we find at the AA is that the most effective way to engage with our members is not saving the planet but saving them money. There has been a direct correlation with war in Iran and searches for used EVs which have gone up 78% last three month compared with previous three months.***

It is important to tailor messaging carefully to different audiences. We must avoid a jarring mismatch. The GVA argument works well with Westminster and elite audiences but less so for people who have just been laid off because of net zero transition. We need talk about tangible benefits to people, from a person led perspective such as from adopters of green technologies. A place-based perspective works best. ***If you live outside of London and are seeing people losing their jobs, factories and shops closing because they can't afford their energy bills and are receiving positive messages on how much progress we've made on renewable energy it just doesn't compute.***

Rising energy security concerns have supercharged the case for net zero. It's a different conversation now that energy security has risen up the agenda and cost of renewables has plummeted. People understand the need for energy independence. Meanwhile the price of solar panels is 90% down and gives people real hope. The argument to come off fossil fuels is not just about climate, it is about the economy, national security, global competitiveness, patriotism and not being left behind. ***There are so many levers to pull. Energy affects everything – energy security works across all voting intentions and is biggest one to lead with.***

Balancing hope and fear



Hope is more motivating than fear. We need to tell the truth and get across the urgency whilst ensuring that people feel they have agency and avoiding creating the impression that it's too late. Alternative futures are possible. We need to foster active hope – hopeful for the future whilst being mindful of the climate emergency and avoiding complacency. Action is the antidote to fear. You create hope. The question of agency is very important. People can feel overwhelmed so if there is something they can do even if just in their own lives, they feel better. Grass roots work is incredibly important. Local neighbourhood plans can be an effective tool for giving the community the opportunity to envision what their future could be based on decisions now. The People's Emergency Briefing articulates the risks then moves on to more empowering messages.

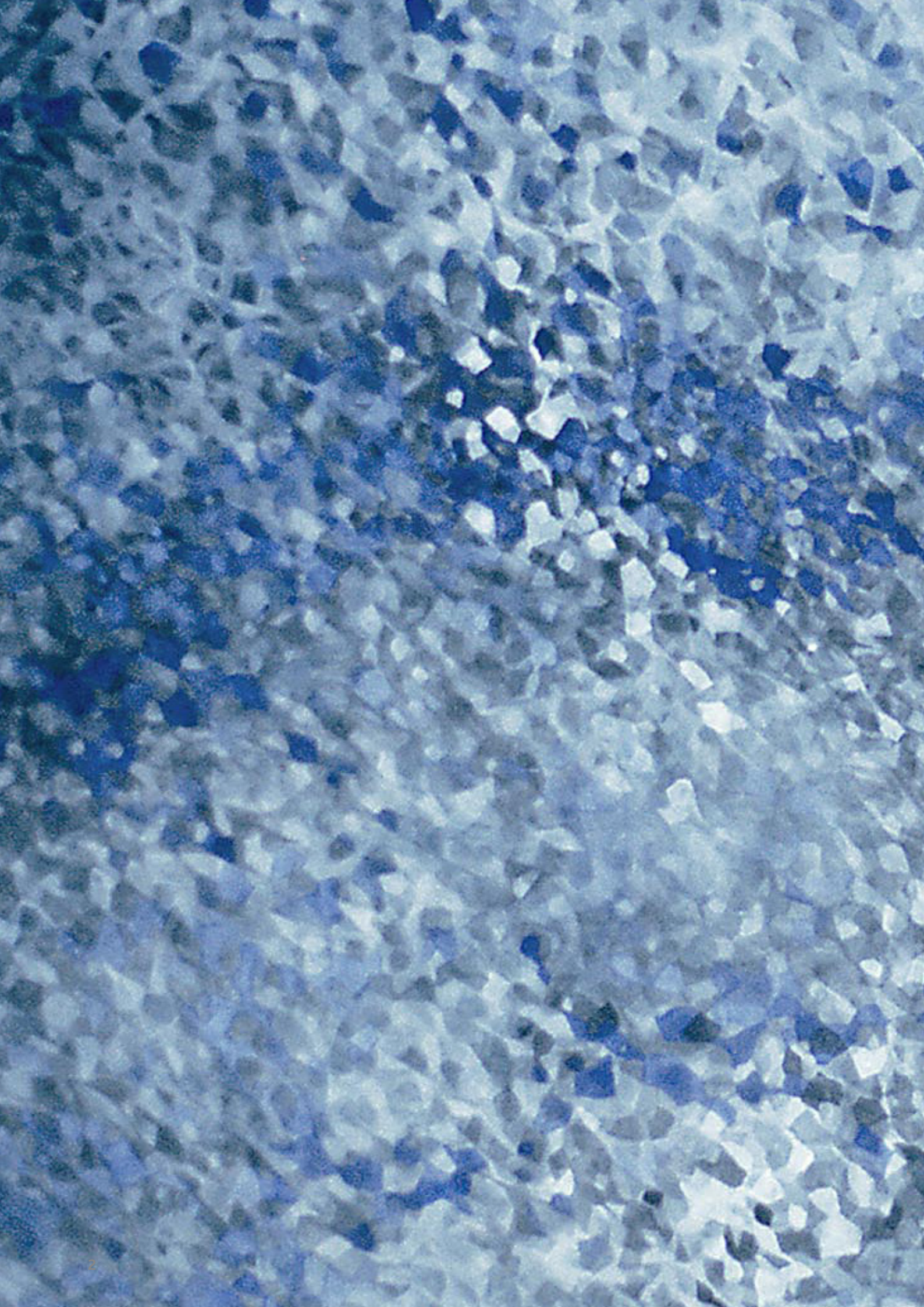
Climate change is the Number One risk. It is important to keep climate in the discussion. People still care about climate change and that is born out in different polls across different voters. ***Our conversation on the ground is nowhere near as bad as the media will have you believe. They over platform sceptics etc far more than really exists. Balance would be 20% denial because everything we see is that people want to see climate action, and young people even more so.***

Net zero is not well understood and has been politicised. There is a question about whether we should drop it. However, it is a scientific term. The solution is to link more strongly the language around net zero to climate change and make it more tangible in terms of benefits, such reducing air pollution. ***We need to hold the ground. If there was (Heaven forbid!) a referendum it is vital that the arguments are all there. Don't outlaw net zero but always say what's for! If the why is "so we can get to net zero" your comms are wrong!***

We need to manage our feelings so that we don't become overwhelmed by them. Climate change can't just be another thing to worry about. Public concern about climate change is high (c. 80%). They understand that it is serious, and it's likely to get worse before it gets better but if we leave people with that, they just feel hopeless and that there is nothing they can do. ***In every conversation about fear, you need to give people a bit of hope and vice versa. If you just do hope people will think you're not living in the real world.***

People who have made it their life's work feel motivated, but many people feel overwhelmed and don't want to think about it. It is hard to get interest and focus – but there were noted spikes during the heatwave with phone ins on LBC, BBC. Sadly, there will be many more opportunities when climate impacts are hitting when it will be a good time to talk about climate change. We need to think about those moments when we can move the dial.

As a transport organisation we want to people to travel by sustainable modes, but when we are messaging things out, we are very conscious we can't bash them over the head with messages that might just paralyse them and have a negative mental health impact in terms of the choices that they are making because some people are just surviving not necessarily thriving and the cost of living crisis is extremely real.



III Being at One with Nature

"We cannot keep pushing our problems elsewhere, our waste problems, our problems stemming from ultra consumerism. We need to keep an idea in our mind of the whole life of things and of where things come from and to look at our economy as a whole. It is vital that we treat this as a system.

"Our food strategy looks at where does our food come from, how we as a Council can have a strategy to buy local produce, to look at the whole thing as a circular entity. In terms of the big construction that's going on in the city, we are asking developers to think in a more circular manner about their own consumption and their own waste. This is not hugely controversial – people can get behind common sense stuff."

Cllr Katie Dye, Chair of the Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, Leeds City Council

"I think the good growth message is sinking in, good sustainable green growth in the widest sense of the word. It's about building houses which are energy efficient and don't overheat, and we are way behind the curve on that. We should be building houses with overhanging eaves and with external shutters, the same as they do in hot countries. We shouldn't be building any roof without photovoltaics and solar thermal on the roof. Again, that should be mandated for.

"Building good stuff is easy as long as we force the hands of the developers. I think the message about the value of nature and access to blue and green spaces is becoming a far more universal message within our country. But until we have a government that has the courage to legislate to stop houses being built that don't meet the standards needed, we won't make progress."

Cllr Bridget Smith, Leader South Cambridgeshire District Council

"The way to connect people with nature, I feel very strongly, is food. Essentially, we've got three books when we're kids. We have a book of companion animals. We love those. We cuddle them. We keep them in our home. They're called cats, dogs, and bunnies. We have a book of exotic animals. We revere those, and we keep them in zoos, and we go and gawp at them as if they're some sort of treasure to put on a pedestal. Lastly, we have farm animals. We don't give a damn about those. We just eat them. They're meat, and that's it. The problem with that is it sets up a judgmental framework in people's minds from a very young age that they can partition."

Chris Packham CBE, Author & Television Presenter

Protecting nature is protecting ourselves

We need a radical realignment of how we perceive ourselves in relation to each other and the environment on which we depend. We are wired to focus on immediate self-interest, but the result is a lack of systemic wisdom.

Being at one with nature means understanding that protection of nature is protection of ourselves.

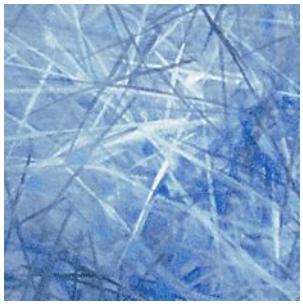




- Moving from extraction to regeneration 22
- Resetting values and priorities 23
- Reconnecting with the natural world 24

A Fierce and Slicing Pain

Moving from extraction to regeneration



Climate change is not the problem it is the symptom. The fundamental challenge is to move from an extractive to a regenerative mindset. We see nature for extraction rather than as a fundamental life system that allows us to function. If we ravage the earth for critical rare earth minerals to achieve net zero, there will be serious social and environmental consequences. How will that impact on the Global South? We must not prolong an exploitative imperialist way of operating. Our capitalist economic system doesn't recognise the finiteness of the natural capital of the world. How can we value and protect nature? How can we become proper custodians of the fundamental systems that sustain life? We need to move to a circular economy with onus on more regenerative processes on the part of manufacturers and agricultural producers. ***Nature needs to be our inspiration. We can't grow forever. We fool ourselves that we can have perpetual growth, but we can't.***

Putting a monetary value on nature is a contested area but until we've got an alternative world view, seeing nature as infrastructure, as an essential finite asset is a good start. How can the 'Natural Capital Accounting' framework be applied more consistently to optimise for natural capital gain and health gain? Nature is not there for exploitation and destruction. We need to value the things that nature gives us, and we need to do it in a more serious way. 'Ecosystem services' describe the essential, direct and indirect benefits that humans freely receive from healthy natural environments.

A circular design supports nature and a fair and just transition to net zero. We can build out obsolescence rather than build it in, make products that will last. We can't deliver this purely on pricing. If we say we need only to price in externalities, we have failed. We need to design in a product that can be re-used, thereby creating 'loops of value'. Products that are designed intelligently for circular re-use and that are designed to hold value.

I am obsessed with the circular economy because this provides some of the answers. How do we design into products and services our economic model something that is done in a circular rather than a linear way. We are still trying to retrieve an economy after it has gone wrong. We need to get it right at the outset.

Every engagement we have with nature needs to be positive, life affirming and regenerative as opposed to extractive. In today's paradigm, just taking nature seriously would be a start. We need nature to flourish wherever we live and work. Hospitals surrounded by wild nature so that people could go out and genuinely be in nature. We need to start thinking about demand management. Demand must be tempered by the envelop in which we are living.

The idea that we all have enough water to water our gardens, for baths and long showers, for endless datacentres, for endless goods that you can just click on Amazon and non-biodegradable stuff from Temu and Shein, is for the birds. We are too limited in our thinking currently. I don't know how change will happen, but all the key indicators are going the wrong way. We literally cannot continue as we are.

Re-setting values and priorities



Many people see 'green' and 'growth' in opposition, but we can't grow the economy sustainably unless we protect the environment and economic activity will be generated by the net zero transition. Developments must ensure Biodiversity Net Gain. Nature is not a "blocker to housing development" but rather a necessity for building resilient towns and neighbourhoods. The "war on bats and newts" is completely missing the point. We are poorer if nature is destroyed. Nature based solutions create a virtuous circle: improve the environment, attract businesses and grow the economy without the detrimental economic impacts once thought inevitable. Scotland and Wales have broader national strategies than England. The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act legally requires public bodies to improve social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being. However, we think about ourselves predominantly as consumers in a capitalist economy.

We in the UK and developed economies of the world have been living through a 250-year Ponzi scheme. We assume constant growth. We have a presumption of more people doing economically productive activity. But we have ageing populations and have been living beyond our means for decades with diminishing returns

How can private sector incentives can be better aligned with social and environmental objectives? Enhancing nature's recovery needs to be put in a context that economists can understand. South Gloucestershire County Council translates social value into commercial value. Their natural capital evaluation toolkit (ICaN) converts the social value coming from natural capital into a financial value and so they can present that as a financial benefit figure and seek investment based on that figure. ***We are asking organisations to invest in these projects not so they can get a financial return but so that they can take credit for the natural capital benefits to society. Designed to align with ESG CSR commitments***

As humans we are naturally collaborative. How can we switch the focus to healthier food produced from regenerative landscapes creating space for nature and sequestering carbon? We need metrics alongside GDP. Wellness, people's sense of agency, nature, taking our carbon budgets more seriously, should all be put on an equal par to GDP. ***Personally, I have a real issue with GDP growth. The idea of continuous growth in a finite system makes no sense. So, you could cut the population, cut consumption, or share more. You can share stuff infinite times. Through sharing we could cut the amount we consume by 70%. But if you reuse a product that does nothing for GDP. Basing everything our happiness, our economy, on GDP makes no sense at all!***

Different economic models could be explored. Commoning business models were leveraged during the early days of the internet to prevent it from being monopolised by big players. There is debate around degrowth, but there isn't yet a model understood by economists that demonstrates a link to individual life benefits. The climate movement needs to be careful not to switch people off. ***We need to rebuild the cross-party consensus achieved in 2008 when only five MPs voted against the Climate Change Act.***

Reconnecting with the natural world



Access to nature is vital for physical and mental health. Nature brings communities together and a nature rich environment is more resilient to climate change. However, people living in advanced economies are out of touch with nature. We spend ever more time looking at our screens. The UK is one of the most nature depleted nations, but surveys consistently show that people in the UK care about nature. RSPB is the biggest membership organisation in the country. The climate and nature crises should be linked. Nature matters to people of all political persuasions. A nature-based campaign would have broad appeal across people of all political persuasions.

Access to nature is becoming a more universal message. Nobody should walk more than 15 minutes from a green space. Covid showed how people with access to green spaces did better than people in dense urban centres. It also highlighted serious equity issues. The higher the level of deprivation the higher the chance of lack of access to quality green space. If you are not connected to nature by age 12 it is very hard to establish link. Community gardens could be a way of connecting and meeting other people offline. ***10 years ago, when I suggested re-wilding verges, I got massive push back, but that conversation has gone. People have shifted their perception and appreciate the butterflies.***

Nature is the emotional connector. We need to raise public awareness of biodiversity loss and the nature crisis. On the one hand you have scientists issuing dire warnings, huge risk to our social and economic wellbeing. On the other hand, you get politicians downplaying, just a few technical swaps. That mismatch makes people not take it seriously. Vast swathes of nature are people's back gardens, but these are not deployed as a critical part of nature recovery which they could be. ***We don't do "no mow May" in our back gardens!***

I am keen on the idea of national service for school leavers – doing nature restoration for a year. If you had a government that said this is an emergency, "this is the coldest summer for the rest of your life!", it should not be hard to make happen. Part of re-establishing the connection would be a national response commensurate with the challenge. There is a large register of urgent nature restoration work that needs to be done – peatland restoration, reforestation and wetlands restoration – work that doesn't deliver any immediate financial returns and would be best done by volunteers. We have administrative architecture in place that processes teens out of school into further education, apprenticeships etc

Re-establishing connection with nature is the most healing thing we can do. The wisdom of indigenous communities could help us. We need to overcome old erroneous thinking that when you are fully embodied you are primitive and not considered respectable. There could be a great healing if we can bring all sides together without it being destructive. It's a process of remembering, connecting with the innate wisdom that is still in our DNA.

Our grandmother, grandfather wisdom is still here. Not in our modern chaotic culture, which is more like an adolescent out of control, but the grandparent wisdom still exists in humanity in indigenous cultures and communities. That wisdom is still here.



IV Healing the Whole System

"I'm a glass half full person and believe that we should do everything we can to make the world better. I'm also a realist and in some areas we are too far down the path with some things that are irreversible. We are going to need to talk and act on things like cooling and CCS.

"We don't have a climate crisis we have a carbon crisis that is creating a climate crisis. If we don't refocus on carbon then we are not going to be able to accept the positive action that is needed to reduce our carbon usage. You can't have a wind turbine without a concrete base which requires carbon. Manufacture of EVs, renewable energy components, lightweight composite materials still need some oil and gas. We can't be ideological. There is a need for pace and pragmatism."

Graham Leadbitter MP, Shadow SNP Spokesperson for Energy Security & Net Zero

"We talk about building houses, but we don't talk about place making. We talk about nature and flooding and the effects of climate change, but we are not building the preventative part of that into our infrastructure. We don't need 1.5 million homes. What we need are communities to sustain 1.5 million family units – if we think of place then we wouldn't just think about houses, we should think about the green and blue infrastructure to go with development along with active travel and employment. We plough in with sticking plaster solutions when we need to zoom out and see the big picture."

Sarah Gibson MP, Environmental Audit Committee Member

"I believe in seeing is believing. It's one thing seeing Bangladesh flood, it is another thing seeing an urban street in the middle of Waltham Forest flood and the damage that does to people's homes. There are simple things we can do – rain gardens water butts – that can make the difference of a few ml of flood water but that can make the difference between losing your home and not losing your home. …

"The experience in a local London street is that actually we can manage, our lives will not be turned upside down. These are simple measures people can get behind which demonstrably work."

Cllr Clyde Loakes MBE, Leader London Borough of Waltham Forest 2003-2009 & Deputy Leader 2010-2026

A holistic approach

Too much attention tends to be given to treating the symptoms of problems and not enough to the treating the underlying system. The result is quick fixes rather than real solutions.

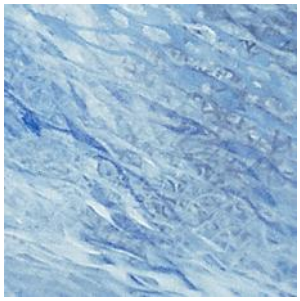
Healing the whole system means addressing the root causes of our problems. If we are to tackle the root cause of climate change, we need to address our dependency on fossil fuels.



- Tackling root causes of problems 28
- Delivering a whole systems transition 29
- Acting in society's long-term interest 30

Flying through the Air

Tackling root causes of problems



The cause of anthropogenic climate is our dependency on fossil fuels and the way to rectify that is to switch to clean renewable energy. The question is how we get clean energy on a scale that has not been seen before. We must ensure that the market conditions are right. We have the technical solutions we need, but vested interests are stymieing progress. Climate change is exacerbated by consumerism and the failure to price properly for carbon. Moreover, our ability to disaggregate economic growth from environmental damage is getting harder. AI uses huge amounts of energy and water. We also face a social crisis. Widening extremes of wealth and poverty are undermining the very fabric of society. We are seeing a broadening gap between the haves and the have nots.

We must ensure a fair and just transition to net zero and that the cost of goods and services covers their true environmental impact without penalising lower income households. There needs to be something that links the economic impact with the carbon impact. Could carbon pricing be seen as a panacea? ***Putting a price on carbon is the one top-down solution that could work. I would hold out the hope that rather than having some grand joined up theory of everything, going to a more effective price on carbon that works across the world would work, provided it is done globally.***

However, notwithstanding the challenge of implementing a global carbon price one of the biggest issues is wealth inequality. The transition will only work if it is equitable. Raising fuel duty will hit the poorest households unable to afford an EV the hardest. Road pricing is a good microcosm of the challenge. Economics is fixable as long as you tax progressively but even people supportive of climate change policies are wary of the distributional impacts of road pricing. Social justice issues need to be carefully weighed to ensure alternatives.

Key question is which levers have the biggest impact. Consumerism is at the heart of the problem. We are wired to believe that we can fly anywhere we want, have anything and do anything, which we couldn't do 100 years ago. ***It has to be wrong that something that is sourced locally is more expensive than something that is flown across the world. Then there is the issue of what bit of plastic is so important that it needs to be flown across the world just to scratch a consumer itch that ends just ends up in landfill.***

We need to work within reality and the levers of power we have. We are too heavily indebted as a country to make big changes to the economic system without spooking the markets. Economic decision making in government is based on the costs of tackling climate change not the costs of inaction, but shifting government's focus toward the cost of climate inaction reveals that transition benefits routinely outweigh upfront costs. A pragmatic approach may be to move to an outcome-based model rather than an input-based model.

We've got an affordability crisis, NHS crisis, obesity crisis, congestion, air pollution problems, climate and nature crisis, cost of living, affordability, equality issues, what are the solutions that can solve those? Walking, cycling and affordable public transport tick all those boxes so we should be focusing investment on those.

Delivering a whole systems transition



How do we think and plan holistically? How do we design good places to live and work that tackle climate and nature crises and deliver on a vision of quality of life, health and prosperity for all? We need more integrated policy across transport, housing, planning, environment, energy and other investment. This is a holistic challenge that requires contributions from every area of society and every part of government. There is not always alignment across government departments. Ministers can lead and work with other departments but require strong leadership and coordination from the centre especially where there are tensions such as when preserving jobs in high carbon sectors risks stymieing progress e.g. ZEV mandate. There is also lack of strategic coherence across different systems and strategies. For example, water networks can't operate without power, but power networks don't place that as a priority in their planning.

We tend to focus too much on transport and supply and not enough on demand. Triple Access Planning is a useful framework for planning how to gain access to support all our needs whether by spatial proximity, digital connectivity or physical mobility and helps to correct this imbalance ***The 15-minute neighbourhood is a great concept, but we don't grasp the nettle. So much of local authorities' budgets is used to transport students. There are travel implications of inaccessible out of town hospitals, shopping centres.***

A place-based approach needs to be at the heart of a whole systems transition. It is easier to move beyond government silos and develop integrated plans at a devolved and regional level. It is also vital to bring in local people, because one size doesn't fit all. ***Our economic strategy has climate as a thread that runs through everything we do. We are creating investable propositions for climate infrastructure, whether that's heat networks or new public transport investment or nature. We approach them as economic propositions as part and parcel of our approach to economic development within the city. We need to be delivering multiple co-benefits for every £1 we spend.***

Stronger devolution is central to a place-based approach. Ideally this should be by natural catchment areas not just administrative boundaries. We need to change the way infrastructure is planned. It needs to be a joined-up effort with the planners and engineers. ***We need to get the town planners taking the highways responsibility as well as the highway authority taking the planning responsibility. So often you see a local plan out for consultation and National Highways is just a consultee!***

The trend towards greater devolution and Mayoral Strategic Authorities is widely seen as a positive step but local authority capability and capacity remain key constraints. ***Someone tarmacking over their drive will have a more negative impact on the environment because there will be more water run-off and if it heavily rains there will be flooding elsewhere. We need people to understand what is needed to prevent bigger problems down the line but that takes resource that we don't have***.

Acting in society's long-term interest



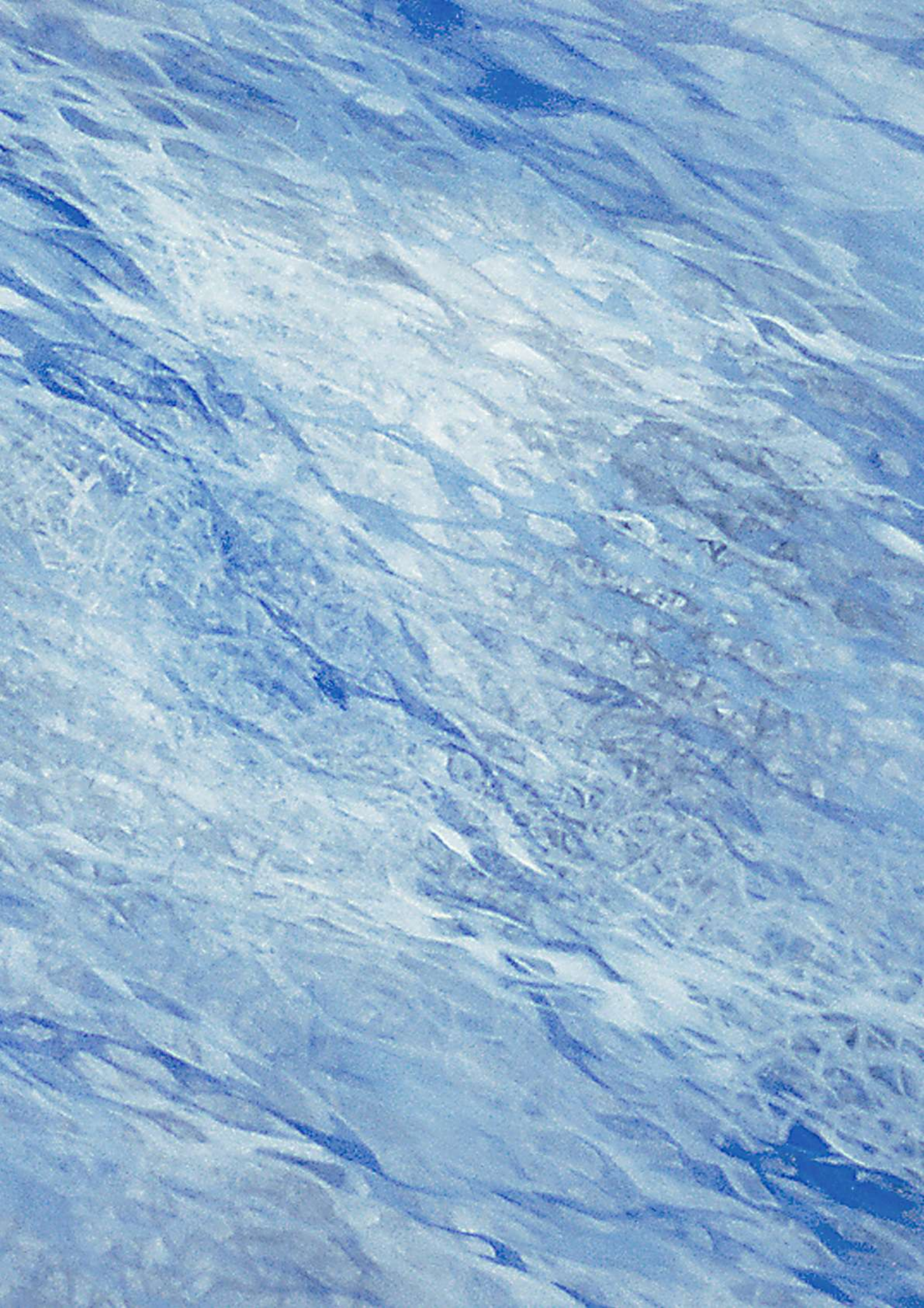
How can we hold multiple societal goals together including: addressing the climate and nature crises, reducing inequality, strengthening the economy, national defence and energy security, and responding to the risks posed by AI and other disruptive changes? We can't necessarily expect this to come from governments on five-year political terms, businesses operating on short-term reporting cycles, and in the face of the massive power wielded by wealthy unelected actors. What is the role of independent bodies and/or deliberate democracy in holding major decision makers to account and ensuring that decisions are made in the long-term interest of society? Citizens juries or assemblies, or participatory budgeting, can be a helpful tool, especially when done in a collaborative way. ***They consistently come up with recommendations that may fall short of what the science requires but go FAR beyond what any serving politician would be willing to countenance.***

Politics in the UK is different to five years ago. At the time of COP26 tackling climate change was a priority, but we are now missing a bit of political leadership to sell the vision and remind people of their connection across the globe. That is not being played out very publicly because of more immediate cost of living concerns and this makes it hard for policymakers to drive projects through. ***But I like to think you can tackle people's immediate problems whilst also framing it in a context of global community***

We need convincing leadership to combine the science, the data, the evidence with hearts and minds. Because a lot of this is about how people can be persuaded to forego things or make changes for a longer-term gain not necessarily directly to them but for wider societal benefits. We need powerful storytelling. We need charismatic leaders that can make the case for change, as Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo demonstrated during her tenure, forcing through a strong case for green transformation.

This not only about political leadership but leadership at many different levels. A good illustration is the challenge of implementing measures to reduce traffic and encourage proper mode switching. Reducing short car journeys delivers carbon reduction and many wider social benefits, and it falls to local government to implement what can be unpopular measures. When there is a backlash central government typically doesn't show leadership. ***But scientists and experts aren't great at putting their heads above the parapet either. I was appalled by lack of engagement by teachers and doctors on active travel stuff – they could have been really powerful ambassadors, but they were nowhere!***

We need to foster a culture that encourages political courage. We need get out of "blame games" and create better policies that work through to delivery. We need strong cross-sector collaboration that makes political consensus possible and supports an environment conducive to policy and decision-making in society's long-term interest. ***The blame game stops when you get all the relevant actors round the table to think through the development of policies that can be successfully delivered.***



V Becoming Citizens of One World

"Geopolitical alliances are under threat. In response, we must build and strengthen other forms of partnership, including those between cities, regions, mayors, governors, states and the NGO sector. Encouragingly, businesses and the private sector are more engaged than ever before. Much of the financial services sector now supports the transition, and most industries have set meaningful targets. Our task is to harness this momentum and continue to make progress where we can."

Alex Sobel MP, Chair of Joint Committee on Human Rights, Chair APPG Fair Elections & Chair Global Deforestation APPG

"From our perspective, whilst we are a small part of global emissions, we have huge soft power and a legacy of being ahead of the curve and leading by example. We should be showcasing what we do well and learning from others in the areas where we need to adapt, such as keeping cool. Yes, we are only a small part of the picture but if we can show that we can decarbonise, we can export our expertise and encourage others to make a difference. We have a voice as the UK that we can use."

Sarah Gibson MP, Environmental Audit Committee Member

"We have no choice. It's all of our business whether we like it or not and there are going to be more and more climate refugees. But this can't be the only part of the message to the public. It is too often presented as a message of giving something up. I live in a city where people live in poverty, and I can't ask them to give anything else up, they've given up too much already.

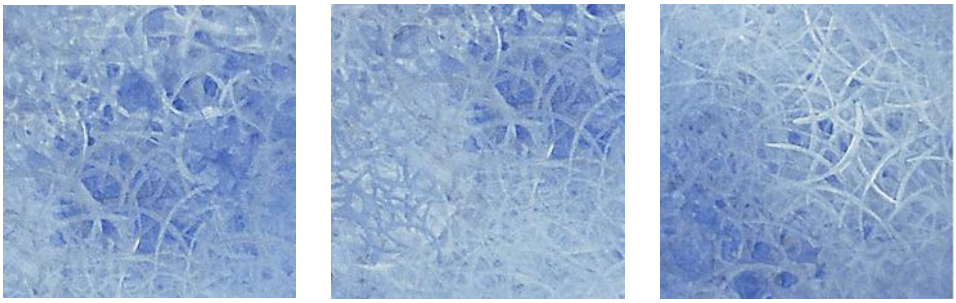
"We have to be global citizens as part of one world whilst delivering for our own people addressing inequality. I believe we could be doing that right now and delivering tangible benefit. National governments need to support local governments to deliver, and it will be the delivery that gets the consensus. Then we can fulfil our moral responsibility globally as we in the Global North caused this in the first place."

Cllr Susan Aikten, Leader of Glasgow City Council

Our natural empathy and respect

Climate change is a global intergenerational problem requiring unprecedented levels of cooperation. We need to connect with our empathy and respect for each other and all living species.

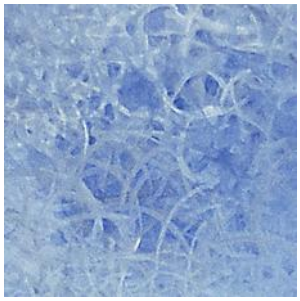
We should strive to become citizens of one world. We should avoid polarisation and ideological thinking and seek instead to promote intrinsic and 'bigger than self' values.



- Fostering a 'one world' mindset 34
- Building coalitions of the willing 35
- Winning hearts and minds 36

Clouds melt away

Fostering a ‘one world’ mindset



How can we build greater empathy and respect for people globally? People don’t naturally identify with internationalism, particularly if they are struggling to pay their bills. We need to start with where people are, their local area and environment, ‘act local think global’. The UN Sustainable Development Goals were designed as a universal roadmap. However, top-down targets do not easily fit with local contexts. Twinning in the aftermath of WW2 was used to re-build connections across Europe. Town twinning for the 21st Century might be a way of connecting people with different parts of the world. Social media reinforce divisions. When people are getting their information through an algorithm what hope can there be of seeing the world as one? We need more coverage in the mainstream media. ***It is disappointing how little coverage there is. When we talk about extreme weather events and their impacts we need to link it back to climate and ecological crises and the devastating impacts on people’s lives***

Migration is set to be a huge issue, so breaking down barriers and improving integration will be increasingly urgent. An example was cited of a hotel in Leeds with asylum seekers that has caused much bad feeling, racism and nastiness locally. However, efforts to bring the community together through shared activities, food, football games, overwhelmingly changed perceptions for those who took part. ***The evidence clearly shows that when people meet people they tend to get on! We’ve got more in common than what divides us.***

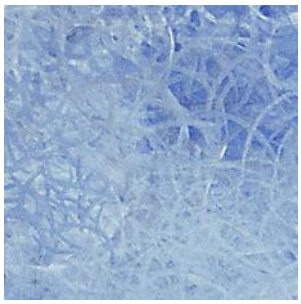
When resources are constrained, people’s instinctive response is to form a group that has priority over scarce resource. Whilst vast majority may not be racist instinctively, they will buy into nationality, race or skin colour if it gives their “group” priority over other people over a scarce resource. As climate change sterilises land and displaces people there will be increasing competition for ever scarcer resource. The arts, and feature film in particular non-labelled climate narratives, can shift mindsets and embed a global perspective.

How do we move to a more ‘one world’ mindset? ***Climate change is a huge collective action and collective justice problem that could be described as the ultimate existential test of humanity and whether or not morality is even real.*** Becoming citizens of ‘one world’ has to be the right goal. However, we are moving ever further away from being one world and it would not be wise to use up political capital on that debate.

We need to start with where people are. People know it’s a global crisis and do care but don’t feel empowered to do anything about it. Localisation works best, having a vision and plan for their local area. Benchmarking across counties can encourage healthy competition. It is important to show how individual actions add up and make a difference. People are empowered to vote, to join voluntary groups, recycle, clean the park. Those actions need to be valued even though what most people can do is trivially small.

You have to meet people where they are. What’s in it for them? Start with their local area and make the connection with their local environment. Only when you’ve established that link do you earn the right to talk about the global picture.

Building coalitions of the willing



The Paris Agreement was a high point for global cooperation on climate change. A decade later we are in a very different place. In an increasingly fractured world, there is a role for 'coalitions of the willing' to accelerate progress and bridge the Global North and South gap. Given current geopolitical challenges the climate crisis just is one of many crises. Re-directing finances away from development and aid to defence will be a challenge for the COP process. Reparations in a world of constrained resources will be a very hard nut to crack. Leaders from the Global South must be heard. It is helpful that the Santa Marta process has started and is working with both Global North and South on the transition away from fossil fuels. Currently, we may make more progress through multilateral/ bilateral agreements on accelerating technologies and climate finance.

Cash, coal, cars and trees – Boris had the right idea about coalitions of the willing! Create clubs that people will want to join. We can't let perfect be enemy of the good.

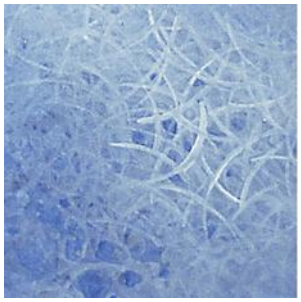
How do we at a nation state level emphasise the positive aspects of the transition? How can we become a vanguard nation and make the UK an example of doing things differently? Having an optimistic vision, bringing together the benefits then gives us the moral right to take a leadership role and inspire others. Renewable energy is as much about energy sovereignty and security as about tackling climate change. ***We need to ensure that we share the best technology globally. How do we ensure we have access to the best technology to solve the crisis at fastest pace to help us decarbonise?***

Ensuring a just transition will be a major challenge. We've created a global economy and a fight for resources to fuel that economy. Some countries are in catch up phase. Climate action is taken for value, values or compliance. ***Values were in vogue a few years ago but are less so now. I agree that there is a moral obligation to those who have done the least to cause it. I feel that but not everybody does. From here on in, how do we do less damage? Once we get to a steady state, then we can think about reparations.***

On the whole things get done by business. We need a new approach to the developing world. We need a dynamic lens to see where countries are now not how they were (China should no longer qualify!) Once investors see a real benefit money flows. These are often pension funds. We need bankable projects that actually deliver a return. ***By not having to do the same dirty journey we did, we can help developing countries frog leap over the fossil fuel stage. We should give green power and clean water to women globally!***

Nearly 9 in 10 UK businesses are already feeling the financial fallout of climate change. As climate impacts worsen there is greater focus on building resilience. Most businesses need to do more to reduce emissions from their supply chain (Scope 3) but increasingly there is a recognition of the need to have a transition plan. ***COP is imperfect but it has had a real impact. If you say ESG you get to speak to Head of Sustainability. If you say transition finance and decarbonisation you get to speak to the C Suite.***

Winning hearts and mind



This is a good moment to think about how we can move forward as there will be a natural reversion at some point. People will push back when they don't like the world they are seeing, with hotter summers, wetter winters, more extreme weather events and damaging climate impacts. Politicians and the media consistently underestimate public support for action on climate change. There is a disconnection between what people actually feel and what politicians think they are thinking and this has been problematised by vested interests. The most powerful generation is the one growing up now. Politicians come and go. Leadership needs to be bottom up. ***It's young people's vision that counts. "Vote with your ballot vote with your wallet".***

There is a general inability to grasp the global connectivity of all our lives. We need to find ways to reverse the idea of "why should we bother because they're not doing it over there etc.?" We must drive up public support to keep pressure on the climate issue. If more than 25% of the general public can be convinced that a change needs to be made governments will have to act. ***"We hold the balance of power. We vote for them."***

People know that the planet is heating up, but they still want to go on holiday. The sense of individual responsibility and the part each of us need to play hasn't sunk in yet. Politicisation of the agenda hasn't helped, but there is still inertia. There is a huge job for education and comms. We need a holistic well thought through properly integrated communications campaign with messaging tailored for different groups and focused on actions people have agency over. ***Who should start the comms? How do we get an orchestrated comms? If we wait for the government, we will be waiting forever.***

The only way we will solve the problem will be by working together. We need a narrative that everyone can find their own reasons to support. Suspending intellectual disagreements for the sake of a common good. Popular Front in WW2 where different conflicting groups could agree to fight on the same side. ***We will not "win" if we ask everyone to abandon their ideologies and prejudices. If that is a condition, we will have lost. If you get the basic point right people can invent their own reasons for agreeing.***

How do we avoid the worst dystopian nightmare of humanity descending into each for his own, erecting ever bigger barriers? Already there are millions of climate refugees which is having knock on effects with migration, disputes between countries, food shortages etc. The arts will play a critical role. Story telling can be a powerful vehicle and help us to solve this crisis as one world working together.

For many years I have concluded my addresses with, "We are one species on one planet with one big problem and one last chance to sort it out". If we don't see that and allow vested interests to run the division machine, we are screwed. We must shut down the raft of disinformation that comes from vested interests. This has to be our 'Independence Day' – the alien is climate breakdown and the nature crisis.



Setting the Challenge Consultation 2026

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Edward Morello MP, Co-Chair Net Zero All-Party Parliamentary Group and Chair of Climate Tech All-Party Parliamentary Group
Graham Leadbitter MP, Shadow SNP Spokesperson for Energy and Net Zero
Sarah Gibson MP, Environmental Audit Committee Member
The Baroness Lister of Burtersett CBE
Fiona Harvey, Environment Editor, The Guardian
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Further information

Claire Haigh MA Oxon, FRSA, FCILT is the Founder & CEO of Greener Vision. She chairs the Independent Review Panel for the Joint Air Quality Unit (Defra/DfT), convenes the Council for the Future and is Executive Director of the Transport Knowledge Hub.

Claire is also an artist inspired by a deep desire for positive change, and a belief that for real and lasting change to occur we need to begin with ourselves. In the 1990s she began exploring the nature of thought and consciousness through art, believing that paintings could provide a new window of understanding. This led to her embarking upon *The Tabula Project.*

The Tabula Project is a creative endeavour that started with the assumption that we won't solve our most intractable problems with the same thinking that created them. The paintings depict states of consciousness and thought and fundamental questions of existence are explored in the workshops and writings. The paintings are under three main sections. 'Examining Thought' explores current predominant thought forms. 'Clearing the Mind' is about striving to achieve a state of consciousnesss without thought.

'Building a New Framework' points to a new integrated framework for thought where the whole mind is in balance. By examining our current perceptions and clearing away the main obstacles to progress we can begin the work of building a new paradigm.

Greener Vision is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to encouraging the switch to a greener future, and applies insights from *The Tabula Project* to tackling the climate and nature crises. In 2025 Greener Vision partnered with Centre for Energy Ethics-University of St Andrews on ***The Tabula Project 2025*** an exhibition and discussion series exploring new approaches to addressing climate change.

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If you would like more information about ***The Tabula Project*** please email:
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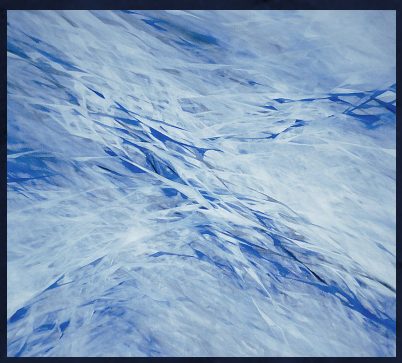

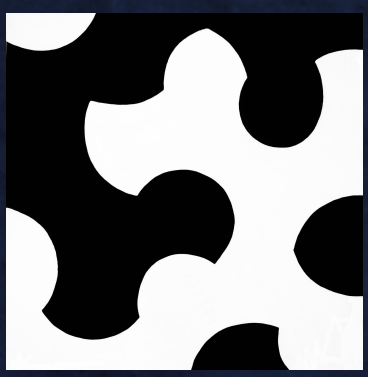

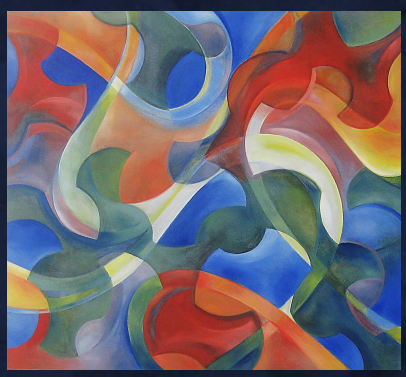

Metamorphosis

Metamorphosis explores the fluidity of the self and the infinitely malleable and changeable nature of consciousness. The paintings are based on a poem and depict states of awareness, and a range of sensations of pain and pleasure which could be experienced by any sentient being. *1993, 15 paintings, oil on canvas, each 96x106 cm*

PART I

Arms and legs rest peacefully,
deadened by a long sleep,
but the skin now tingles with new delight.
I gaze in awe,
as I am gently covered by a soft and glistening
blanket. Peering closer, I marvel at its intricacy.
Hundreds and thousands of tiny segments
all shining like stars and shimmering as one.
Effortlessly I succumb,
until in cold dead panic
I detect the unmistakable glow of worms.
Tender caress becomes piercing pain as
countless creatures burrow deeper inside.
I choke in horror and try to resist,
but leaden limbs won't respond.
I open my lips but no scream can be found.
Maggots chew forward,
multiplying in my mouth
filling my throat.
Desperate eyes search for help
but find only a few rays of light
as the thick film descends here too.
In my mind's eye they are crawling forward
edging into the centre.
But as they start to consume my consciousness
I am once more overwhelmed by their splendour.
Gladly I give them what I no longer need,
and as they relieve me of the burden
I melt into their radiance.

PART II

I am enveloped by a grainy substance.
Pressing against it,
I wriggle through in sideways thrusts.
I discover harsh grit and brittle soil
which scratch and tear and burn my skin.
At last I happen upon a cool moisture
which soothes and seduces and draws me
inside and deeper I slide into a dark recess.
But craving for light forces me back.
I struggle through clawing dryness until hard
clumps fall away and my skin can bask in the
warm light of day.
This pleasure is suddenly and brutally
terminated by a fierce and slicing pain.
I twist and writhe in agony
until my body has completely disintegrated.
No more pain now.
I am flying through the air with a flock of birds.
We are heading for the sky.

PART III

We are seeking what lies in the blue beyond.
The cold ascent numbs our wings,
but soft clouds beckon us higher.
As we arrive,
we become entangled in an intricate white web.
Duplicitous clouds
once so pure and enticing are now
bent on our destruction.
Through thickening fog we catch a glimpse of
blue, but trapped in white fury
we are tossed from side to side
until anger bursts though in electric rage
and blazes out our hearts.
New light seeps through thick mist
Clouds melt away revealing a sea of blue
and we know we are going home.

Front Cover	*A Glimpse of Blue*
Page 5	*The Cold Ascent*
Page 9	*Electric Rage*
Page 15	*The Last Rays of Light*
Page 21	*Easing the Burden of Consciousness*
Page 27	*A Fierce and Slicing Pain*
Page 33	*Flying through the Air*
Page 39	*Clouds melt away*

