

**CLIMATE CHANGE** INTO SOLUTIONS  
TURNING CONSEQUENCES

6<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER  
09:00 - 15:30  
TALLY HO, PERSHORE ROAD  
BIRMINGHAM B5 7RN

KEYNOTE SPEECH  
BY JOHN FIRTH  
Founder and CEO of  
Acclimatise. World  
leading expert to spell out  
practical ramifications  
of climate change.

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## Event Report

1. Introduction to event
2. Press release
3. Headlines from presenters (and audio and slide links)
4. Questions and ideas arising
5. Presenters responses
6. Comments on the event
7. Pledges



The event was officially opened by Professor Rashid Gatrad, OBE, Deputy Lieutenant of the West Midlands and inspirational leader of the WASUP project – Walsall Against Single Use Plastic.

Keynote speaker was John Firth, founder and CEO of Acclimatise, a globally operating advisory and analytical consultancy providing services to assist corporates, investors and governments integrate climate change risk into their business processes. In its 15 year history, Acclimatise has completed over three hundred and fifty projects in eighty countries.



## **1. Introduction**

This was the fifth annual conference staged as a not-for-profit project and free to delegates to attend organised jointly by David Middleton, Birmingham based retired former CEO of the MEBC sustainability business network and the UK branch of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, and Jacqui Staunton of Coventry based Climate Change Solutions Limited. It was sponsored by whg, (Walsall Housing Group), The Birmingham Energy Institute of the University of Birmingham, the Commercial Group, and the RSA (Royal Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce). A capacity audience of 200 registered for the event staged at the Tally Ho Conference Centre in Edgbaston, Birmingham and included representatives from business, the third sector, academia, NGOs, and local politics.

## **2. Press Release**

### **“We will trash our childrens’ future” lead speaker tells climate change conference.**

“Without radical governments committed to radical action, we will not achieve the targets set by the Paris Agreement – no ifs, no buts. We need a radical committed approach to transitioning to a low carbon economy and building resilience. If the next UK government and others around the world are not committed to such essential action we will not meet the net zero carbon target for 2050 and we will trash our childrens’ future”

John Firth, founder and CEO of Acclimatise Group Limited, was speaking at the largest multi-sector conference on climate change to be held in the West Midlands this year. A capacity 200 delegates at the Tally Ho conference centre in Edgbaston included multi-national companies, micro local businesses, community project groups, academia, NGOs, and faith groups. They heard speakers talk about the challenges and opportunities created by climate change.

David Middleton, Birmingham based joint organiser of the event with Climate Change Solutions of Coventry, said afterwards: “I cannot believe nobody from the West Midlands Combined Authority or Birmingham City Council, the largest council in Europe and host to the 2022 Commonwealth Games, turned up. They were invited, reminded and chased. With school children striking and tens of thousands of people protesting on the streets of our major cities – all calling for the sort of radical political response John Firth was alluding to, Birmingham and the region ignored us. The transition to a post fossil fuel, zero carbon future is an incredible opportunity for West Midlands businesses. With local councils declaring emergency status to climate change, their absence raises questions about the legitimacy of their declared commitment and their understanding of the opportunity.”

Acclimatise, based in Nottingham but with offices around the world, provides advisory and analytical services to assist corporates, investors and governments integrate climate change risk into their business processes. In its 15 year history, it has completed over three hundred and fifty projects in eighty countries.

David Middleton, now largely retired, was the founder and CEO of the MEBC business network focussed on sustainable development, and CEO of the UK branch of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development.

David Middleton                      0121 444 2683  
John Firth at Acclimatise        01782 59596

### 3. Extracts from presentations (and audio and slide links)



PowerPoint presentations via

<http://www.climate-change-solutions.co.uk/past-events/nov-19-climate-change-turning-consequences-into-solutions/>



Recordings of presentations via

<https://1drv.ms/u/s!AroKUVonyUEegaYIPWrErvq-bH8rPw?e=eQY7YO>

### Extracts from presentations

#### Professor Rashid Gatrad, Deputy Lieutenant, West Midlands and leader of the WASUP project

“The very fact that the Lord Lieutenant accepted the invitation to open this event shows just how important climate change now is. It is no longer a matter for debate. It is no longer a vision that might or might not happen. There is now scientific evidence it is happening. So Her Majesty and Lord Lieutenantcy are very interested in what we do here today.” “WASUP – Walsall Against Single Use Plastic - is about awareness raising, education and putting pressure on corporates. It now has some 2-3,000 volunteers helping clean up streets and communities.”

#### John Firth, Founder and CEO of Acclimatise

“The IPCC recent report warned of the consequences of global warming going from +1.5 degrees to 2 degrees centigrade and the catastrophic consequences of such a small increase. We are currently heading towards a 4 degrees increase.” “Do you remember the heatwave of 2003? It was the largest natural disaster on record to hit Northern Europe. Some 70,000 people died. In the UK, some 10/15,000 died. Do we talk about that? No. If the deaths had been through traffic accidents we would. That was considered a 1-in-500 years incident. By 2050, it will be a 1 in 2 years happening.” “Our response has got to be radical.”

#### Jill Parks. Deputy Director, Climate Change and Business Services, Environment Agency

“This is an emergency not just because the scientists are telling us it is but because this is happening in the here and now – impacting on things we hold dear. It is not just an abstract matter but is affecting our communities and our economy.”

#### Paul Dockerill, Director, Energy and Programme Management, whg



Not all presentations were from the lectern. To inject some variety into the proceeding, some presenters held “conversation” sessions with event chairman, David Middleton standing in for Beverley Nielsen who was scheduled to chair the conference for the third consecutive year but withdrew just before the event she having been selected as a parliamentary candidate in the forthcoming General Election. David Middleton retired in 2013 from being CEO and founder of the MEBC sustainability business network, and CEO of the UK branch of the Business Council for Sustainable Development. He is seen here in conversation with Paul Dockerill of the Walsall Housing Group which has been the main event sponsors since its first year.

Paul said: “We are a sector under pressure – from regulators, from the demand for house building, to build safely.” “We have to be sustainable as a business but we have millions to invest and we must do that with real decisions and precision.” “Don’t want to see business as usual but to collaborate and to share knowledge and experience. There is no platform for us to do that.” “There is no leadership political or from business, nationally or locally. Where are those like we had in Egan nationally and Bucknall locally?”

#### Paul Nicol, Director of AMC, whg

“We were rated number one in the UK for providing energy efficient homes.” “Recently awarded by government £1m support for r&d specifically on Advanced Methods of Construction. How can we build more on site using more renewable energy and reducing use of fossil fuel?” “Our target is for 15% of our energy use next year to be from green energy.” “We have taken over 200 garage sites in the stock transfer and are looking at how best we can reuse, rebuild and renew our communities.”

### **Dr Paul Brooks, Group Director; Health, Safety & Environment, Tata Group**

Founded by Jamsetji Tata in 1868, the Tata Steel is the 11th largest in world. Annual steel production capacity of 28 million tonnes. 75,000 employees. Annual turnover of 19 billion dollars. CO2 intense process. Virtually 100% recycled. Playing a fundamental role in the move to decarbonisation via products such as stronger but lighter built cars; in packaging; in electric mobility, in steel plant derived aviation fuel – and others. Paul talked about various production process developments aimed at reducing the CO2 impacts of production but said it could not be eliminated without the arrival of breakthrough technology.

### **Nicky Philpott, Director, UK Health Alliance on Climate Change**

“Unprecedented temperatures impact on A&E.” “2,000 deaths last year.” “catastrophic consequences if we continue as we are.” “Our urban areas don’t support active lives.” “Buildings and places need to change.” “Need to redesign our neighbourhoods.” “Need cities to quickly fade out cars – need plans to take overheating seriously and housing policies that consider ventilation.”

### **Clayton Shaw, Programme Manager at STEAMhouse**

Clayton reported on a conference staged in June this year focussed on clean air and run in conjunction with the WMCA and the team of the Regional Mayor. The objectives were to stimulate collaboration, break down traditional barriers and encourage innovation especially from local sources. He introduced the next speaker.

### **Michael Addison, Director, Eco Birmingham**

“I am here to promote the vision of a new digital eco city map for Birmingham.” “If I was a visitor to the City for the Commonwealth Games it would help me to travel by green transport, find zero rated shops, and to generally be an environmentally positive visitor.” “Map would help nudge behaviours of visitors, residents and businesses.” “Demonstrate Birmingham as a progressively green city with the greenest Games and is responding actively to the Climate Emergency.”

### **Harvir Sahota, Managing Director, Mahirs Experience (in conversation with David Middleton)**

“We are a private family catering business specialising in private and corporate events and especially Asian wedding events and working locally and nationally.” “We employ 21 people but can be 200/250 with agencies and suppliers at the week-end.” “Concerned to help the community.” “We get many approaches from charities seeking help. So we formed Mahirs Foundation as a charitable body to formalise this.” “Now charge for what used to be free – and often abused – food tasting sessions. Money now goes into the charity.” “We use lots of oil but recycle waste. Now segregate all waste. Was a culture challenge and we had to padlock the main waste bin!” “We have solar panels, a biomass boiler and a waste water use system. We are keen to help spread the message particularly in our sector and ethnic community.”

### **Kate Cooper, CEO, Birmingham Food Council**

Kate’s presentation highlighted the growing pressure on our ability to produce nutritious food to feed growing population. “30% increase in UK population. 300% globally. Global population was 2.5 billion when I was young. Now nearly eight! Staggering figures. By 2025 1.8 billion people will be living with absolute water scarcity. East Anglia, the UK breadbasket, is into second decade of being officially semi arid.” “When ambient temperature reaches 32 degrees, plants stop growing.” “Huge number of people in the food supply chain but nobody making money from nutritious food.” “UK’s National Food Strategy has made three recommendations - the Government sets up 1) a [UK Food Security Institute](#), or similar, ideally led by senior members of the MoD or intelligence community with specific remits regarding food risk and resilience; 2) [a new statutory funding body](#), similar to the Arts Council or Sports England to enable engaging, informed debate about the food security challenges we’re facing; 3) a [Public Inquiry led by a senior Judge](#) to advise on the authority body we need to ensure food system players act ethically in the protection, promotion and maintenance of sufficient supplies of safe, nutritious food for the UK population.

### **Tom Bradley External Affairs Manager, Cadent Gas.**

“We have the biggest gas distribution network in the UK serving 11 million homes.” “Challenge is to decarbonise but in a way that is beneficial to all users.” “Adopting a whole system approach to include electricity, transport and gas demands. How they interlock is critical.” “In the North West we are developing the HyNet project looking to use hydrogen for big lorries, buses, trains, industrial use and homes.” “Need government and regulators to create policy frameworks appropriate to help develop and deliver this innovation.”

### **Katie Hale, President, Sutton Coldfield Chamber of Commerce**

“We are a relatively new branch of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Chamber. We are four years old with about 110 members, mostly SMEs but from a wide range of sectors including education, manufacturing, creative and so on.” “Idea of The Eco Pledge inspired by my little girl who kept telling me what they were talking about at school – recycling and sustainability and the like.” “I wanted to create a legacy from my term of office.” “The Pledge asks members to do just one thing to make a difference – from reducing the use of plastic to planting trees.” “Launched in June.” “Now got other branches of the Greater Chamber showing interest.”

### **Dr Chris Martin, Co-founder, Footsteps-Faiths for a low carbon future**

“Footsteps brings together faith communities from across the city which represent a large number of its residents.” “Was formed in 2015 at the time of the Paris Climate Summit.” “Have published a report - The Role of Faith Communities in the Climate Emergency.” “We represent the faith communities on Birmingham’s Climate Task Force.” “There is no greater opportunity than this. Councillors understand we must do something this time.” “This time it is different so much so the Task Force changed its meeting times to evenings to enable youngsters to be involved.” “Politicians are listening and understanding this time something must be done.”

### **Michaela Wright, Head of Corporate Sustainability, HSBC UK Bank plc**

“HSBC has 38 million customers in 66 countries and employs 230,000 people.” “Used to own the Midland Bank so right that our new UK HQ should be in Birmingham.” “As a bank we have committed to spent £100 billion in sustainable finance by 2025 and have already reached £40 billion.” “Signed up to source 100% of our energy from renewable sources by 2030. 71% already achieved in the UK.” “Have agreed to stop financing projects in coal with three qualified exceptions –Bangladesh, Indonesia and Vietnam.” “As a bank we can play a major role in the transition process. But we need to work together. We welcome regulation and policies that help us price things correctly. Big debate on pricing nature but certainly need pricing on carbon.” “Anxious to play our part in Birmingham and welcome your thoughts on what we can do together.”

### **Professor Martin Freer, Director, Birmingham Energy Institute, University of Birmingham**

“Many have been on this journey for some time and there can be a sense of weariness about all this, but I think this is a great moment with a level of ambition and potential investment of real significance and a real opportunity.” “We are a group of universities working together and with the Combined Authority and the City of Birmingham to help transform the region and to be at the vanguard in the green energy and technology market worth some £3 trillion.” “I am also director of the Energy Research Accelerator which includes eight research intense universities and involving some 1500 people.” “Had £60 million funding from government and £100m from industry to develop a partnership between industry and academia.” “Have 23 new research institutes from Aston to Nottingham including the £20m Battery Innovation Centre at Coventry.” “Undertake fundamental research through to large scale demonstrations.” “3.5 years down a 5 year programme.” “Now established a technology transfer centre in China, the biggest potential market on the planet.” “Want to work in collaboration with others.”

### **Event summary and call to action - Chris Crean, Regional Campaigner, Friends of the Earth**

“If this was a real emergency - as we are told it is - we would have seen blue lights and the emergency services responding quickly. Unfortunately, though some 50% of local authorities and central government have had their emergency debates, not much seems to have happened. Birmingham had its debate and launched a Task Force. That met in October. Shortly afterwards BCC passed the planning application for the athletes’ village for the Commonwealth Games. The village will have no zero carbon homes, no ground source heat pumps, no solar panels.” “What we need is real action.” “Traditional lobbying is very important. Need to engage with the people who design our lifestyles. Need to be politically aware and have political nous. Need to listen to them so you can engage with them in their language.” “John Firth told us this is serious. The Lord Lieutenant said we must listen to the young people.” “Great thing about today was it was not just the third sector, not just local authorities, not just business – but all of them. We must marry business, the economy, civil society and our global environment or we are not going to come up with the solutions we need to the problems we face.”

## **4 Questions and ideas arising from delegates**

The following are issues/questions/ideas originating from delegates at this event via the SLIDO system or Post-its (the ones we could read!).

### **Buildings & construction**

1. Remove VAT on refurbishment of existing buildings
2. Update planning standards for house building re sustainability; walk/cycle friendly designs; community cohesion
3. Planning frameworks are a fundamental part of the problem
4. Should have zero carbon housing as standard
5. All new buildings to be zero carbon in construction by 2022
6. All housing to be built using modern construction methods
7. How can government support development of alternative heating in homes; incentivise for house companies/developers; and provide incentives for these homes to be purchased.

### **Business/finance**

8. Create a platform for businesses/politicians/communities to explore and test solutions
9. Lobby investment funds about where they invest
10. Find a way of ensuring business community is properly represented in regional/local government initiatives ie BCC Task Force.
11. How can we stem the flow of investment in fossil industry and divert to mitigation/adaptation activity
12. Provide more support to businesses developing solutions enabling achievement of climate change targets in line with global and national emission targets
13. Make business more transparent. How does HSBC reconcile its sustainability commitment against its continuing investment in fossil fuel and armament industries

### **Education and awareness**

14. Have a national tree planting bank holiday
15. Education from an early age
16. Transparency of information
17. Move the debate from generalisation to tangible, facts/actions/consequence
18. Climate emergency to be an integral part of the school curriculum and not an add on
19. Small ‘silo’ organisations are afraid to collaborate and share with bigger organisations in case they lose ownership/funding. How can they retain their importance
20. How can civil society groups running climate awareness projects work best with local government and organisations to effect change
21. How can we articulate/illustrate better that the “drop in the ocean” is crucial so we in the UK can make a big difference

### **Energy**

22. Incentivise the investment in energy efficient technology
23. Give a business rate reduction for businesses creating solutions
24. Less electricity you use the less you pay per unit

## **Food**

25. Vegetarian food only at all public events and in hospitals
26. Uneaten food at public events should go to a refuge or soup kitchen – not just be thrown away
27. Reward farmers for planting trees and increasing bio diversification
28. Encourage people to adopt a plant based diet

## **General**

29. Sign “climate change leaders debate” petition
30. Less international competition which promotes use of fossil fuel.
31. More global co-operation
32. Would reducing population to one with lower material aspirations reduce carbon emissions more quickly that technology?

## **Incentives and penalties**

33. A carbon tax on non-essential items – polluter pays etc
34. Procurement processing need more environmental weighting
35. There are too many advisory targets – five a day – on 10k steps, less salt etc etc. We need targets on personal consumption such as power and water – that will keep getting tighter and tighter

## **Lifestyle**

36. Encourage downsizing. Give a positive embrace to living with less
37. An average UK citizen creates 10 tonnes of CO2. Offset by planting 40 trees

## **Policy making and government**

38. Climate change and environment should be at the heart of every political decision
39. Change structure of ‘Cabinet’ so climate change is at the top of the hierarchy not just in transport and planning
40. Have a no growth economy. Development rather than growth.
41. Birmingham’s cross party approach should be emulated by others
42. Explain how you plan to listen to communities and support major changes needed
43. Lobby for a new Green Deal – with teeth – per Ann Pettifor
44. Identify which issues are responsibility of local, regional and national government and create better co-ordination between them
45. Empower local communities/local government to raise finances to tackle/resolve local transport and clean air challenges
46. Is local government a major player in ‘turning consequences into solutions’ or is it a side show to them? If they consider themselves a major player, why were they not at the conference?
47. What impact would facilitating home – or near home/school and local vacations have on decarbonisation.
48. Any ideas or strategies for opposing the anti-expert propaganda by the likes of Gove and Trump given it’s our experts providing climate emergency data?

## **Transport**

49. By 2030, Birmingham to be car free city – needs cheap connected public transport and active travel which encourages localism as well
50. Complete tram system across the West Midlands
51. Achieve a fully integrated network plan
52. No airport expansion
53. By 2025 only EVs and/or EV club cars allowed to park in city centres
54. London-style congestion charge system in Birmingham city centre
55. Tramway needed between Dudley town centre and railway
56. Change school selection processes to enable local families to walk to school and thereby avoid school run. Faith schools to be obliged to take in local children.
57. Prioritise cycling and walking and public transport. Reduce roads/car use.

## **Waste/recycling**

58. Establish a royal commission to develop R&D to make all plastic recyclable
59. Ban the use of certain types of plastic
60. Major public venues should have zero waste strategies
61. Second hand is sexy!!! Need more clothes swaps and use of charity shops
62. More litter bins needed on streets and canals
63. Put pressure on corporates to use less packaging
64. What does WASUP do with waste after picking? Is there any further recycling
65. Government needs to look at recycling of plastics from the opposite end of its life, which can be reused and which becomes the only plastic in use.
66. Does Professor Rashid/WASUP have a solution to plastic “nurdles” that wash up on our beaches in their millions.

## **5 Speaker responses to questions and ideas arising from delegates**

### **Paul Dockerill**

#### **Buildings & construction**

There needs to be a wider review of the national housing model to ensure we are building the right sort of housing people want and can afford. Fundamental to this is how we develop an energy and heat strategy for homes. Rip up the current plans and start again by talking to communities and business's and let's see community co-operatives.

#### **Business/finance**

Business needs to do more to engage with communities. They need to rethink how they do this through their employees and not the immediate community outside their building. If they live in a commercial business area this is not the same as where their employees live. Discount council tax and give it back to communities to use effectively. It is likely the labour element of cutting grass, sweeping and cleaning roads and general basic maintenance would be given freely by that community. The ripple effect to this would be more and more join.

#### **Education and awareness**

Create community co-operatives, everyone contributes and gets their own recognition – grow and work together. It feels like we need that catastrophic event to wake people up. It is very sad to say that but it is likely true. There is plenty of informative media about how the world is dying and how third world countries and nature are being forced to adapt and change. It is the western world that needs to change. It will be interesting to see if those that have suffered with the recent flooding will change their attitude and approach going forward.

#### **Energy**

We need to change our approach. Share the strategy with business and use the knowledge and business acumen to turn the monopoly on energy companies.

We are under estimating what is needed for the national energy strategy, lack of investment, monopolisation by the energy companies needs to change.

#### **Food**

Even at this event we had food over and it was a challenge to give it away!!!

Our immediate concern will be the devastation from the recent flooding. Farms in my area alone have lost 20% of their crops due to seed and young plants being completely washed away. Soil erosion is worse than it has ever been locally.

Stop eating meat!!!

#### **General**

Sign up to the WM Climate Change Charter (WMCCC)!!!!!!

Make yours and your business pledge to change.....sign the Charter!!!!

#### **Incentives and penalties**

How can we get Government and the Combined Authority to create a clear plan to incentivise communities and business's when there is no clear future for them.

#### **Policy making and government**

Agreed (67 - Have a no growth economy. Development rather than growth.) Consolidate our environment, prevent waste, conserve energy and food. Let's survive.

Empower communities and business's to work together and provide reward for results. Work together for the greater good.

### **John Firth**

We all need to be realistic about the scale of the challenge ahead as this is the only way we can deliver practical solutions.

Thank you for your truly inspirational examples from everyone presenting – great to hear real action, by real people, delivering real results. I've spent the last 25 years of my professional career in climate change, and at last we are now getting into the action phase!

The vision of creating a West Midlands economy based on sustainable development is a laudable one – the only real challenge we face is breaking down institutional barriers – happy to bring a sledgehammer.

#### **Recent Acclimatise reports:**

- 'Navigating a new climate' UNEPFI and Acclimatise report on TCFD disclosure for banks <https://bit.ly/2zOnTpy>
- Lenders' Guide for Considering Climate Risk in Infrastructure Investments <https://bit.ly/2Gsdgvl>
- Advancing TCFD guidance on physical climate risk and opportunities - EBRD & GCECA project <https://bit.ly/2GnSkFX>
- Using scenarios in TCFD corporate disclosure of physical climate risk <https://bit.ly/2H0ajzb>

#### **Other reports:**

Acclimatise receives the Climate Change Business Journal Industry Leadership Award <https://bit.ly/2E7Njjx>

Horizon 2020 research on the successes and failures of the climate services market <https://bit.ly/2GtjRSj>

Our new GCF Proposal Toolkit is now available: <http://bit.ly/2srozbx>

Impacts on USA military bases <https://bit.ly/2JbG4WM>

### **Liz Parkes**

I've had a quick look at the attachment. There look to be lots of good points in here. I think the big message is that there isn't one single solution to this issue - we need to make transformational change to the way that we all live our lives and that requires action at every level, engagement, behaviour change, collaboration, technological and innovative solutions, different ways of thinking and designing the future.

## Dr Paul Brooks

Lots of good suggestions & ideas many of which in principle I think could be supported, but actually not many questions and none which are specific to me. So, no specific comments from me in response!

## Dr Chris Martin

Buildings & construction	02. Update planning standards for house building re sustainability; walk/cycle friendly designs; community cohesion
Business/finance	09. Lobby investment funds about where they invest
Business/finance	11. How can we stem the flow of investment in fossil industry and divert to mitigation/adaptation activity
Business/finance	13. Make business more transparent. How does HSBC reconcile its sustainability commitment against its continuing investment in fossil fuel and armament industries
Education and awareness	14. Have a national tree planting bank holiday
Education and awareness	15. Education from an early age
Education and awareness	16. Transparency of information
Education and awareness	18. Climate emergency to be an integral part of the school curriculum and not an add on
Education and awareness	20. How can civil society groups running climate awareness projects work best with local government and organisations to effect change
Education and awareness	21. How can we articulate/illustrate better that the “drop in the ocean” is crucial so we in the UK can make a big difference
Energy	24. Less electricity you use the less you pay per unit
Food	25. Vegetarian food only at all public events and in hospitals
Food	26. Uneaten food at public events should go to a refuge or soup kitchen – not just be thrown away
Food	27. Reward farmer for planting trees and increasing bio diversification
Food	28. Encourage people to adopt a plant based diet
General	30. Less international competition which promotes use of fossil fuel.
General	31. More global co-operation
General	32. Would reducing population to one with lower material aspirations reduce carbon emissions more quickly than technology?
Lifestyle	36. Encourage downsizing. Give a positive embrace to living with less
Policy making and government	40. Have a no growth economy. Development rather than growth.
Policy making and government	41. Birmingham’s cross party approach should be emulated by others
Policy making and government	42. Explain how you plan to listen to communities and support major changes needed
Policy making and government	45. Empower local communities/local government to raise finances to tackle/resolve local transport and clean air challenges
Policy making and government	47. What impact would facilitating home – or near home/school and local vacations have on decarbonisation.
Transport	56. Change school selection processes to enable local families to walk to school and thereby avoid school run. Faith schools to be obliged to take in local children.

## Kate Cooper

- Vegetarian food only at all public events and in hospitals

Nope. Vegetarianism is not The Answer. Sure, populations need to eat less meat and animal products. But not eating meat or animal products at all is not appropriate in many locations and for many people.

(How animals are farmed is another matter. They should be treated well. And that costs more than them being treated badly.)

There are, too, ethical issues in imposing a particular diet on others.

As for food in hospitals, nope and nope again. Some patients require a highly controlled diet, and nothing must come between the advice of doctors + dieticians and their patients.

- Uneaten food at public events should go to a refuge or soup kitchen – not just be thrown away

Besides the logistics issues, it's not always the right thing to do — think food safety, incl regulations thereof.

- Reward farmer for planting trees and increasing bio diversification

Nope. As ever, life is more complex than such a blanket statement. Afforestation should not happen on prime agricultural land. Arguably some lands currently used for livestock should be used for carbon capture— as the Committee on Climate Change did in the Land Use report (nov 2018). See below, the second bullet point listed under *Ethical issues in the food system* in [this blogpost](#) — you'll need to scroll down:

Should UK grazing land be taken out of livestock production for afforestation, and if so, how much and should the affected farmers be compensated?

(See the Committee for Climate Change 2018 Report: [Land use: Reducing emissions and preparing for climate change.](#))

- Encourage people to adopt a plant based diet

Nope. See above.

## Chris Crean – his comments in red

- 1 Remove VAT on refurbishment of existing buildings or lower the rate and put VAT on new build at the top rate
- 2 Update planning standards for house building re sustainability; walk/cycle friendly designs; community cohesion **YES**
- 4 Should have zero carbon housing as standard **YES**
- 5 All new buildings to be zero carbon in construction by 2022 **YES if not earlier. They were taken out quite quickly post the 2010 election**
- 7 How can government support development of alternative heating in homes, incentivise for house companies/developers; and provide incentives for these homes to be purchased **YES**
- 10 Find a way of ensuring business is properly represented in regional/local government initiatives ie BCC Task Force **YES but recognise that not all business speaks with the same voice**
- 11 How can we stem the flow of investment in fossil fuel industry and divert to mitigation/adaptation activity **Divestment campaigns**
- 14 Have a national tree planting Bank Holiday **Very interesting idea**
- 15 Education from an early age **BUT re-educate those already out of school**
- 20 How can civil social groups running climate awareness projects work best with local government and organise to effect change? **Join FOE's [Climate Action groups](#)**
- 22 Incentivise the investment in energy efficiency technology **Yes**
- 23 Give businesses rate reduction for businesses creating solutions **and putting them into practice**
- 25 Vegetarian food only at all public events and in hospitals **Yes**
- 26 Uneaten food at public events should go to a refuge or soup kitchens - not just be thrown away **Yes**
- 27 Reward farmers for planting trees and increasing diversification **Yes**
- 28 Encourage people to adapt a plant based diet **Yes and/or reduce meat in stages – needs much more debate**
- 29 Sign "climate change leaders debate" petition **Yes**
- 30 Less international competition which promotes use of fossil fuel **Yes. Ban F1 or at least don't call it a sport**
- 31 More global co-operation **Yes and support for the rights based agenda and international/regional agencies**
- 32 Would reducing population to one with lower material expectations reduce carbon emissions more quickly than technology? **Needs proper debate**
- 33 A carbon tax on non-essential items – polluter pays etc **Yes. Internalise externalities**
- 34 Procurement processes need more environmental weighting **Yes**
- 35 There are too many advisory targets – five a day – on 10k steps, less salt etc etc. We need targets on personal consumption such as power and water – that will keep getting tighter **Also get rid of the standing charge which makes the first unit the most expensive and then increase the rate as you consume more**
- 36 Encouraging downsizing. Give a positive embrace to living with less **Yes**
- 37 An average UK citizen creates 10 tonnes of CO2. Offset by planting 40 trees. **Yes and protecting the ones we have**
- 38 Climate change and environment should be seen at the heart of every political decision **Yes**
- 39 Change structure of 'Cabinet' so climate change is at the top of the hierarchy not just in transport and planning **Yes. Plus it is a cross cutting theme and should be as equal if not more important than economics which after all is not a science but a construct...**
- 40 Have a no growth economy. Development **and sharing** rather than growth
- 41 Birmingham's cross party approach should be emulated by others **Yes but needs to be quicker and have intervention measures and needs to be fed into central government and the LGA measures**
- 43 Lobby for a new Green Deal – with teeth – per Ann Pettifor **Yes**
- 44 Identify which issues are responsibility of local, regional and national government and create better coordination between them **Yes and more devolution of money and power plus ability to raise money**
- 45 Empower local communities/local government to raise finances to tackle/resolve local transport and clean air challenges **Yes**
- 48 Any ideas or strategies for opposing the anti-expert propaganda by the likes of Gove and Trump given it's our experts providing climate emergency data? **Keep defeating them with science**
- 49 By 2030, Birmingham to be a car free city – needs cheap connected public transport and active travel which encourages localism as well **Yes**
- 50 Complete tram system across the West Midlands **yes**
- 51 Achieve a fully integrated network plan **yes**
- 52 No airport expansion **Yes**
- 53 By 2025 only EVs and/or EV club cars allowed to park in city centre **yes**
- 54 London-style congestion charge system in Birmingham city centre **Not so sure. Needs further debate**
- 56 Change school selection processes to enable local families to walk to school and thereby avoid school run. Faith schools to be obliged to take in local children **Yes**
- 57 Prioritise cycling and walking and public transport. Reduce roads/car use **Yes. All fine but recognise that it is the BUS that is going to reduce our transport woes like it or not**
- 58 Establish a royal commission to develop R&D to make all plastic recyclable. **Yes BUT is it not already. It is too cheap so why not virgin material tax? Food waste contaminates loads of plastic.**
- 59 Ban the use of certain types of plastic **Yes –especially one use**
- 60 Major public venues should have zero waste strategies **Yes**
- 61 Second hand is sexy!!! Need more cloths swaps and use of charity shops. **Yes. Should be seen as an integral part of the business economy, not a scourge of the high street. But need to get them into BIDs to have their voice BUT also understand why some shops do not like them on their patch**
- 62 More litter bins needed on streets and canals. **Yes BUT folks need to use them better and don't forget a litter bin attracts other forms of rubbish such as from flats and businesses. And take-aways should not be zero rated.**
- 63 Put pressure on corporates to use less packaging **Yes**
- 64 What does WASUP do with waste after picking? Is there any further recycling **Yes – agree further discussion needed. Litterpicks with attitude.**
- 65 Government needs to look at recycling of plastics from the opposite end of its life which can be reused and which becomes the only plastic to use., **Yes**

## Michaela Wright

13 Make business more transparent. How does HSBC reconcile its sustainability commitment against its continuing investment in fossil fuel and armament industries

Our defence policy clearly states we do not provide finance for anti-personnel mines, cluster bombs or other weapons. As I mentioned in my speech we are transitioning away from fossil fuels and have not financed any new coal-fired power plant projects since the policy was introduced. There are three except countries Bangladesh, Indonesia and Vietnam and we would only finance in these countries if an independent analysis confirmed the country has no reasonable alternative to coal.

The link below is to all our sustainability risk policies, which includes pdf for each policy

<https://www.hsbc.com/our-approach/risk-and-responsibility/sustainability-risk>

## Professor Martin Freer

Many thanks for the invitation yesterday, I enjoyed the discussion. I am not sure I can answer many of the questions (and there are rather a lot), but do think you should be feeding into the thinking of the task force as your document is a really good collection of the issues that people are concerned about.

## **6 Comments about the event**

*The event continues to grow in significance and with increasing relevance beyond our geographical restrictions. With the mix of innovators bringing solutions addressing climate change at a practical level you are doing all the right things. We are delighted to support your further activities.*

**Glenn Barrowman** University of Wolverhampton, and Black Country ESIF Sub committee low carbon representative.

*What an utterly amazing fact filled, diverse menu of dynamic presenters and topics covered yesterday. Many, many congratulations on your best ever event! As for "Turning Consequences" ? Well you certainly hit the nail on the head! You, your presenters and your supporting colleagues were all resolute to inform and support the program right to the end, which I can say certainly filled our boots!!*

**David Cole**

*This was the 5th event in the series and in my opinion the most significant so far. Climate change is upon us now in the UK, fact, just look out of the window. Our infrastructure is creaking all around us, unable to cope with extreme rain, heat or cold. Our healthy food supply is at risk as our environment and eco-systems are struggling to cope. Disappointingly our politicians and business leaders still view it all as business as usual. Next year's event needs to be a showcase where we really do walk the walk. Delegates should consider the impact of their traveling, the food should be locally sourced and mostly plant-based, with absolutely no single use plastic. The call for action is to actually take action?*

**Steven Davis**

*Thanks again and well-done to you and your colleagues – a welcome refresh of the issues, update on local momentum, and a chance to develop the network.*

**Gerard Davies**



Surprise additional guest speaker at the conference was Miss England, Dr Bhasha Mukherjee, who in her year of office is campaigning about diabetes and who spoke about the link between diabetes and climate change.



For a fifth year in succession, Jacqui Staunton of Climate Change Solutions of Coventry partnered with David Middleton to stage the event. The demarcation is that David designs and constructs the event and Jacqui delivers it.

## **More images from the 2019 event**



## 7. Pledges – by Chris Crean

On a day which started and finished with two men in very different hats (Lord Lieutenant then me) we all shared a packed agenda and learnt loads. As part of the final session delegates were asked to write a postcard to themselves which they will receive in March 2020 saying what they will have done by then as a result of their attendance at this conference.

A total of 41 letters and postcards were written with a variety of pledges and aspirations. One delegate hopes in 2020 to become a district councillor and Mayor of the West Midlands. While many are committing not to fly in 2020 and to cycle and walk more and change their diets. Here are a few of the aspirations and the anonymised full list is available .....

*“Establish a WASUP group in Balsall Heath”*

*“Be brave and use my passion and skills to make a difference wherever I am and at work”*

*“Write to your pension fund about divestment”*

*“No more talking only implementation”*

*“All contracts I bid for will include a sustainability statement whether they ask for one or not!!!”*

*“Campaign against HS2”*

*“Improve the sustainability of my employer”*

*“Get organised to have solar panels fitted to the school from south facing roof elevations so that we can become as net zero as possible in the near future.”*

One wag also noticed that the paper was from an old circular from the City Council about the provision of cycle stands. So a reply to officer was crafted agreeing that we need more cycle stands across the city but advising that they could also be electric charging points for electric bikes!!!!

Look out for your cards in March 2020 and good luck in your endeavours.

Chris Crean Nov 2019

## Post event correspondence

Hi David/ Jacqui

I wondered if you could share this with all delegates and speakers from last week's event.

### What have you done since the Climate Change Event??

- Purchased a hybrid car, swapping from diesel to electric/petrol vehicle
- Reviewed our future procurement practice at whg to ensure that we purchase materials from sustainable sources and our contracts will include robust clauses to deliver our strategy to combat climate change. This will cover £60m of capital investment in our housing stock over the next 4 years.

Great event guys, well done.

Paul Dockerill  
Director of Energy & Programme Management, whg

Hi Jacqui

Many thanks for these, we found the event really stimulating and informative. We are fellows of the RSA and came along as saw it on the website. We are thinking we could curate an event like this in Hertfordshire area in future with the RSA as so important to bring organisations and citizens together in this way to enable change and new thinking. We are also working with CAT in Wales who I am sure you must be connected with too, it would be good to have their input too in regards to Zero Carbon Britain hub, if you would like any further connections with them then just let me know.

There was lots of discussion about the need for New Collaborative Leadership - therefore some people may be interested in this type of development. Would it be possible to share this with the attendees? We would be happy to provide a 25% discount to the community if anyone did want to join us later this month. We are a not for profit co-operative. <https://indd.adobe.com/view/f0d5ca10-d673-494f-bfde-ab96982db1f0>

Very best  
Jill

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The team at The Tally Ho

----- *David Middleton* -----

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