Together for a Fair Climate Future

Event 1 Summary: Voices for the Future

9 Feb 2021, 1:00 – 2:15pm



Live event illustration: William Bock – Visual Scribe

Voices for the Future shared creative visions for a more sustainable future. It set out actions needed today and in the years ahead to realise those visions. And discussed how to ensure a diversity of views shape the UK's response to the climate crisis and build a fairer society.

The ideas in this document are those of the panellists and video contributors - full credit must be attributed to them. Find out more about the speakers at the end of this summary.

Ten Action Points

Act with urgency - climate change is here, it's happening now. Climate change is already a reality for people globally, whether through impacts internationally or here in the UK, or through connections with families in other countries. The government must recognise the urgency and immediacy of climate change and act radically.

Climate change is a collective issue and shared responsibility. Whilst recognising that action starts from the individual and individuals have power, we need to also reflect on the role we all play in society and within wider systems. Through collective and collaborative action and bringing people together from different backgrounds, we can create radical change.

> *My vision is based on regenerative culture – a regenerative and resilient community and culture created to enable everyone in society* – Daze Aghaji

Climate action is not only about technological change, it is also about inclusive change. Talking to the same people in the same 'climate bubbles' will lead to the same answers. Take a proactive approach to reaching out to communities and amplify the voices and views of those who are often marginalised.

> *Inclusion is not an option, it's literally just a better way of delivering anything that gives you better outcomes* – Nikita Mistry

Build the needs of future generations into decision-making. To ensure solutions are long-lasting, they must account for the needs of future generations and nature. This includes in an inclusive recovery from Covid that's built on foundations that are fair, green and resilient.

Value the knowledge, skills, and resources of communities. Take an approach to community development that's bottom-up and that recognises and values the assets, resources, and lived experiences of communities. Go where the spark is and listen to communities on what's important to them. Involving communities and citizens in exploring the future can help unblock decision-making for the long-term.

> *It's about treating everyone completely equally, valuing that knowledge equally, and building a vision for the future together* – Ellie Shipman

Treat climate change as an intersectional issue. Intersectionality means recognising different layers of social injustice. Climate change is linked to inequality and is not separate to systems of racism or capitalism. Climate change must be treated as a social justice issue as well as an environmental one, and these need to be acted upon together.

> *We've got to … start to think of climate change and climate justice as more of a social justice issue and make those connections* – Zarina Ahmad

Recognise the UK's global responsibility. The UK has a global responsibility to support both adaptation and mitigation, especially to climate-vulnerable places such as small-island states. Policies need to go beyond single issues or countries to reflect global interconnectedness.

Call out and hold polluting companies to account, both for their environmental harm and misrepresentations to the public. Governments should not be run in service to polluting companies.

Art, creativity, and storytelling are important parts of climate action. Art can help people imagine alternative futures and move climate action forward. Moving climate messaging beyond the technical towards engaging hearts and minds can encourage personal response and aid climate-resilient communities.

> *Cultural and educational projects can help people of any age feel more relaxed, more able to resolve conflict, and more able to imagine a longer-term future or expand their horizons*– Bridget McKenzie

Messages about a positive future can help encourage change, but this must be accompanied by an acknowledgement of the negative. Moving messages away from making sacrifices for a sustainable future towards articulating positive visions around change can inspire action. However, we need to acknowledge the impact of climate change and unearth the deep roots of problems. People are experiencing grief and loss of their futures, communities, homelands, and Indigenous connections. Facing the hard truths can also be a call to action.

Panellists



Daze Aghaji – Climate Justice Activist
Daze is 20-year old student at Goldsmiths studying history and politics. She is a Climate Justice Activist, which means she considers climate change and social justice issues holistically. Her work covers politics, youth engagement, intersectionality, and youth climate change organising.



Zarina Ahmad – Climate Change & Environmental Educator
Zarina has been working in climate change for over ten years, working with diverse communities across Scotland. She focuses on climate literacy and translating climate policy into everyday language. She considers the relationship between climate change and racial justice. Zarina runs an ethnic minority environmental network to get more voices from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities involved in environmental issues.



Bridget McKenzie – Founder, Climate Museum UK
Bridget helped co-found *Culture Declares Emergency* and set up *Climate Museum UK*, which is a mobile and digital museum that helps people

engage with the Earth crisis. Her background is in arts and culture, learning, and young people.



Nikita Mistry – Head of Civil Society Engagement, COP 26 Unit, Cabinet Office
Nikita leads the civil society team within the COP 26 Unit, which sits in the Cabinet Office. The COP 26 Unit brings together the government's policy and planning for the COP 26 summit. Nikita works with NGOs, interest groups, trade unions, faith groups, and young people (both in the UK and internationally) to ensure their voices are heard as we plan and prepare for COP 26.



Ellie Shipman – Participatory Artist and Illustrator
Ellie is a participatory artist and illustrator interested in exploring urban change, sustainability, wellbeing, and what it means to be a woman. Ellie's background is in community development and she is interested in how to bring in an asset-based approach of talking to communities (what are the local skills and resources, and what do communities want) and linking that to climate change through participatory art.

Video Contributors

We are also grateful for video contributions from:

- **Dr Mya-Rose Craig** – Founder & President, Black2Nature
- **Georgia Tucker** – Artist
- **Jude Daniel Smith** – Volunteer, Teach the Future
- **Sarah Brignall** – Graduate Programme, National Grid
- **Banseka Kayembe** – Founder and Director, Naked Politics
- **Laurie Smith** – Senior Foresight Lead, Nesta
- **Charlotte Hanson** – Lawyer, Client Earth
- **Shilpa Shah** – Co-founder of the Akashi project