

POOJA KISHINANI

MARION SMITH

STUDENT GUIDE TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

A Handbook for
Climate Grief,
Science and Action

WRITTEN AND COMPILED BY CLIMATE EMERGENCY MANCHESTER AND STUDENTS AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER



If you have picked
up this handbook
because you're
terrified about
climate change,

YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

INTRODUCTION

We know that the climate crisis is the biggest collective threat we face in the 21st century. In this year alone, we have witnessed a range of climate disasters and extreme weather events, such as the Siberian heat wave, the horrendous floods in Bangladesh, and the Australian, Amazonian and Californian bush fires.

The Coronavirus pandemic has also exposed the pre-existing inequalities in our societies. It has highlighted how the burdens of a crisis fall most heavily on marginalised, low-income groups. The climate crisis is and will be the same- the most brutal impacts will affect people in low-income, marginalised communities especially in the Global South (the so-called “developing nations”).

We are only living through the early days of the climate crisis. Things are going to get much, much worse in the future. If thoughts of the future keep you up at night, we want to assure you that you’re not the only one who is scared, anxious and overwhelmed. Your feelings are normal, moral and shared.

We have created this handbook as a resource for you to take action on these feelings and fears. It covers three areas. Firstly, the emotional side of climate grief. Secondly, accessibly explained facts and resources on climate change (hopefully with more sarcasm and humour than your average guide). Finally, and crucially, we talk about steps you can take towards climate activism. If you’re struggling to process these emotions, and don’t know where to begin in this panic, we’re hoping that this handbook will be a good start.

WHY IS THIS GUIDE SPECIAL?

What’s often missing in the climate conversation is the emotional aspect of confronting the climate crisis. As students, we are taught how to research facts and collect robust data to support our arguments. It is rare - too rare - for the conversation to steer towards climate emotions - the fear, anxieties and distress we experience while thinking about our future, or how rapidly the world is changing. While science and politics has exploded in mainstream climate conversations, the emotions underlying our reaction to the crisis have been left unexamined, or deemed unimportant. Climate emotions are often difficult to process and communicate. After all, it is much easier to look away from the abyss of climate panic and carry on with our daily lives.

This has a cost. When we ignore our difficult emotions they don’t just vanish. They lurk, they chip away at our sense of wellbeing, of safety. They undermine our morale and weaken our enthusiasm to work together, to work hard for a just, equitable future. That’s why this handbook talks about emotions before it talks about polar bears and molecules of carbon dioxide.

Because the writers and readers of this handbook are mostly students at the University of Manchester, we cover a list of societies and networks at university level. Beyond that, we look at what the University and the Manchester City Council are or aren’t doing about climate change, and what they could do if they were pressured by you and your friends.

Although international and national climate news is overwhelming, we also cover brief facts on climate science and international and national (UK) policy. The goal is to explain science and policy in a simple, accessible manner without all the jargon (and where we have used specialised language, we’ve included longer definitions in our glossary on page 52). But as we mentioned earlier, these topics are discussed only after we explore the emotional dimension of climate change. That’s our priority.

WHO ARE WE?

I'm a musician, music researcher and Master's student at the University of Manchester studying Ethnomusicology (that's basically the anthropology of Music). You might think that this has little to do with climate activism, and you'd be right- I would consider myself much more of a concerned citizen than an expert. I'm just an individual who's very frightened about climate change who's trying to do what they can to help at a local level!



MARION SMITH



POOJA KISHINANI

I'm a final year Politics, Philosophy and Economics student at the University of Manchester. As an aspiring policy maker, I'm interested in understanding the role of justice and equity in designing climate policy. Like Marion, I'm alarmed about climate change too, and this handbook is an attempt to channel my negative emotions into something constructive that benefits the wider student community.

We are also members of the organisation [Climate Emergency Manchester](#), a local group of volunteers trying to get better local policies, and better action on climate change in terms of energy, transport, food, democracy, among other areas. We're witnessing the positive effects of climate activism first-hand, and we wholeheartedly believe in making this movement as diverse and accessible to as many people as possible.

As hard as it may be to believe, we as authors of this handbook are only human- we make mistakes and fail a lot of the time! We certainly do not have all the answers (pro-tip: run away from anyone who claims to know it all!). We struggle to make sense of the mess in front of us: government inaction, big corporations infiltrating every aspect of our lives, mindless consumerism, etc. This handbook tries to bring together resources for students like us who are keen about climate action but may not know how to deal with setbacks along the way.

Our hope is that this handbook encourages you to examine your own emotional response to the climate crisis. We hope that it motivates you to start conversations around climate grief, and raise the topic with friends and family who may be unfamiliar with the concept. The resources may be useful for you to figure out how you can maintain morale, and persist even in the face of bureaucratic resistance. It contains practical advice for you to examine your own skills, and your groups' skills as well. After all, only when we are aware of our limitations can we know how we can improve.

No handbook can be exhaustive, and this handbook can never truly be "complete". There will always be more ideas, suggestions, comments, questions and improvements. That's why we strongly encourage you to get in touch with us at studenthandbook@climateemergencymanchester.net. Share your thoughts with us - let us know your thoughts on the handbook, and if we've missed something important (which we're sure we have somewhere!).

We hope that you find this handbook helpful.

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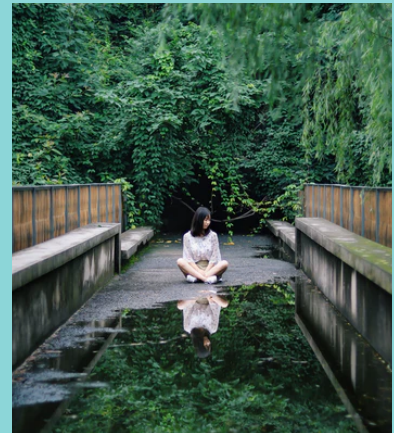
PART 1:

Climate Grief and Our Mental Health

THE EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE

There is a big and important difference between our intellectual and emotional understanding of climate change.

If we are familiar with the facts and data on climate science, we will be able to *intellectually* process the enormous consequences of rising global temperatures - sea levels rising, floods, droughts, food and water insecurity, forced migration and so on. It's clear that these facts point towards a bleak future.



These are also facts that are relatively easy to attain- with reading of reliable books and articles, and guidance from more experienced activists, we can access data on climate science. While some climate scientists continue to speak in a language full of jargon, many more, such as Kate Marvel, Julia Steinberger, Katherine Hayhoe, Peter Kalmus, Kevin Anderson and Michael Mann have conveyed scientific data in a manner that is simple and accessible.

It is far more difficult to process *emotional* and *psychological* responses to the climate crisis. First of all, it might baffle you to think that people carry on with their daily lives without giving any thought to the life of the planet- we're living in a climate emergency, after all. Our friends and families may also try to dismiss our worries, fearful of being infected by our bleak views.

There are also more structural factors- school curriculums rarely equip us with tools to navigate complex emotions. Witnessing the utter recklessness of our politicians is also infuriating and depressing in equal measures. Failing to act themselves, they glibly suggest that we should "chill out and watch a good old fashioned movie," instead of fighting for our future. Combine all these factors with the relentless stream of anxiety-provoking climate updates on our news and social media feeds, and it's easy to understand why so many of us are struggling to cope.

In this section, we describe some common emotional responses to the climate crisis. We provide a vocabulary, and set of tools, to help you make sense of your emotions, process them and reflect on what you have learnt, in the hope that you will carry it forward in your climate activism. Throughout the handbook, we emphasise that our advice is not a substitute for professional help- after all, we're in the same position as you. We are constantly learning new ways of engaging in climate activism, coping with our emotional responses and carrying on the fight for climate justice. This guide is certainly not exhaustive, but it's a start.

CLIMATE GRIEF

WHAT IS CLIMATE GRIEF?



Grief is the intense sorrow we experience in response to losing someone or something that we deeply care about.

We mourn the loss of loved ones, of relationships and jobs that didn't work out, of dreams that are left unfulfilled. In the same way, our sense of loss also extends to the rapid destruction of the planet we call home. We are grieving the loss of the planet as we know it, and those of us engaged in climate activism also understand that things will get much worse in the future unless we overhaul the systems that exploit our planet.

Climate grief, also known as ecological grief, is a relatively new concept in literature. It has emerged to describe how climate change has an impact on our mental health. It refers to the feelings of loss, despair and anxiety while witnessing collapse of ecosystems, ecological disasters, extinction of non-human species and more generally, the man-made harm inflicted on the planet. This may be a relatively new phenomenon to those of us in the Global North, but many people in the Global South who have already experienced the effects of climate change on a devastating scale have been dealing with these emotions for a long time.

Climate grief is an important concept because it highlights our psychological response to a rapidly warming planet; after all, the climate crisis is not an abstract, scientific phenomenon - its effects can be physically felt. To grieve the loss of our home is a legitimate mental health response to the climate crisis, and constitutes an important part of what it means to be a human in the Anthropocene.

HOW DO I RECOGNISE CLIMATE GRIEF?

Not everyone experiences grief in the same way. For some, grief can come out as anger and rage, especially at the inaction of governments and corporations to reverse the scale of the crisis. In recent years, research has also been focussed on understanding 'eco-anger' and 'climate rage.' Others may feel a surge of 'eco-anxiety' or 'climate anxiety' at the thought of time running out to save our planet. After all, we are running out of time to minimise climate catastrophe, and we have less than a decade left. Climate grief can also cause sadness, frustration, denial and confusion. More often than not, you will have experienced some form of each of these emotions.

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Climate grief can also be anticipatory or transitional - you may not experience climate grief immediately after a loss or ecological disaster. Instead, anticipatory grief is the process of grieving losses before they materialise. For instance, in the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, some of you may have experienced anticipatory grief - the feeling that things are about to get much worse.

Anticipatory grief can be hard to articulate because of the uncertainty associated with it: you do not know exactly when or how you will experience a tragic event. Similarly, the transitional nature of climate grief means that you grieve the loss of the planet as you live through these rapid, overwhelming transitions. The concept of 'solastalgia' may also be particularly helpful to explain this phenomenon. Solastalgia refers to the lived experience of environmental change, and sparks feelings of emotional or existential distress. As Albrecht (the philosopher who coined the term) puts it, solastalgia is "the homesickness you have when you are still at home".

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE CLIMATE GRIEF?

Climate grief is a difficult emotion to process, and it can often be a lonely experience. At times, you might even think it is easier to stay away from climate news, and suppress your emotions altogether (it really isn't helpful to do the second, but do think seriously about how much news you consume, when you consume it and why). This might be a short-term solution, but in order to sustain climate activism over a period of time, neglecting your emotions can hurt your wellbeing, morale and ability to take climate action. You have to confront your grief, not just to look after yourself, but to be effective in taking action.

Acknowledging grief becomes necessary to sustain individual and collective morale, and to deal with despair without giving into it. The next section addresses each of these elements in more detail.

CLIMATE GRIEF: QUICK SUMMARY

- We can experience grief not only at the loss of loved ones, but also at the loss of our planet, and of our imagined futures
- Climate grief can manifest as many different emotions, including rage, anxiety, sadness, frustration and denial
- Climate grief can happen to you before ecological loss or disaster is experienced on a personal level- it can be anticipatory.
- Acknowledging and confronting this grief is important for looking after your mental and emotional health, but also in order to effectively take action.

MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Disclaimer: This is NOT professional advice. The content of this handbook serves to provide information and guidance only, and should NOT be used as an alternative to professional advice.

DEALING WITH DESPAIR OR STARING INTO THE ABYSS

When we talk about ‘The Abyss’, we mean the overwhelming state of despair and/or panic/depression that many of us feel when we think about the climate crisis. This may include (but is not limited to) a loss of sleep or appetite, an inability to concentrate, feeling numb and/or withdrawn, and experiencing a sense of powerlessness and futility.



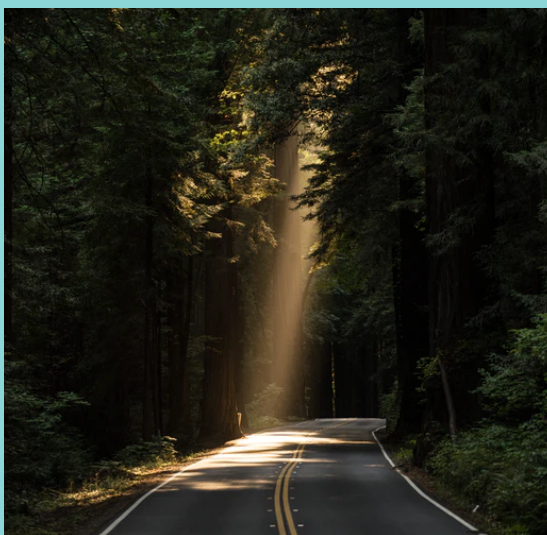
Most people find ways to avoid the abyss by turning their back or finding “busy work” that they can do right away. We as individuals often don't have the tools for much else. Or if we did have the tools, we've forgotten how to use them. There's not a language that we can share with other people, because we are scared that people might think we are strange if we talk about these feelings.

Dealing with despair and abyss-staring at a personal level is never about you as a person. It is always about you finding other people, ideally ones who are further along on the journey than you, because otherwise you're just going to spiral each other into an even worse place. And it's about understanding the seduction of urgent high-pitch action, even though yes, this is an emergency. You need to begin by understanding the psycho-dynamics going on within yourself and the psycho-social dynamics going on around you. That sounds complicated, but the one piece of good news we have is that this can be less difficult and complex than it sounds. Because, ultimately, you can find at least some of the answers you need through effective collective action.

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INDIVIDUAL MORALE MAINTENANCE

There are many reasons why you may not maintain your own morale. Maybe you set high expectations, or get caught up in the excitement and liberation of starting something new, which soon fades away. Or you may feel that you have no right to feel upset or anxious because of your privileges; after all, you are lucky that you don't have to worry about clean water, functioning public infrastructure or fighting for formal freedoms such as freedom of speech or assembly. You may bite down on those anxious feelings and remind yourself to "just toughen up." These feelings are completely valid, but if we lack individual morale maintenance skills or the language to talk about it, then it's likely that maintaining our individual morale over time becomes difficult. Moreover, with a lower individual morale, we are less useful to the group and we may also cause other people to lose their morale.



The solution to the problem of ignoring individual morale maintenance is to bring it out into the light, to have a buddy who you can talk things through with. This could be someone within or outside your climate activist group or broader friendship network. Talking to someone will also enable you to be conscious of the triggers that are currently setting you off- and remember, your triggers will most likely change over time. It's so important to recognise and accept the validity of your feelings, because that's the first step towards managing your emotions in a way that's self-compassionate.

Disengaging from the news for a while is a popular way of sustaining personal morale - after all, the daily storm of incompetence, corruption and malice that passes as official news is likely to make you wonder "is the fight even worth it?".

Another way of sustaining your morale is to actively seek out things that reinvigorate you when you feel like you are stuck in a slump. Running, gardening, writing fiction or poetry - anything that keeps you going when you feel drained. It is also important that you take a step back from high tempos of activity when you feel particularly down. Communication with your group is key here - let them know that you need a break and some time off.

KEY INTERVIEW:

DR JENNIFER ATKINSON



Dr Jennifer Atkinson is a climate educator and Senior Lecturer at the University of Washington, Bothell. She has written and spoken extensively on the mental health impacts of climate disruption. Her seminar on “Environmental Grief and Climate Anxiety” is one of the most popular courses in the US, and she has also collaborated with activists, psychologists, scientists and educators to provide resources for people to navigate the emotional toll of climate change.

What advice would you give to a university student who feels powerless in the face of climate change? Where or how should they begin to process their emotions?

I actually have a whole series of recommendations, which I discuss at length in my podcast [Facing It](#) (which explores strategies for coping with climate despair). The episodes are quite short - only 15 minutes each. But if I have to distill everything down to a single suggestion for fighting climate despair, it would be to TAKE ACTION. Action is the best antidote to grief - there's nothing more therapeutic.

In fact, I always tell my students that it's action that gives rise to hope, not the other way around. And I don't say this in the naïve sense of believing that a single person planting trees or going to a climate march is going to solve the problem.

The real power here is that getting engaged helps us build solidarity. One of the main reasons people feel hopeless and depressed in face of our climate threat is they think they're alone in their concern. And when we feel isolated, we are not likely to act.

So cognitive psychologists emphasize how important it is to imagine ourselves as part of a team. That sense of solidarity also counteracts the pervasive concern that our actions are too insignificant to matter (eg "Why even bother?") My own students hit this wall all the time, and feel helpless because their impact is dwarfed by the scale of the crisis.

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But if we see ourselves as working collectively rather than individually, we can recognize that all contributions sync up w/ a larger network of change. This is what Adrienne Marie Brown calls "emergent strategy": a movement that spirals out from all kinds of small, local actions and connections to create complex systems. Economist Donatella Meadows makes a similar point when she reminds us to think about leverage points "where a small shift in one thing can produce big changes in everything."

There's an example I love from Rebecca Solnit's book Hope in the Dark: In the 1960s, the Women's Strike for Peace was the 1st organized antinuclear movement in the U.S. and when interviewed, participants said they felt their efforts achieved nothing at the time. But in fact, they ultimately contributed to major victories like the ban on above ground nuclear testing (which was creating the radioactive fallout showing up in mother's milk and baby teeth.) Here's an excerpt from an interview with one of those activists. Solnit wrote:

The woman from WSP told of how foolish and futile she had felt standing in the rain one morning protesting at the Kennedy White House. Years later she heard Dr. Benjamin Spock -- who had become one of the most high-profile activists on the issue -- say that the turning point for him was spotting a small group of women standing in the rain, protesting at the White House. If they were so passionately committed, he thought, he should give the issue more consideration himself.

It's a reminder that social change is hard to measure and often invisible in the moment. So the next time you hear Greta Thunberg giving some big speech before the U.N., remember that she's just a single visible point resulting from the invisible work of thousands of unnamed people behind the scenes: scientists, activists, journalists who brought attention to the climate story, the teachers who ignited her awareness, some anonymous passerby who said an encouraging word to keep her going during the first winter of striking alone, and all the youth climate strikers spreading and amplifying that message & having impacts of their own which are impossible to trace or may not be visible until years down the road.

That should be reason for hope rather than discouragement. Because every time we have a conversation or share a book or inspire someone through our work, those actions may get multiplied by a larger community that we'll never even meet.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

One of the core team members of Climate Emergency Manchester, Calum McFarlane, has compiled [a list of resources](#) for parents who are worried about climate change. Although he includes the writings, ideas and groups that have enabled him and other parents to process their emotion and take timely action, the resources can be helpful for a wider audience. It includes things that you can do to change your lifestyle AND fight for systemic change (avoiding the false binary of individual vs collective action). There are also links to things you should read and think about, as well as resources to talk to children about climate change.

Another remarkable source we keep returning to is the '[Audacious Toolkit: Actions Against Climate Breakdown](#)' by Dr Julia Steinberger, and any of her blog posts, really! She conveys the urgency of the climate crisis while also highlighting actionable steps that we can take as individuals and collective groups.

Climate scientist and author Peter Kalmus has also written an excellent opinion piece on [living with the knowledge of the climate crisis](#).

We also highly recommend the following videos which focus on the psychology of climate action:

- Rosemary Randall's brilliant talk "[Climate, Psychology, Conversation: The unconscious dynamics of how we talk about climate change](#)" is a MUST-WATCH.
- Britt Way's talk "[How climate change can affect your mental health](#)"

Caroline Hickman has an excellent article on [psychotherapy and the climate and biodiversity crisis](#), and her [response to a young student](#) terrified of the climate crisis. Her Ted Talk on the [psychological barriers to climate change](#) is also worth a watch. Greenpeace have also created an [infographic](#) that references Carole Hickman's writing in a quick, concise format.

A mini-lecture by Dr Kate Jeffery, Professor of Behavioural Neuroscience at UCL on '[The Psychology of Climate Inaction](#)'

We'd also recommend this [vulnerably honest short video](#) on scientists describing grief and hope about climate change:

This isn't a resource that is climate change specific, but Alessandra Pigni's book *The Idealist's Survival Kit: 75 Simple Ways to Avoid Burnout* may be some writing that is helpful.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

This is another disclaimer that the authors of this handbook are not mental health professionals. If your climate grief and/or anxiety and depression is impacting your life beyond the point where you can function healthily, please seek professional help.

This is a list of both national and Manchester-specific organisations that you could contact:

SAMARITANS:

<https://www.samaritans.org/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/>

NHS PSYCHOLOGICAL THERAPIES SERVICE (IAPT):

<https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/find-a-psychological-therapies-service/>

MIND UK RESOURCES FOR THERAPY AND COUNSELLING:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/drugs-and-treatments/talking-therapy-and-counselling/how-to-find-a-therapist/>

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER COUNSELLING SERVICE:

<https://www.counsellingservice.manchester.ac.uk/get-help/>

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER SELF-HELP RESOURCES:

<https://www.counsellingservice.manchester.ac.uk/buildyourmentalhealthexpertise/>

MMU COUNSELLING SERVICE:

<https://www.mmu.ac.uk/student-life/wellbeing/counselling-and-mental-health/>

SALFORD UNIVERSITY COUNSELLING SERVICE:

<https://www.salford.ac.uk/askus/our-services/wellbeing-and-counselling/counselling>

ART AS CATHARSIS

Throughout the years, art has been a powerful tool to channel hopes, fears and anxieties for the future. Art is not only cathartic, but it also creates a sense of community. As the brilliant James Baldwin put it:

“You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented in the history of the world, but then you read.”

Here are some useful resources that can help you navigate your feelings and emotions in response to the climate emergency.

(Remember: it is normal to feel overwhelmed - it is a completely rational response. But also bear in mind that you're not alone in this struggle, no matter how lonely it feels.)

BOOKS

Non-Fiction

Active Hope by Joanna Macey
How Soon is Now? By Daniel Pinchbeck
The Great Derangement by Amitav Ghosh
Hope in the Dark by Rebecca Solnit
Mourning Nature by Ashlee Cunsolo and Karen Landman
Being the Change by Peter Kalmus
Facing the Climate Emergency by Margaret Klein Salamon

Fiction

Parable of the Sower by Octavia Butler
The Maddaddam Trilogy by Margaret Atwood
The Overstory by Richard Powers
American War by Omar El Akkad
Flight Behavior by Barbara Kingsolver
Dry by Neal Shusterman and Jarrod Shusterman
Trajectories by Rosemary Randall (see review and interview with author)



DOCUMENTARIES

An Inconvenient Truth (2006)
Tomorrow (2015)
Regeneration (2010)
Planet of the Humans (2019)
Years of Living Dangerously (2014)
Merchants of Doubt (2014)
2040 (2019)
Before The Flood (2016)

CONTINUED

ART AS CATHARSIS (CONTINUED)



PODCASTS

Climate Crisis Conversations
Hot & Bothered by Dissent Magazine
In Conversation: A Listening Series on Climate Justice & Collective Liberation by
How to Survive the End of the World by the Brown Sisters
Mothers of Invention by Maeve Higgins and Mary Robinson
Facing It: a podcast about love, loss and the natural world by Jennifer Atkison
The Anthropocene Reviewed by John Green
Manchester Green New Deal Podcast

COMEDY SKETCHES

(If Dark Humour's your thing)

Foil Arms and Hog- Mother nature catches earth burning fossil fuels
Foil Arms and Hog- Awkward interview with planet earth
College Humour- climate change is the ultimate birth control

MUSIC

Full Album

Hozier- *Wasteland, Baby!*
Father John Misty- *Pure Comedy*

Songs

Billie Nomates- Hippy Elite
Father John Misty- Now I'm learning to Love the War; Holy Shit
Sam Lee- The Garden of England
Anonhi- 4 Degrees
Billie Eilish- All the Good Girls Go to Hell
Paul McCartney- Despite Repeated Warnings
Joan Shelley- The Fading
The 1975 feat. Greta Thunberg- The 1975
Emmy the Great- Solar Panels
Joni Mitchell- Big Yellow Taxi
Hozier- Jackboot Jump
Weyes Blood- A Lot's Gonna Change
Sufjan Stevens- America
Queen - Hammer to Fall
Crossby, Stills, Nash & Young - Wooden Ships
Elvis Costello - Waiting for the End of the World
Guns N' Roses - If The World
Sam Fender - Hypersonic Missiles
Leonard Cohen - Everybody Knows

And not strictly a formally-released song, but
'Greta Thunberg sings Swedish Death Metal'

You can also listen to our spotify playlist!

PART 2:

Climate Facts (But
Make It Accessible)

CLIMATE SCIENCE

SOME BRIEF FACTS

So we've dealt with the at-times difficult (but definitely necessary) touchy-feely side of climate change. Now we're going to cover some facts about climate science and climate policy for those who want more information.

We've read enough guides ourselves to know that these can be incredibly boring- but don't worry, we've tried our best to keep these sections brief, accessible to read, and vaguely sarcastic/enjoyable reading.

We're hoping that the definitions included here are fairly self-explanatory, but if you're unsure of any specialised terminology we use, it should be covered in the glossary on page 52. If it's not, please let us know.

If you are an individual or group campaigning on climate change, you have to find or invent ways of explaining the science behind what's going on. Fortunately this is not difficult. Our favourite one is this:

You are lying in bed under a duvet on a nice Sunday morning. It is not too hot or too cold. If your mum comes in and shouts at you to get up and stop being lazy, and pulls away the duvet, well pretty quickly, you'll be too cold. If she's in a surprisingly good mood and for some reason throws another duvet over you, for a minute it might feel great. But pretty soon you're overheating.

Well, there is a duvet of what's called greenhouse gases around the planet we have known about since 1824, when [Fourier](#) published a scientific paper that there must be something trapping a certain amount of the sun's heat, otherwise, the planet would be a lot colder, based purely on its distance from the sun.

In the 1850s and 60s, [Eunice Foote](#), and the more well-known [John Tyndall](#) pointed the finger at "carbonic acid", now called carbon dioxide (CO₂). In 1896, a Swedish scientist [Svante Arrhenius](#) calculated -

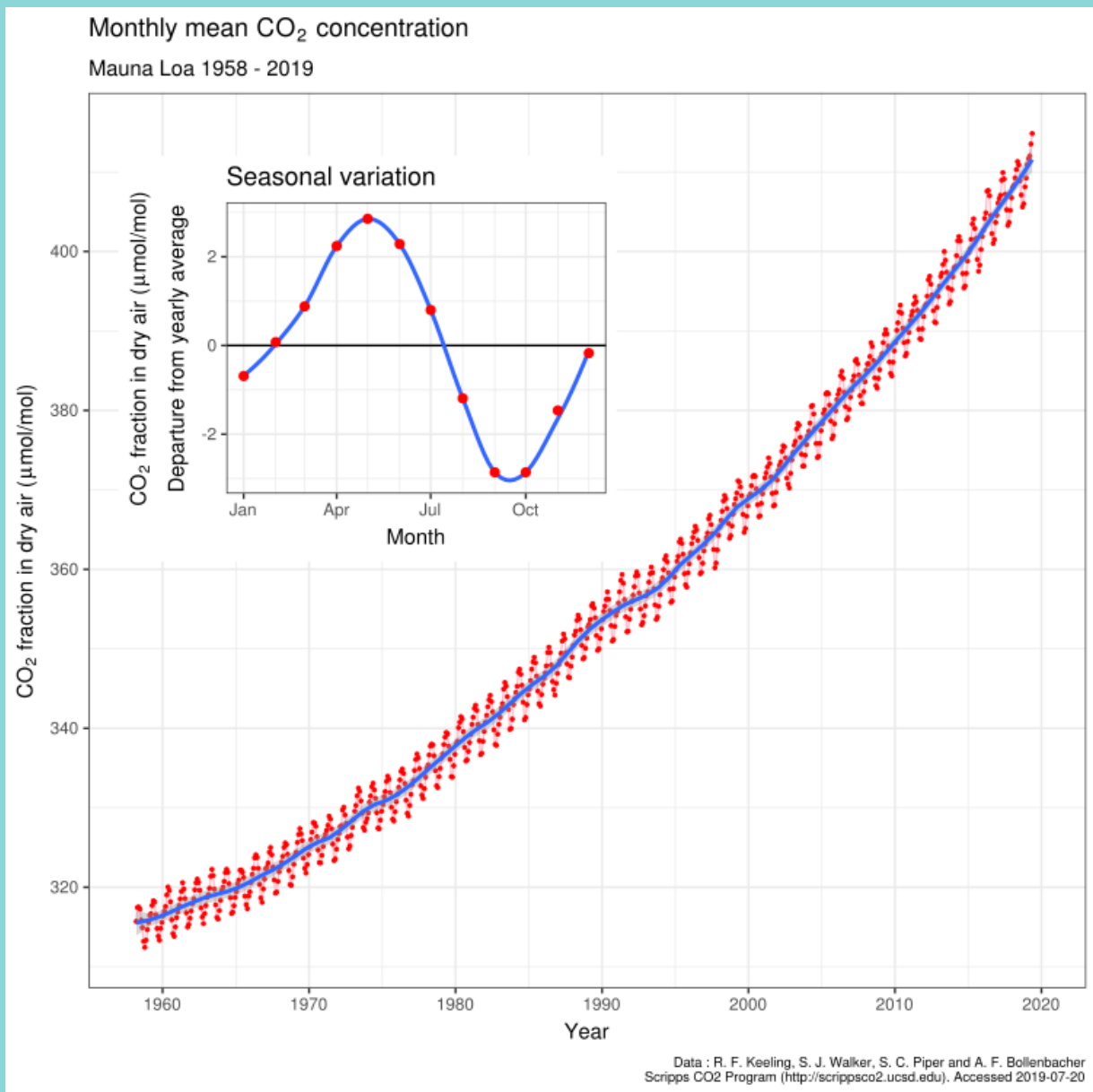


and it took him a year - that if you'd doubled the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere, you would get somewhere between roughly three and four degrees of additional global warming.

Since the late 1950s, scientists have documented that carbon dioxide is building up in the atmosphere thanks to our relentless obsession with burning fossil fuels. We are making the "duvet" thicker and thicker. The consequences are melting ice caps, rising sea levels, changing ecosystems, melting tundra, more extreme weather events. These changes will continue, with consequences for humans and other animals on this planet.

[The metaphor is not perfect. In the duvet analogy the heat is coming from inside the human body, and it's not being able to get out into space because of the duvet. In our planet's reality, the heat is coming from the sun. But it's still a helpful illustrative tool.]

Once people understand the duvet metaphor, you can then explain that there's a scientific assessment called the [Keeling Curve](#) which measures the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere, and that nobody denies that is going up and up and up. This is just about the base level of information you need to know to explain climate change basics to a complete beginner.



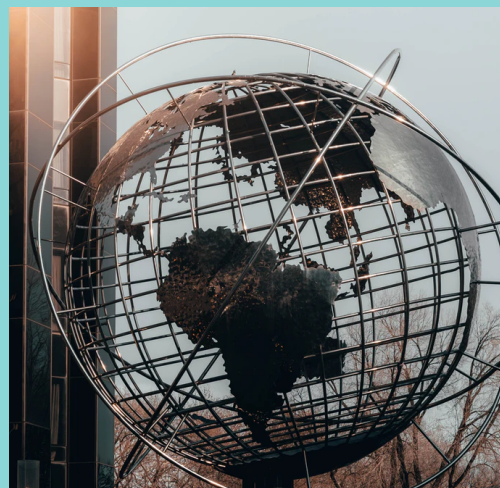
Credit: Wikipedia

The Keeling Curve, first developed and monitored by Charles David Keeling, is a graph detailing the accumulation of carbon dioxide in the Earth's atmosphere. It's based on continuous measurements monitored from 1958 to the present day from the Mauna Loa Observatory, Hawaii. As you can see, the presence of CO₂ in the atmosphere has climbed, and continues to climb significantly- which holds terrifying consequences for the planet, as discussed on the previous page.

INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE POLICY

A BRIEF HISTORY

Scientists have been aware that carbon dioxide was building up in the atmosphere since the late 1950s. Although one or two were particularly concerned, on the whole there was a “let's wait and see what unfolds” approach. By the mid-1970s, however, a consensus started forming that CO₂ was going to be a major problem. In the early 80s, there were efforts, including by Al Gore, to get Congress and the Senate in the United States interested and there were similar rumblings in Germany, Australia and the UK. The key point is that in the mid-80s, the ozone hole- the thinning of patches of the ozone layer that surrounds the earth- became a cause celebre, or “a thing” as the young people used to say.



In 1985, an ozone treaty was agreed in Vienna but the US government was not happy that atmospheric scientists - as they perceived it - were dictating international policy. So after an important scientific meeting in Villach, Austria, the US Secretary of State George Shultz made sure that the United States was not “bounced” into a treaty on carbon dioxide as they had been on ozone.

In 1988, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was created. The word “governmental” is crucial here; it is not “international”. It is about governments being able to keep an eye on what's going on, and able to water down the “summaries for policymakers.” (The attacks on the actual science reports, assessment reports and Working Groups - that was left to the oil companies and outsiders). In the summer of 1988, climate change exploded onto the public policy agenda and public awareness, partly because there was a very severe drought in the American Midwest and the Mississippi River was at its lowest point, and there was an enormous heatwave in North America. And policy entrepreneurs managed to play a blinder. James Hansen's testimony on the 23rd of June is seen as a turning point. The outcome was that people like George Bush Senior and Margaret Thatcher started giving big public speeches, promising something would be done.

It took about a year until the middle of 1989 for the fight back by the oil and companies, the automobile manufacturers and the people who disliked the idea of environmentalism of limits to fight back, but they did. So you could argue that the founding of the Global Climate Coalition, an international lobbyist group representing industry interests, marks the beginning of that fight back. Obviously there are finer details which we cannot delve into in this handbook.

In 1990, the first assessment report of the IPCC was released. The delayed negotiations for an international treaty about climate change only began in January of 1991. And nothing much happened until close to the end of the negotiating period.

CONTINUED

INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE POLICY (CONTINUED)

It's worth highlighting the position of countries in the Global South, who rightly pointed out that they did not cause this problem because they didn't burn enormous amounts of oil, coal and gas. And yet they were going to suffer the consequences for it in terms of sea level rise, heatwaves, changes to agriculture, etc. Basically, the Global North had caused the problem, and they had to do something about it. You can imagine that the Australians and the British, and the French and Americans were not pleased or enthused.

But the real standoff came between the Americans and the French. The French said, "Well, this is a serious issue. So the treaty that we all will sign in Rio, in June of 1992 has to have targets and timetables for emissions reductions by industrial countries." The Americans replied, "We didn't just win the Cold War to be tied down by international agreements. And if you keep targets and timetables in the treaty, we ain't coming to Rio, and we ain't signing your treaty. And your precious document will languish, useless, just like the International Law of the Sea." So it was a staring contest. And the French blinked.

This means that ever since 1992, when the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was signed and then ratified by individual nations, the problem of deciding who will reduce emissions, by how much and by when has persisted. All these different agreements ensued: the Berlin Mandate, the Kyoto Protocol, the Montreal process, the Bali Roadmap, the Copenhagen agreement, and the most recent Paris Agreement. None of them has been able to overcome the fact that back in 1992, the French blinked.

Meanwhile we are still deluding ourselves with technological fantasies about carbon capture and storage, or biosequestration or whatever. Meanwhile, emissions of greenhouse gases from human activity have gone UP sharply, rather than down.

So that was not a "short explanation" of the International framework. But it's a hidden history. It's a forgotten history, because many of the shiny-faced people now running around producing shiny reports were three years old when Rio was signed, and were never taught this stuff. And anyway, they are reluctant to talk about naked political power because they're technocrats, and they get nervous when they have to talk about the facts of life. If you want to know more, check out the longer version of the article [here](#).

Marc Hudson, another core group member of Climate Emergency Manchester, has had two articles published on The Conversation which might be of interest:

[IPCC: the dirty tricks climate scientists faced in three decades since first report](#)

[Don't bet on the UN to fix climate change – it's failed for 30 years](#)

INTERNATIONAL POLICY: QUICK SUMMARY

- Scientists have been aware of the effects of CO₂ since the 1950s, but not much was politically considered until the mid '80s.
- The IPCC was formed in 1988, and public policy agenda began heavily featuring climate change the same year.
- UNFCCC signed in 1992, and a many different climate change agreements have ensued.
- The citizens of countries in these agreements are repeatedly told about advanced technological fantasies that will solve climate change, whilst at the same time greenhouse gas emissions continue to climb.

UK NATIONAL CLIMATE POLICY

A BRIEF HISTORY



There has been awareness of the possibility of CO₂ build-up all the way back to the late 1960s and early 70s. You can see it there in the [Reith Lectures of 1970](#) and [The blueprint for survival](#), published by the Ecologist, a British environmental journal, in 1972. The British State set up a Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution, which produced detailed reports about all manner of problems, and sometimes these were acted on (e.g. acid rain is no longer a problem).

But on the whole, around climate change, if you want to see elite politicians [making nice speeches](#), you need fast forward to 1988 when Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher started making speeches and then the Hadley Centre for Climate Science is launched within the Met Office. This was at the time of the “dash for gas”, where new gas burning infrastructure was created, partly due to Thatcher’s hatred of coal miners. This switch from coal to gas reduced emissions slightly, which the UK could then claim credit for. The Major government (1990-97) signed Rio, and said it would create a sustainable society. Yeah, no.

Moving forward, the Blair government (1997-2007) had various promises, especially a renewed interest in market mechanisms. As a result, the “climate change levy” (a sort of tax on some businesses) was introduced in 2001, which slowly morphed into the emissions trading scheme at the EU level starting around 2005. In its 1997 manifesto the Blair government also stated that it would set up an academic collaboration, which led to the creation of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research in late 2000. Then, in 2005, Blair also made climate change one of the themes of the G8 meeting held in Scotland in order to try and regain some of the political capital and prestige that had been lost with the illegal Iraq invasion.

You then have this very interesting period for five years or so where there was a bipartisan consensus (see academic article [here](#)). The Labour government, the Conservatives and Liberal Democrats in opposition were all competing around who's going to have the best Climate Change Bill. In 2008 the Climate Change Act gave us the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) with its annual reports and its five year budgets.

The next big change is the coming of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government in 2010. Climate was already “off the agenda” because the Copenhagen conference in December 2009 had been a catastrophe. The Cameron government (2010-2016) set about having a “bonfire of the quangos” (quasi non-governmental organisations). Among these were a couple of relatively/really good ones- the Royal Commission on Environmental Protection (its first report had mentioned carbon dioxide as a possible problem- imagine that!) and the Sustainable Development Commission, set up by the Blair Government.

CONTINUED

UK NATIONAL CLIMATE POLICY (CONTINUED)

These were MORE than just “sheltered workshops” - they regularly produced detailed critiques of government environmental policy which were quoted in the mainstream media, and performed a useful ‘watchdog’ and ‘services to the wider green movement’ function. It was a clever and impactful thing to kill them off, from the perspective of a Government that had no real interest in dealing with the pending ecological debacle, and their absence is still a problem today.

The Coalition Government made a minor attempt - because of the Lib Dems being present - to do something about retro-fitting the UK’s 25 million houses with a so called “[Green Deal](#)”, a complex scheme which got pitifully low levels of uptake (15,000) and was abolished when the Conservatives formed their government in 2015. Overall, the foot was off the accelerator altogether (see academic article Gillard 2016 [here](#)).

The election of a Conservative government in its own right, was in fact a major turning point, but not in a good way. It brought increased hostility to renewables (especially onshore wind. Ironically off-shore wind boomed), an attempted love affair with fracking, and more taxpayer money shovelled into the bottomless pit labelled “nuclear.” (See Sovacool Stirling and Johnson on [policy mixes for incumbency](#)). We now have a far right government, and that you can trace the personal, ideological and financial links between it, the climate deniers and brexiteers [see the desmogblog stuff](#)), all headquartered at 55 Tufton Street in London. The links between rightwing populism and climate scepticism have also been outlined in this [article](#).

The UK bid aggressively to host the UNFCCC big annual conference (to be held in Glasgow in November 2021 rather than 2020) not because of any particular interest in global climate politics, but as a way of showing that a post-Brexit UK was still a major diplomatic “player.” Meanwhile, the Committee on Climate Change, set up as part of the Climate Change Act 2008, says there simply aren’t the policies required to hit future carbon reduction targets.

The UK keeps spinning the line about having reduced its own emissions, while carefully ignoring that consumption-based metrics show essentially no change since 1990. This means we have “outsourced” our emissions to other countries. The [most recent progress report by the CCC](#) also shows that the UK is falling behind its commitment to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Once again, this is only a brief history of UK climate policy. To know more, you can check out the [CEM website](#).

NATIONAL POLICY: QUICK SUMMARY

- 1988 was when UK politicians like Thatcher first started making speeches on climate change
- The Blair government (1997-2007) made some promises on climate change, introduced a climate change levy (a form of tax on businesses) and the Tyndall Centre
- The 2010 coalition with the Lib Dems held some positives in climate policy, but the election of the Conservatives alone put an end to many of these.
- Today, climate change policies in UK government are invariably tied to Brexit-related policies- no real change in consumption has been made since 1990.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER AND CLIMATE ACTION

Here we provide some information about the University of Manchester as an organisation, and shine a light on the work being done by students at the University. These are organisations that you can also be part of.

The University, like any large organisation (a company, a hospital, a whatever) uses a lot of energy and resources, and like most, has developed plans which (cl)aim to do something about this. One thing you could do in your time here is help to hold them to account for these plans. Are they on target? Are the plans ambitious enough anyway.

But a university is NOT exactly like a company, a hospital or a whatever, because it is also a place where research about the world is done, and where young people receive additional opportunities to become more informed, more thoughtful people.

So, how is the university doing on THAT? Is climate change genuinely embedded in the curriculum? Are students being taught the basics of how to “be” citizens, who are critical and effective actors who can be useful to society in the 21st century?



The University of Manchester is the largest single-site university in the UK, and has one of the biggest student communities as well. As of 2019, there are over 26,855 undergraduate students and 13,395 students enrolled in postgraduate taught and research courses. Furthermore, there are currently 12,800 staff members engaged in academic teaching and research, as well as IT, administrative and secretarial services. In July 2019, the University declared a climate emergency.

FACULTIES AND SCHOOLS

The University is divided into three faculties, and within each are different Schools. A detailed guide of each Faculty and its constituent Schools is available [here](#). A brief overview includes:

- **The Faculty of Humanities** which consists of four academic Schools - the Alliance Manchester Business School, the School of Arts, Languages and Cultures, the School of Environment, Education and Development and the School of Social Sciences
- **Faculty of Science and Engineering** comprises the School of Engineering (chemical engineering, computer science, mechanical, aerospace and civil engineering) and the School of Natural Sciences (physics, astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, earth and environmental sciences)
- **Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health** which is made up of the School of Biological Sciences, the School of Health Sciences and the School of Medical Sciences offering cross-disciplinary research.

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We believe that you as students should focus at least some of your energies on your school - what is it teaching undergraduates, is it up to date, is it relevant, and also at the Faculty level. Is climate change education embedded not just in nice mission statements but also in all of the day-to-day thinking and doing. This is of course not glamorous, but on the up-side, you won't get arrested/tasered/deported.

These are some schools and institutes within the University that may be of interest:

The **Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research** was founded in 2000 as a collaboration across several UK universities, including University of Manchester. It engages in multidisciplinary research across energy systems, carbon budgets and pathways, the water-energy-food nexus, communities, and circular economy. Furthermore, the research undertaken at Tyndall has been useful for guiding policy responses to climate mitigation and adaptation at the regional, national and international level. Academics, research fellows, post doctoral research associates and PhD researchers at Tyndall Manchester also collaborate with researchers at the University of East Anglia, Newcastle University and Cardiff University. More information on the research at Tyndall is also available on their [website](#).

The **Sustainable Consumption Institute** was established in 2008 and has since worked on transformations to more resource-efficient consumption and production systems. Research at the Institute focuses on four themes: studying social practices in our everyday lives, system innovation and transformation, examining the politics of unsustainability and working towards sustainability by engaging multiple stakeholders. Like the Tyndall Centre, the research undertaken at the SCI has also informed policy responses at different levels, including initiatives at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the the UK Women's Budget Group Commission on a Gender Equal Economy. More information is available on the [SCI website](#).

The **Manchester Environmental Research Institute (MERI)** brings together academics from health sciences, engineering, social sciences and humanities to foster interdisciplinary environmental research. The research at MERI focuses on human health, food and agriculture, water resources, energy and changing ecosystems. You can find out more on the [MERI website](#).

There are also MANY academics who are interested in climate change, both personally and professionally. If you threw a rock at the Arthur Lewis building (we are speaking metaphorically here), you'd probably hit one (please don't do this). Geographers, Political Scientists, Sociologists "etc." We've included an interview with one such academic, Dr Joe Blakey, on the following page.

There is also an online course, which ANYONE can take, and counts towards your degree. **University College for Interdisciplinary Learning (UCIL)** offers modules to address the urgency of climate change. The 2020-21 course units focus on climate change include [Climate Change and Society](#), addressing [21st Century Challenges](#) and [applying the Sustainable Development Goals in practice](#).

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THE UNIVERSITY'S PLANS AND PROMISES: EMISSIONS, TARGETS AND MEASURING PROGRESS

The University has developed a Sustainable Resource Plan to encourage resource efficiency. The plan covers ten delivery areas: Carbon reduction (Scope 1 and 2 emissions), energy efficiency, water conservation, waste reduction, responsible purchasing and sustainable travel, technical spaces, construction, IT services, catering and conferencing. Targets have been set across each of these areas until 2022, and the University has committed to publishing annual reports that outline specific action plans to meet these targets. A detailed plan of each delivery programme and its 2022 targets can be accessed [here](#) and [here](#). The devil is always in the detail, and your skills at researching, and asking awkward questions, and knowing when you are being distracted or diverted, are needed to help scrutinise and figure out what is actually going on.

Focussing on carbon emissions, the University has proposed to reduce Scope 1 and 2 emissions by 40% by 2020 calculated from its baseline year 2007/08. The most recent update (in 2018/19) shows that the University is on track to meeting its goal; it has reduced its emissions by 37% from the baseline measure. However, it must be noted that these emissions pertain to scope 1 and 2 activities. Put simply, Scope 1 refers to all direct emissions produced by the burning of fuels, owned and controlled by an organisation. Scope 2 refers to the indirect emissions from the generation of electricity purchased and used by the organisation (e.g. the emissions from supplying energy to power computers, heating and cooling systems). Scope 3 emissions, also known as consumption-based emissions, refers to other indirect emissions from sources that an organisation does not own or control. For instance, this includes emissions from the procurement of goods and services which are consumed by an organisation but may be produced in another region or country.

The university's carbon budget has focused on scope 1 and 2 emissions. The Sustainable Resources plan contains non-carbon targets for scope 3 activities, such as Active Travel measures and Sustainable Catering targets. However, while writing this section, we were not able to access a detailed report on Scope 3 activities, either because it was restricted for the use of staff or because it was archived. This is hardly democratic or transparent. If it wants to be taken seriously, the university needs to reveal these numbers and to commit to publishing them regularly.

CLIMATE ACTION INITIATIVES AT THE UNIVERSITY

As a part of its Social Responsibility initiative, UoM has launched the 10,000 Actions challenge to educate and support staff by encouraging sustainable personal actions. It is the biggest sustainability initiative for staff in the UK. As a part of the University's 'Ethical Grand Challenges' initiative, all first-year undergraduates can participate in the Sustainability Challenge which involves working in interdisciplinary teams to brainstorm sustainability-focused solutions and ideas while developing plans for an ideal sustainable future campus. Feedback in previous years about the Sustainability Challenge as a semi-compulsory activity has been mixed, to say the least.

The University has also committed to eliminate avoidable single-use plastics by 2022, and is working with regional universities and colleges in the Greater Manchester area to achieve this goal. So far, the university has encouraged 'plastic-free' events on campus and has also ensured that Food on Campus outlets sell food that is wrapped in biodegradable plant-based packages.

The Students' Union has also expanded the 'Want not Waste' shop which offers a range of plastic-free, zero waste products. The Students Union is a separate body from the academic university, and is both run by and for students. This means that the SU has the power to campaign with and on behalf of the students it supports. It is, as the name suggests, a Union separate to the University hierarchy.

WHAT IS UoM MISSING?

A CLIMATE CURRICULUM

The climate crisis - and especially climate justice - needs to be integrated within the core curriculum across courses.

The University curriculum has not kept up with changing times. This is because a curriculum takes time to develop and changing it takes time and energy. It has enormous inertia, for a variety of other reasons too. Therefore climate change is often dealt with in a haphazard and inconsistent manner across the Faculties and schools.



Given that climate change is going to dominate the lives of today's students over the coming decades, we think the climate crisis should not just be a topic that is explored only in modules such as atmospheric sciences or environmental politics. We must all understand that the climate crisis compels all of us to act. No matter what path we choose to pursue - physics, policy making, music, business and so on - we need to act collectively to address the crisis.

The University must change its curriculum in the upcoming months (yes, it is that urgent) and years. It should not just "teach climate facts" to students, but it must spark conversations among students. This shouldn't just be limited to the 'Sustainability Challenge' which is offered in the first week of university (and, as alluded to above, isn't always viewed as a highly engaging activity by students who have taken part). There must be an ongoing process - students need to develop the skills and tools to brainstorm creative solutions and work with people from different academic backgrounds. Students from all courses should leave university able to analyse and discuss the impacts of the climate crisis on our ecosystems.

Climate science and data are needed, but on their own are not enough. Students need the tools to tackle the ethical questions raised by the climate crisis. For instance, the conversation of 'climate migrants' or 'climate refugees' should not just focus on the number of vulnerable people who will be displaced from their homes. It must also cover the ethical implications of our choices - is it morally defensible for us to refuse entry to refugees on the grounds that "we lack the resources" to support them, or that they are "not our country's problem"? These are difficult conversations. Not everyone will agree, but that's the whole point - we need everyone to participate in these conversations. We need to work together, despite our differences

Most importantly, there also needs to be a "safer space" for students to voice their fears and anxieties about the climate crisis. We can come up with the most brilliant ideas, but they will rarely become reality without individual and collective morale maintenance. Emotional intelligence, adaptability and tenacity are some of the most essential skills we need. If there's one thing that the last few years of climate inaction by governments has taught us, it is that persistence is key. But in spite of this, universities rarely take these elements into account while designing courses and teaching methods. It's all very "information deficit filled, tick the box, move on..."

WHAT'S UoM MISSING? (CONTINUED)

In creating this Handbook, we spoke with students across different faculties and departments, and the Education Officer at the Students' Union. We asked them what they thought was missing in their courses, and what was needed. Their answers are below:

"I study BSc Psychology and Sustainability is a rarely mentioned topic. We covered one lecture in first year about encouraging green behaviours as an example exercise for a team work project. I'm passionate about applying theories of lifestyle behaviour change to sustainability and there is definitely a gap for this in existing modules on the course as well as scope for a complete module on sustainability on its own. At the very least, the climate crisis should be covered as a part of the welcome week the same way social justice issues are covered. I want to see climate change and sustainability embedded as examples with an impact on mental health just as frequently as other lifestyle experiences like smoking or exercising"

HOLLY, THIRD YEAR BSC PSYCHOLOGY STUDENT

"I'm a final year Mechanical Engineering student, and it was disappointing that there are no modules relating to the ongoing climate crisis in the first two years of the course. As a concerned citizen, I am eager to learn more about the climate crisis, and I would greatly appreciate it if there was an optional module offered to all students each term addressing different aspects of sustainability. The University of Manchester certainly has a brilliant opportunity to empower students to work towards a green revolution and they must take it!"

MATTHEW, THIRD YEAR MENG STUDENT

"I studied BSc International Business, Finance and Economics and sustainability was rarely mentioned throughout my degree. This is troubling as large businesses are consistently the worst polluters of our environment. If we want a viable future, I believe we must embed sustainability into all of our business practices. It's a shame that the next generation of business leaders are not being taught to see this as a priority and I worry about what this means for our planet."

**SARAH, THIRD YEAR BSC INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS,
FINANCE AND ECONOMICS STUDENT**

“The Climate Crisis is the ultimatum 12-year challenge of our time. It is so complex and interlinked with other social/cultural/political struggles that sometimes you could feel so powerless. Even if you know what you can change at your level (like reducing plastic packaging, changing your diet and not fly,...), the reality is, 60% of global emissions are made by corporations and industries funded by global institutions and banks. These are which a lot of our students aim to get employed in and seek for better social and employable mobility. Embedding the Climate Crisis in the curriculum is not simply about behavioural change - but empowerment of a future workforce and generation as a whole, that know the challenges faced by their very own field and know how to collaborate creatively between them: engineers, artists, economists, politicians, sociologists - you name it! The truth is: the change we can make is proportional to the time we spent doing it, what better way to do this than in our full-time jobs? And what better way to start this at the seed of your careers - University of Manchester and 140 courses to deliver.”

**LAETITIA ALEXANDRATOS, EDUCATION OFFICER
AT THE STUDENTS UNION MANCHESTER**

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

Although the University has developed a Sustainable Resources Plan and a Living Campus Plan outlining goals across different areas, this information could be made more accessible to students. Prior to writing this handbook, we had little knowledge about the University's 2022 targets, and we are highly motivated. What's it like for people who don't (yet) care that much?

To increase accountability, more students have to become aware of the commitments made by the University, so they can help evaluate the annual progress reports. The University should reflect on ways in which this information could be made more accessible to students. For instance, the detailed 20-page reports on climate action should also be complemented by a short one-page summary documenting the goals and how we reach them (focus on the action, eliminate the rhetoric). Short videos should be made (they don't have to be slick, but they do have to exist).

KEY INTERVIEW:

DR JOE BLAKEY

Dr Joe Blakey is a Lecturer in Human Geography at the University of Manchester. His research interests include carbon accounting and politics, governance, sustainability and zero-carbon cities. He is also a member of the Manchester Zero Carbon Advisory Group, and leads the sub-group on indirect emissions.



What is a carbon budget (yes, you're allowed to use the diet analogy), what is Manchester's budget and how are we doing on keeping to it?

“It’s a well-worn analogy, but a carbon budget is a diet plan. The idea is that you restrict the amount of carbon we consume over a period of time. Limiting the amount of carbon we can emit is a really good idea because continuing to pump carbon into the atmosphere is a little like having someone pile lots of blankets on you when you are already too hot (see our Climate Science section). The planet is going to get hotter and we cannot simply kick these extra layers of carbon off. The effects of this are already being felt – the planet has already warmed by 1 degree against pre-industrial levels.

Ideally, we need to limit the amount of carbon we can use by as much as possible as soon as we can. The trouble is, carbon emissions underpin pretty much everything we do. So scientists have said that if we really must keep emitting carbon it would be best to limit warming to somewhere around 1.5 degrees (against pre-industrial levels) to avoid the worst effects and definitely not more than 2 degrees. As such, there is a limited amount of carbon we can pump into the atmosphere whilst staying within this safer (but still not safe) level of warming. But with a finite amount of carbon who gets to emit what?

Manchester has adopted a carbon budget of 15 MtCO₂ (‘million tonnes of carbon dioxide’), which is the amount of carbon that it's allowed to emit from our homes, workplaces and ground transport between 2018 and 2100. This is also the amount that the Tyndall Centre thinks is Manchester’s fair share to stay within 2 degrees of warming without gambling on yet-unrealised technologies to suck carbon out of the atmosphere. The city was planning to reduce its emissions by 13% each year to meet this. But just over 1/4 of this budget has been used in the first two years, requiring a 14.8% reduction in subsequent years to stay on target. We need to do much, much better else we will have used all of the budget in the next few years.

The city’s relationship with aviation is also under a limited carbon budget - but this is for UK-wide aviation. Tyndall Centre researchers have proposed an allocation of 1,262 MtCO₂ for all UK aviation CO₂ emissions and the city’s airport and citizens have a key role to play in this too. Analysis in the latest Manchester Climate Change Annual Report (2020) indicates that emissions from citizens flights from all airports and flights from Manchester airport are all still on a gentle upward trajectory - though lockdown will have subsequently impacted this.”

CONTINUED

INTERVIEW WITH DR JOE BLAKEY (CONTINUED)

What are the dangers in talking about carbon budgets- what do they hide or omit?

We tend to not think about non-direct emissions (ie. the role that territories play in emissions that happen beyond their bounds) - we tend to focus on emissions happening directly in the city or those from electricity consumption. As such, the city does currently have a budget for emissions occurring from investment (e.g. having a factory abroad manufacture carbon-intensive goods, or investing in oil) and consumption (e.g. buying a laptop produced overseas). We can paint a fuzzy picture of what these emissions look like, but it's hard to track the city's impact on these specifically as you would need to monitor progress against a budget. But we still need to act on them, they're another level we can pull to steady the wheels of the already-unfolding climate emergency.

Budgets may also contain commitments to carbon offsetting, which might involve getting other places to limit their emissions so you can have a bit of overhead in your budget or might relate to sucking carbon out of the atmosphere (planting trees is an obvious example, but there's also big engineering attempts to do this mechanically and to bury the carbon underground). There's huge issues with this - both in terms of who has a 'right' to emit and the level of confidence we have in these offsetting approaches (which is pretty low). Trees can be cut down, people can break promises and negative emissions technologies are unproven at scale.

Finally, I think the idea that many historically prosperous nations can have any sort of carbon budget is a troublesome one. We've already had more than our fair share of carbon. There's no way we can reconcile any carbon budget with what you might call 'historical emissions debt'. We're taking an increasingly large share of the pie, so we have a moral obligation to take as little as possible."

What are some key steps the University can take to increase climate awareness in the core curriculum across different courses, in order to prepare students for the climate challenges we will face in the coming years?

"As most students are those that inherit the consequences of climate change, it strikes me that students should have the biggest say in how we tackle it. So I think the University should focus on amplifying the voices of students alongside their innovative ideas. We should not simply be explaining to students on the solutions - we instead need new thinking. Sure we can lay the foundations but it's vital we can create spaces where their new, innovative ideas can emerge.

To this end, I also think we need critical perspectives more than ever - tinkering around the edges will not resolve the issue - we do need radical, big ideas that challenge the dangerous rails on which society runs. These critical disciplines seem more vital than ever. Geography is a good example (but as a Geographer I'm biased!). I also think we have a responsibility to a) share the voices of those who are unevenly affected by climate change but often don't have a voice on the matter and b) be honest about how we got into this mess and how deep we are in it. Perhaps then we can start thinking about the scale of change needed and what this requires."

SUSTAINABILITY NETWORKS

CAMPAIGNING GROUPS ON CAMPUS

SPOTLIGHT: PEOPLE & PLANET

The University of Manchester People & Planet society is part of the national People & Planet network, which is the largest student network in the UK campaigning for social and environmental justice. Their aim is to empower and support students to lead movements that can achieve systemic change. Currently, they run four campaigns - Fossil Free, Sweatshop Free, Undoing Borders and Divest Barclays. You can find out more about each of the projects here.



We spoke to Fritha Heaven and Daniel Johnson of People & Planet about their Fossil Fuel Divestment Campaign:

The Fossil Free Campaign at the University of Manchester was started around 10 years ago by a group of students under the People & Planet Society. This is part of a wider national campaign whose objectives are to exclude the fossil fuel industries from universities' investment portfolios in favour of more sustainable and ethical investments. At the University of Manchester, this meant campaigning for senior members of staff to agree to divest from fossil fuel companies, a total of almost £12 million.

Over the 10 years the campaign was running, People & Planet used a variety of direct actions in order to keep up pressure on the university to divest. These have included simple ideas such as leafleting and chalking, as well as more noticeable actions such as creating a papier mache oil pipeline along Oxford Road (which was done in 2015). More recently, the Society decided to escalate its actions and carried out 2 occupations of the John Owens building which helped gain more attention from the University's Senior Leadership Team. The first was done in July 2019 and lasted 24 hours, and the second in November 2019 lasting 7 days which ultimately led to the University to finally commit to fully divesting from fossil fuels by 2022!

Certainly, the fossil free campaign at the University of Manchester took a long time to reach its final goal, however the shared enthusiasm and creativity of the activists involved has been consistently strong throughout. The ability to run effective actions that are also engaging and fun is, in my view, undeniably one of the main reasons for the campaign's ultimate success and will surely allow People & Planet to be successful in future campaigns.

You can contact People and Planet UoM on their Twitter: @PeopleUoM

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SPOTLIGHT: WANT NOT WASTE



Want not Waste is a zero waste shop that is run entirely by student volunteers. A range of healthy and sustainable products are available at the shop, and they also run workshops, cooking demos and sustainability talks. We spoke to the team, who provided us with a profile on what the shop has been up to:

Want Not Waste is a student-run shop trying to make a sustainable lifestyle affordable and accessible. We are a zero waste project within the University of Manchester Students' Union Student Action group. We sell a range of ethical goods that can be refilled, reused and recycled. Our sustainable produce is sourced as local as possible to support small independent businesses, student enterprises and charitable projects but it doesn't stop there. Our blog and events offer a community and safe space to learn and share knowledge as we all endeavour to live a more environmentally conscious life.

Want Not Waste also features a small social space offering ethical, fairtrade tea and coffee and a Terracycle hub where you can recycle a variety of items including crisp packets, make up and bread bags. The team behind WnW are all students and come from various backgrounds, degrees and Universities. We are proud to announce that this academic year we have appointed a committee of 6 enthusiastic volunteers to head up the managing of the project.

OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

Besides making sustainable living affordable and accessible, we aim to share and learn about sustainability in an encouraging and non-judgmental way. Our shop offers a community for students and the public to meet like-minded people, and share eco tips whether this be in person or online. We host a range of free events aimed to educate and share sustainability tips/advice, such as slow-stitch repair workshops, clothes swaps and DIY tutorials. We also use our online presence to create this sense of community with Instagram takeovers, skill-share videos and the recent launch of our blog. Our vision for the next year is changing slightly in response to the current pandemic however we are working with the SU to reopen in some capacity this academic year. Keep your eyes peeled on our social media for updates.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Want Not Waste is a young project and has gone from a small pop up store inside the SU with a handful of volunteers in February 2019 to a group of 30 volunteers and our own premises. We've raised over £500 for charity through clothes swaps and Terracycle whilst also operating a shop within our not-for-profit project. More recently our biggest success has been at the UoM Volunteering Awards, UoM Social Responsibility: Making A Difference Manchester Awards and the Students Union Volunteering Awards- the shop, project lead 19/20 Holly Smith and new committee member Natasha Maddison were nominated for a total of 6 awards. We achieved highly commended in 2 categories and won the Outstanding Contribution to Environmental Sustainability and Holly won Volunteer of the Year. We are very proud of everything we have achieved and are excited to continue to build the WnW community this coming year!"

You can visit Want not Waste once the 2020-21 academic year begins at Academy 1, UoM Students Union, Oxford Road, or on their Facebook page.

MORE CLIMATE ACTIVIST GROUPS ON CAMPUS

EXTINCTION REBELLION YOUTH (XRY)

focuses on expanding youth involvement in the climate movement. An XRY society has also been registered at the Students Union, and works with the wider XR community in Manchester to organise and share climate-related events and information.

MANCHESTER ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY

dedicated towards building a platform for students interested in solving energy and environmental issues. Find out more information about the society on their [Facebook page](#).

UOM CLIMATE NETWORK

is an informal network of academics, staff and students who meet every week to share important research and action ideas. There are seminars, film screenings, discussions, and meetings. You can join their [mailing list here](#).

SUSTAINABILITY SEMINAR SERIES

delivered every month by academics and researchers at the University, and focus on a range of sustainability topics and research areas. You can find out more information and sign up to the [mailing list here](#).

PART 3:

Climate Action

THERE IS NO ONE KIND OF 'ACTIVIST'

"So, are you a climate activist?" is a question I have been asked on multiple occasions. After I say "yes", the follow-up question is almost always, *"Oh, but isn't it dangerous to protest? I mean, don't you run the risk of getting arrested?"*. I shake my head in dismay. There are many negative connotations or misconceptions attached to the word "activist." The truth is - there are multiple different ways to engage in climate activism. In this section, we break down some of the ways you can be involved in climate action work.

CLICKTIVISM

You've probably promoted and shared a cause on social media. This is a form of activism you can engage in anywhere - as long as you have access to the internet and a digital platform. Clicktivism is not just about signing and promoting a cause, but it also includes organising protests, sharing important perspectives that are underrepresented in mainstream media, and sparking conversations online.



PETITIONING

This includes both online and offline petitions. You can sign and support a petition by someone else, or you can start your own petition, if there is a particular cause that you think hasn't been given due attention. For instance, we at CEM have started our own petition to get a Seventh Scrutiny Committee, dedicated to climate policy, in Manchester. We collected signatures at pre-covid 19 events, and now we are experimenting different ways of using online platforms to communicate the objectives behind our cause and why it's important to us.

You can find more information about this on page 42. You will see our "Sign the Climate Petition" poster, complete with QR code, on notice boards and windows across campus.

SETTING UP ETHICAL SOCIAL ENTERPRISES/BUSINESSES

Creating ethical social enterprises or businesses is a great way to channel your passion for sustainability while also offering other like-minded people the chance to get involved, rethink their lifestyle choices and express their support for the cause you are passionate about. It's a form of activism because you are able to bring about community change in a creative and fun way, and you might also inspire others to start their own ethical social enterprises.

CONVERSATIONS

You might wonder, does starting a conversation on climate change really make you a climate activist? Well, yes, if you decide to raise important issues, and do it consistently. Education is a big part of empowerment. And remember, conversing with people is a skill that you need to practice over and over and over again because it is very easy for people to dismiss the urgency of climate change, or resort to full-fledged climate denial. Some conversations will be difficult and others will be (surprisingly) easy. But persistence is key.

MARCHING

Climate strikes are increasingly common due to sheer ineptitude of international, national and local climate action. Several groups such as Youth Strike Manchester and Fridays for Future organise climate protests. You will probably see these protests advertised on campus flyers, on social media or by word of mouth. Marches are usually an organised and safe way to support a cause.



If you're unsure or anxious about marching for the first time, consider asking a friend or joining a society that is involved in climate action. It's also important to remember that marches are not something that everyone is able to participate in- there are many other ways you can get involved in climate activism if marching is not something that is always accessible for you.

REPORT WRITING/BLOGGING

Do you think your local council is handling the climate emergency well? Do you think people would change their meat-intensive diets if they knew more about the realities of industrial farming? Can you articulate your arguments more powerfully in writing? Good news - report writing and blogging on climate change issues makes you an activist. Whether you offer a new perspective, or critique a news story, you are contributing to the public discourse on climate change. It doesn't matter if many people view your post or agree with your viewpoint - what's important is that you are actively investing your time in learning, sharing and producing knowledge. And we really need more people to do that.



NON-VIOLENT DIRECT ACTION (NVDA)

A simple definition for this is public forms of protest. Marching is a form of direct action, but there are other examples that may also be more extreme- think Greenpeace climbing the Shard in London, or Extinction Rebellion's civil disobedience protests. The reason why non-violent direct action can be so contentious is because those who involve themselves in it often have to be willing to put themselves up for arrest.

Not everyone is able to do this "safely" of course - factors such as race, gender identity, nationality or disability, this is not always a safe option for many activists. If you do not want or are unable to participate in NVDA, there are many other avenues of climate activism you can participate in that are just as valid and meaningful. If you do decide to participate in NVDA, make sure you get advice beforehand, either from friends already involved in activist organisations or from resources provided by the groups organising the events you are attending- you can find some NVDA legal resources in the activist list on page 51.

NO ONE KIND OF ACTIVIST (CONTINUED)

OCCUPYING OFFICES TO FORCE THE POWERS-THAT-BE INTO DIALOGUE

Another form of NVDA, occupation of buildings or infrastructure is a powerful strategy of protest. We asked Fritha Heaven and Daniel Johnson, two students involved in the prolonged and ultimately successful People & Planet Divestment Campaign to share their perspective on successful student occupations:

“Student occupations have the ability to be incredibly powerful in campaigns, however they do have limitations. The main problem being that there is nothing that can follow an occupation that would be capable of creating the same- or a larger- effect. This is why groups should see occupations as the final action they can take and should spend time making themselves and their demands well known by their University before carrying one out. Additionally, this build up time can be used to create excitement for the campaign and attract media interest and support from a wider group of students who may wish to become involved themselves.



People & Planet's Fossil Free Campaign ran for around 10 years, yet the build up for the November 2019 occupation began in September 2018. This involved recruiting new members, running smaller actions to introduce the campaign, and working up to more dramatic actions such as disrupting board meetings before finally beginning the occupation.

A further thing to consider when thinking of running an occupation is the aims and objectives for the occupation. This is important because occupations lose impact over time, because the University learns how to function around you. Therefore, being clear about what your intentions for being there are from the start can help the chances of the occupation being successful.”

HOLDING (ENGAGING) MEETINGS

As an introvert, facilitating meetings is the stuff of nightmares. If you can retain the attention of an entire group of people, maintain decorum, facilitate discussions on climate change, and end the meeting with a clear plan for future action - congrats, you're an activist! And a wizard! Mobilising people to take action about anything, but especially climate change, is harder than it looks.

GETTING INVOLVED WITH YOUR STUDENT'S UNION

Student's Unions are often thought of as places to grab food or join a society. Many students aren't really aware of what a "union" is for. The student's union really exists to hold the university to account on issues of student experience, wellbeing and rights. There is a lot of campaigning work that goes on at SUs which you can get involved in voluntarily through joining a campaigning society, attending senate or joining a committee. You could even run for an elected position. It should be mentioned there is a great deal of bureaucracy involved in working within an SU and especially when holding university leadership (e.g. vice chancellors/boards of governors) to account. We give advice on dealing with bureaucracy later on (see page 46)



Again, this is NOT an exhaustive list. Whatever way you choose to invest your time and energy to take action on climate change, remember that your activism is still valid, necessary and important.

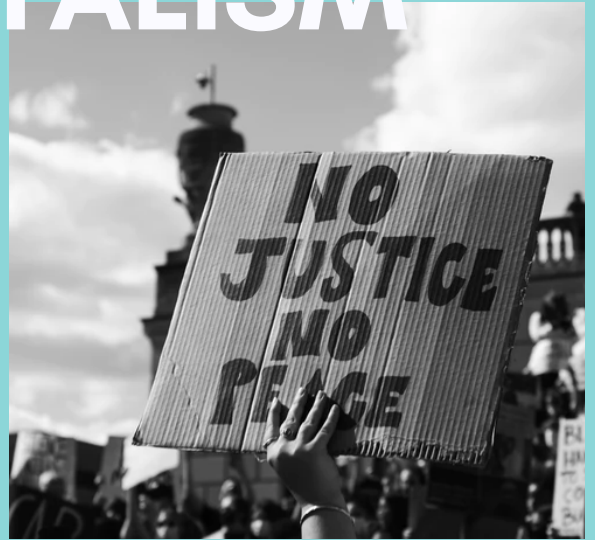
INTERSECTIONAL ENVIRONMENTALISM

Climate change is not only an environmental, political or economic problem- it is also an ethical issue.

Not everyone will bear the burdens of climate change equally; the most harmful effects of climate change will be experienced by people who have contributed the least to the problem - especially poor, marginalised and indigenous peoples in the Global South. As such, the term 'climate justice' focuses on the normative issues surrounding climate change. Climate justice is founded on the principle that climate impacts are not distributed equally, and can often exacerbate pre-existing inequalities and inequalities. Thus, gaining an understanding of how different groups experience climate impacts is essential to design solutions to effectively tackle the climate crisis.

The concept of 'intersectional environmentalism' offers a useful framework to understand how climate justice is closely associated with other social justice issues, such as race and gender equality. Intersectional environmentalism builds upon the ideas of 'intersectionality' - a term coined by Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. 'Intersectionality' is a framework that examines how different social factors (e.g. race, class and gender) intersect and overlap to oppress and discriminate against individuals and groups. Crenshaw argued that social factors such as race and gender should not be considered in isolation because they overlap to produce unique modes of discrimination.

To understand this better, consider how the experiences of a low-income, heterosexual white woman differ from a lower-income bisexual Black man living in America. While both of them are marginalised on the basis of class, the woman also experiences gender discrimination, while the man experiences racism and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.



Thus, intersectionality can help us navigate and analyse the different systems of oppression that overlap to discriminate against individuals and groups.

While intersectionality has mostly been used in the context of feminism (i.e. intersectional feminism), more recently, it has also emerged in the climate justice movement. As Leah Thomas, a young Black environmental activist and founder of the Intersectional Environmentalist platform explains,

"Intersectional Environmentalism is an inclusive version of environmentalism that advocates for both the protection of people and the planet. It identifies the ways in which injustices happening to marginalized communities and the earth are interconnected. It brings injustices done to the most vulnerable communities, and the earth, to the forefront and does not minimize or silence social inequality."

In other words, adopting an intersectional environmentalist framework will enable you to fully understand why climate justice cannot be achieved without dismantling other systems of oppression such as institutional racism and sexism. This can also come in handy when trying to explain to your friends and family why climate justice and systemic injustices cannot be addressed in isolation.

ALLYSHIP IN ACTIVISM

The following section contains some advice on allyship which was originally published by Climate Emergency Manchester as a two-page 'Novice's Guide to Practical Allyship' as part of its [Active Citizenship Toolkit](#). It's written as an imagined dialogue between someone sceptical about practical allyship, and someone who already gets it.

We really can't do this alone, or as some vanguard waiting for others to fall into 'line' under our 'leadership'. So, if you want others to help you, you have to help them. That requires understanding (while not necessarily always agreeing) with their view of the world and taking practical steps to help them in making their lives better, and help them with their campaigning. Failing to be an ally means you have no credibility, in your own eyes, or in other people's.

Wait, what has fixing climate change got to do with being an ally in struggles for justice around race, class, gender?

Most of the people on this planet are not white. So right there, if we're talking about our species, you're going to want to think about what is happening to those who are not white and living in "the West". Climate change is already affecting many people on this planet, thanks to changes to weather patterns (nastier heatwaves, droughts, sea level rise, changes to agriculture). Those on the sharp end of these changes tend to be poor People of Colour (though to be clear - money only offers some protection, and it will not do so forever). But from a purely "practical" point of view -

a) there is a wealth of knowledge in those communities about how to survive in horrible situations, and how to work together to change them. It makes sense to benefit from that.
b) if you want system change (and we really really need system change) you are going to have to work with many different kinds of people(s). They are not going to want to work with you if you are ignorant to and unwilling to learn of their struggles and worldview. Examining your own privileges by listening and in turn offering a helping hand will find you many allies in a broader network towards equitable system change. In this way, you will be able to provide effective allyship.

Well, for the sake of argument, let's say you have a point. What does that mean in practice, where I live? I mean, I can't do anything about President Trump or Boris Johnson. Is there a book I can read, a course I can take?

Note: this isn't about you, it's not about obtaining a "good climate activist badge". It takes hard work and constant effort to practice allyship. And no, there isn't a single comprehensive book or course that can educate you about allyship. It turns out the struggle for a better world is not easy and convenient (who knew?). But fortunately, there are lots of great guides - written by people of colour for the most part - about this very topic. If you want it boiled down into 10 tweets, then check this out.

Google "how to be an ally" and better "how to practice allyship" - there's loads of stuff. And CEM will be doing a much longer guide by the end of the year. For now, we have listed a number of steps you can take to practice allyship:

ALLYSHIP IN ACTIVISM (CONTINUED)

- Listen. Two ears, two eyes, one mouth. That's a 4:1 ratio right there.
- Amplify other voices that (weirdly) don't get amplified by the mainstream media and mainstream culture.
- Use your privilege. If you have the benefit of lots of education, if you have got lots of skills and knowledge, then you have to SHARE them, in humble ways (pro-tip: sharing does not mean telling people that you are the boss and they have to listen to you). Confront racism (not just your own), with firmness, diligence, compassion, knowledge etc
- Do the work yourself. Never demand/expect emotional or intellectual services from categories of people who you want to display allyship to. Do the hard, difficult work - the reading, the watching, the thinking yourself. Find other white people to do it with, consistently and regularly.
- Stay critical. There is no monolithic answer to the crises which beset us all. There is no "One Right Way." People of good intent and similar experiences will have different takes on what is going on and why, and what is to be done. You can't just abrogate your responsibility for your own behaviour.
- Don't expect good guy/girl tokens: You don't deserve an award for being decent.
- Share the skills you have.
- Initiate difficult conversations surrounding racial and climate justice, in both public and private spaces. It's (relatively) easier to talk about racism with friends and peers who share similar opinions, but to be an ally means to step out of this echo chamber and grapple with racism which is rampant in families and communities. It is a tiring process to raise these conversations at home, but allies have the responsibility to do this.
- Create time for self-reflection every single day. This involves confronting and reflecting on the ways in which white people have been complicit in sustaining unjust and unfair power structures.
- Understand that you will mess up and get things wrong - it's an inevitable part of the process. But dwelling on your faults will help nobody, and white tears can easily end up derailing other important conversations by re-centering on your worries.
- Support local businesses run by people of colour, and make regular donations to organisations that work towards the inclusion of marginalised communities. Make this a regular practice, not a one-off event.
- Make a plan for the long haul. That means assigning resources, creating a system to monitor what you are doing, how well you are doing it.

SOME KEY CONCEPTS

- Decentering - this isn't about you. See also white tears, white saviour complex.
- Optical Allyship – Latham Thomas defines this as “allyship that only serves at the surface level to platform the ‘ally’, it makes a statement but doesn't go beneath the surface and is not aimed at breaking away from systems of power that oppress.”
- White Fragility – (why white people freak out and can't talk or think clearly) Robin DiAngelo [newspaper interview](#) and [podcast interview](#)
- White Saviour Complex – [see here](#).
- White Saviour Industrial Complex – [see here](#).
- Whiteness Studies - [see here](#).
- White Tears – [see here](#).

SOME KEY READING

- Gay, R. 2015. [On Making Black lives Matter](#)
- Heglar, M. 2019, [Climate Change Isn't the First Existential Threat](#)
- Kendall, F. 2003 [How to Be an Ally if You Are a Person with Privilege](#)
- Lorde, A. 1981. [The Uses of Anger](#).
- Philips, H. 2020. [Performative Allyship Is Deadly \(Here's What to Do Instead\)](#)
- Wiseman, R. 2019. [Colonialism + capitalism = climate crisis](#).
- [Guide to Allyship](#)

LOCAL AUTHORITY CLIMATE ACTIVISM

If you're thinking about participating in any form of activism, there are different levels of authority and bureaucracy that you're likely to come up against. One that probably springs to mind is NVDA against national government, which can be very important and exciting work- but that's not the only level of activism you can engage with. In this section, we're going to discuss climate action at a more local level- for instance, campaigning against your City Council.

Climate Activism at Local Authority level is so much more than having to take the bins out.



Climate Emergency Manchester is trying to help build a diverse climate justice movement in Manchester. It also holds Manchester City Council to account over the lack of action on its climate emergency policies. This means that I spend significantly more time than most other people of student age dealing with the bureaucratic workings of this organisation- and this is something that seems to confuse a number of my (younger) friends and acquaintances. Here are a few quotes I've heard from friends when I've told them about the work I've been doing:

"The City Council? Yeah, they're really annoying. I forget about them until I get those council tax letters."

"I'd never really thought about doing any activism on a local level. I just associate the Council with bin collections."

"...Why are you bothering the City Council about climate change, not the government?"

These comments are pretty representative of student opinion on local government. If you're a student reading this, it's likely that the main associations you have with the city council are "bin collections" and "council tax letters." However, the City Council plays a far more crucial role in climate policy than you'd think. Here are a few examples:

If you've looked upwards recently, you've seen the Manchester building boom - new shiny glass skyscrapers seem to spring up overnight. These buildings are directly approved by the Council, and although these towers may look flashy and help put Manchester "on the map", the lasting effects for the environment are anything but positive. First of all, there's all the construction waste and emissions that goes into building the skyscrapers. Secondly, if you think about it, those towers are essentially big tubular greenhouses- imagine the amount of energy required to keep them cool in the summer months. We know that with rising global temperatures, things are only going to get hotter- now think about the amount of energy that will be needed to cool these buildings in five years time. This isn't even touching on the gentrification of housing that's taking place during this building boom- that's a related and equally worrying problem.

CONTINUED

LOCAL AUTHORITY ACTIVISM (CONTINUED)

Another example is Manchester Airport. You probably know already that air travel is a frequently discussed element of sustainability- to put the impact of air travel in perspective, a return flight from the UK to Australia is equivalent to an entire year's worth of carbon emissions produced by the average person in the UK. Air travel is clearly a significant problem when it comes to the climate crisis- and yet Manchester City Council owns 35.5% of Manchester Airport. For an organisation that's supposed to be dealing with climate change issues within the city, that's not a good look.



Local governments are also responsible for transport in the cities they serve- we know that transport is another important element of climate justice, and the effects that improved transport can have on a city's emissions can be pretty transformative. Put it this way, if public transport is significantly subsidised and far safer cycling routes are introduced, then the congestion from cars on the roads can be massively reduced. Whilst this clearly hasn't happened in Manchester yet, this is a good example of how better climate justice doesn't just improve environmental concerns, but also the economic concerns of those who are most deprived.

Unfortunately, the pivotal role played by the city council in both infrastructure and climate bureaucracy still isn't common knowledge. If you mention to someone outside of climate activism that you campaign on a national level, you're likely to be met with impressed responses- opposing national government is something that people are familiar with, and it's often considered to be both exciting and impactful. Campaigning at a local level about your city council probably isn't going to elicit the same response. If I'm honest, this work just isn't very sexy stuff. Don't get me wrong- this isn't to say that I don't enjoy the work that I do in CEM. I really do love the stuff I'm doing, and it's something I find a lot of meaning in. But when this work occasionally involves me sitting in scrutiny committee meetings and wading through local administrative issues, it just isn't the most entertaining thing I could spend my time doing.

The problem here is that local authorities like Manchester City Council know that this bureaucracy can seem wildly dull to those unfamiliar with it- and they use this to their advantage. Local Authorities are rarely held to the same levels of scrutiny as national governments, and this means they can get away with more blatant environmental inaction than their national counterparts. For example, last month MCC released a report detailing that in the last two years, Manchester has burned through a quarter of its carbon budget for the rest of the 21st century. This is completely scandalous information, but it's also something that most citizens of Manchester probably aren't aware of- that's because this report is buried in layers of bureaucracy and glossy spin that you have to actively search for. If more people start to understand just how crucial the council's role is, then the level of accountability makes it much harder for them to continue with "business as usual", which harms the city and environment.

If you've made it this far, you might be wondering "why on earth is she doing it? What is in it for her?" Good question. My answer is this - this work is far more meaningful than if I was campaigning at a national level. I joined CEM after coming to terms with the climate crisis, because I knew for the sake of my own sanity that I had to involve myself in some kind of climate activism- in short, I had to do something. At a local level, I can see changes being implemented as a result of the actions of groups such as the one I'm part of.

This handbook has already outlined the different forms of climate activism that you can engage with- I should reiterate here that this is my own perspective from the kind of climate activism I engage in. Your personal motivations and stake in the activism you involve yourself in are pivotally important. If local boring work still doesn't appeal to you, that's ok- you just need to find what works for you, and keep doing it.

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL

SOME BRIEF FACTS

Now that we've explained the importance of local authority activism, here are some quick facts about Manchester City Council to get you up to speed:

Manchester City Council is made up of 96 elected councillors across 32 wards, from Higher Blackley in the north to Woodhouse Park in the south. Each ward has three councillors. Councillors stand in elections, held in May of three years out of four. The winner of the election gets a four-year term as a councillor.

Of these 96, 93 of these councillors are Labour. If you're a Labour supporter, this may sound like a really good thing- but it's important to point out that this means that the Council has had no effective opposition since 2010ish. Because of this, it can be very difficult for less than satisfactory actions by the council to be internally scrutinised and opposed.

THE COUNCIL'S STRUCTURE

Like many local and national governments, Manchester City Council operates a very 'top-down' approach. At the top is the council's executive committee- they're responsible for major decision-making, and for implementing the policy and budget. The executive is made up of the leader of the Council, the deputy-leader, and seven other executive members each with responsibilities for particular areas of the Council's administration.

Below the Executive committee are the six scrutiny committees for different areas of the Council- these are Children and Young People, Community and Equalities, Economy, Health, Resources and Governance, and Neighborhoods and the Environment.



Each scrutiny committee meets 10 times a year, and covers a variety of policies over the course of approximately two hours. You may notice that climate issues do not have their own scrutiny committee- this is something that Climate Emergency Manchester wants to change, as you'll see on the following page.

The existing scrutiny committee that occasionally covers climate change is just too busy with other matters.

In relation to climate change, the Council's record so far is not commendable. There are lots of lovely promises, but not much action. All the way back in 2009 the council promised steep emissions reductions and the creation of a "low carbon culture." Emissions went down for the Council, because of austerity. The low carbon culture promise was quietly forgotten. A climate emergency was declared in July of 2019, but this has been largely revealed as a PR stunt due to the lack of urgency in all their actions on climate since this declaration. MCC's lack of action over climate change has led to numerous accusations of greenwashing from local authority activists. You can find out more on the following page.

MANCHESTER CITY COUNCIL ON CLIMATE CHANGE

We'll be done talking about Manchester City Council soon- we promise- but unfortunately, we need to talk about their record on climate change.

Manchester City Council started making noises about “the environment” in the early 1990s, after winning the right to hold an international conference that was to be a follow-up to the Rio Earth Summit of 1992. They cobbled together a list of things they were already doing/planning to do anyway and rebranded these as “green” and “eco.” That habit has continued.

The City Council then basically decided that it didn't like the outcome of citizen involvement in environmental policymaking because people kept saying things like “airports should be taxed/not expanded.” The physical campaign against a second runway helped sour relations further (Manchester City Council then owned 55.5% of the Airport – that's now down to 35.5%).

From the early 2000s there were various plans and boasts, but climate change policy only really kicked in 2008. In response to a dreadful “Call to Action”, activists wrote a “Call to Real Action.” These combined and extended lead to the creation of the first “Manchester Climate Change Action Plan” in late 2009, which had two headline goals - an emissions reduction target and the creation of a “low carbon culture.”

However, in the 2010s the wheels totally fell off, in part because of austerity and the loss of momentum after the Copenhagen conference of 2009. The emissions reductions that have happened have been due to the UK burning less coal. The City Council's own emissions have gone down because their staffing went from 10k in 2010 to 6k now, and they sold off loads of buildings and stopped providing services.

This is why a seventh scrutiny committee is urgently needed – to force councillors and council officers to hold the executive accountable for their lack of meaningful action over climate change, and to help create more democratic climate justice in Manchester.



Credit: [MCCA Eventbrite](#)

In 2015 the Council set up a community interest company and called it the Manchester Climate Change Agency. Unlike a real agency, it has no significant budget beyond a couple of seconded staff, and can't be forced to give information via the Freedom of Information Act. It basically just produces glossy reports, advertises repeatedly and fruitlessly for a new chair, and takes credit for things that were already happening (sound familiar?). It buries inconvenient facts – e.g. Manchester as a city burned through a quarter of its entire carbon budget for the 21st century in the last two years – in the middle of glossy feel-good reports. Oh, and staged a 90 minute top-down zoom call which it called a “conference.” It was, according to one of the editors of this handbook, an exercise in gaslighting and greenwashing.

There have been more shiny promises – in 2018 they said the city would be “net zero” by 2038, and in 2019, under pressure from activists, they declared a “climate emergency”. However, there has been very little progress on achieving these.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY MANCHESTER'S PETITION

As discussed on the previous page, Manchester City Council has six scrutiny committees, but none devoted solely to climate change. Seeing as the Council has declared a climate emergency, you'd think that scrutinising their actions on climate would be higher on their agenda.. But it's really not. Whatever happened to "deeds not words"?



A large part of the reason why MCC is able to make fantastic promises about climate change, and then almost completely fail to deliver on them, is because there simply isn't enough scrutiny. At Climate Emergency Manchester, we've been to these committee meetings (largely so you don't have to), and over the course of the last year, the Council has devoted roughly three hours in total to discussing climate change in their scrutiny meetings. And much of the time was about trying to extract answers to simple questions from politicians and bureaucrats who were keen not to give answers. Given the urgency of the situation, this just isn't good enough.

Therefore, Climate Emergency Manchester is campaigning for a seventh scrutiny committee dedicated to the environment. A committee completely dedicated to climate change would mean we have far better climate democracy in Manchester, and break the ever-continuing cycle of Manchester City Council's unfulfilled climate promises.

Depending on the type of activism you may be involved in, you may be sceptical of the impact of a petition and a committee - and that's a sensible outlook to have. Whilst petitions on websites like Change.org are owned by for-profit companies in places like Silicon Valley, and have no legal standing with bureaucratic or judicial organisations, the petition we've set up is on the City Council's petition portal. This means that the City Council is required to review it if we get enough respondents- if we can get over 4000 signatures, there will be a full Council debate that discusses our motion for better climate democracy.

So the good news is that this petition could have real-world implications. The bad news is that the City Council's website is truly horrendous to navigate, and it's very difficult for people to sign online (it's almost like this might be intentional...). The even worse news is that Global Pandemics are generally pretty big blows as far as signature collecting face-to-face goes as well.

We need 4,000 signatures by the 10th November 2020 from people who live, work or study within Manchester City Council's boundaries. If you're a student in Manchester, you're eligible to sign, and we would really love for you to do that. What we'd love even more would be for you to help us promote the petition and get your friends and family to sign as well.

There's a whole bunch of ideas below. You can find our petition landing page on our website [here](#), and more information over the page on how you can help.

CEM'S PETITION:

15 WAYS YOU CAN HELP

- 1 Sign the petition- If you live, work or study within Manchester City Council's boundaries, you're eligible to sign. You can sign online, or you can sign on paper by downloading a blank petition page, and returning the sheet to us when you've signed.
- 2 Ask 10 specific friends and family members to also sign – either online or, if and only if it is safe to do so, on paper. You could ask all your lecturers and tutors to sign the petition.
- 3 Change your social media profiles to point to the petition, even if only on the 7th of October and November (we've been doing social media blitzes for a 7th scrutiny committee on the 7th of each month).
- 4 Tweet, blog, or make facebook or instagram posts about the petition (or using any other form of social media that speaks to you).
- 5 Let us know about any upcoming meetings where we might be able to come and talk about the petition (online or even, maybe, face-to-face...)
- 6 Whatever organisations you're part of, get us space in your newsletters and e-bulletins to publicise the petition.
- 7 Make a video about who you are and why you have signed- we're aiming to get a video from a resident in each ward of the City Council.
- 8 Ask any social, campaigning, community hobby group you are in if you can talk to them about the petition and how important it is.
- 9 If you're religious, ask your place of worship to talk about climate change and what needs to be done in Manchester, and to share information about the petition with your community.
- 10 If and only if it is safe to do so, print off a sheet and collect signatures- this could be from family members, housemates or friends in student halls, or others in your household bubble.
- 11 Ask the staff in your GP surgery, dentist or other amenities you use to sign online.
- 12 Ask your councillors to sign (they probably won't, but it's good to ask them – this makes them more aware of the petition and that residents care about it!)
- 13 Put a poster about the petition in your front window or on your bedroom door in halls- you can find this on our website.
- 14 Join us as we walk around Manchester City Centre with visors and sandwich boards that have a Q-Code pointing to the petition (no, really- [we look great](#)).
- 15 Tell us your ideas for collecting signatures- Our email is petition@climateemergencymanchester.net.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

Here's some additional advice and resources that we think members of climate activist groups may benefit from. Much of this information has been taken from Climate Emergency Manchester's Active Citizenship Toolkit- You can find out more information about the toolkit [here](#).

COLLECTIVE MORALE MAINTENANCE

You might remember at the beginning of the handbook that we talked about individual morale maintenance. Now that we've discussed more ways to get involved with climate organisations, this is as good a time as any to talk about collective morale.

A group's morale is difficult to sustain for a number of reasons.



For instance, there may be one group member who takes on work but fails to see it through, or who might be hyper-critical in an unproductive way.

There may be members who demand too much of themselves or too much of others, or it may just be that your group has taken on more work than it can realistically handle.

Another reason that groups struggle to sustain morale over time is because individual members think that maintaining morale is an individual business, not a group endeavour. As a result, there's no real language and social norms around this. Collective morale should be distinguished from the 'check-ins' that many groups have started doing, which is not quite the same. 'Check-ins' are an individualistic response to a sociological problem.

If you don't possess the language and structures to talk about maintaining collective morale, your collective morale is probably not going to be maintained. And low morale can be contagious. And this can lead to a very steep "death spiral" in a group.

Avoiding this starts with creating language and structure to maintain morale. If you are going to talk about the emotions in the group and the group's sense of its own future, you need to do it on a regular basis. You need to do it non-tokenistically, so there is time to discuss the emotions, their implications, and to come up with possible solutions. You need a couple of people within the group who are sensitive to this and are willing to stick their heads above the parapet occasionally and say, "Yeah, I know that we were going to talk about x today, but I really feel from my sense of emails and conversations, that there are morale issues in this group that shouldn't any longer be left, ignored or suppressed", and then go from there.

CONTINUED

BUILDING RESILIENCE AND CREATING HOPE



Resilience is the capacity to cope with difficulties, and to be tenacious, despite setbacks. Building resilience takes a great deal of practice. The first step is to accept that there are no silver bullet solutions to the problems we face. Even if we had simple, clear solutions, they would surely be resisted by those who like or benefit from the current power structures. The fight for a better world is in essence, a struggle.

It is difficult and demanding, and we will most likely spend our entire lives engaged in this fight. We're in this for the long haul, and this is why we need to refrain from short-term thinking with regard to movements and activism. Both individual and group resilience are important to sustain your activism.

Is there reason to have hope for the future? You may have asked yourself this one or many times. Hope can often seem flimsy or unrealistic - after all, what's the point of having hope for the future if hope does not translate into individual and collective action? It becomes important for you to reflect why (or whether) you need hope, and what hope helps you achieve. [Alexandria Ocasio Cortez](#)'s view of hope is particularly striking. She argues that hope is a discipline and a practice. You do not find hope, but you create it through your actions. And that's how hope lives on.

Whether you think hope is necessary or not, it is worth reflecting on the reason that pushes you to engage in climate activism. Maybe your reason also changes over time. But returning to it during the bad days can be a helpful reminder on why you need to be a part of this larger-than-life climate movement, and why the movement in turn needs you.

DEALING WITH BUREAUCRATS

A CORE ELEMENT FOR EVERY ACTIVIST GROUP

As you might be able to imagine, if you're opposing the City Council, you come up against a lot of bureaucracy! You may also face similar bureaucratic barriers in activist work within your university, union, or place or work too.

The key thing to remember is that bureaucrats and decision-makers will try to conceal information, or slow down the delivery of information, until after a decision has been made. Then they can say "sorry, it's too late, it's out of my hands."

It is nothing personal, it's just what they do. Or rather, what they TRY to do.

More specifically...

Bureaucrats will push important agenda items to the bottom, so there is less time to address substantive points and more time for irrelevant/side issues.



Keep a close eye on the agenda, and demand as part of the initial "code of conduct" that agendas are

- always circulated a week in advance as a DRAFT agenda that can be changed before the meeting, following representations,
- that there are mechanisms both before and at the start of the meeting for the agenda to be re-ordered
- that both the agenda-setting and chairing of the meeting is rotated between the organisation and those in attendance

So, when you receive the draft agenda and it relegates the most important/uncomfortable-for-the-organisation item to the end, where everyone is tired and out of time, with a bunch of "fluff" items at the top, you could write back with something like:

Dear x,

Thank you for circulating the agenda for next week's meeting of the Carbon Reduction Advisory Panel. We the undersigned, as members of CRAP, have looked closely at it.

We all are very strongly of the view that items 2 "the precise shade of green ink to use for the next sustainability statement", and item 3 "the time on June 31st when the press release should be put out about the sustainability statement" should be moved to the bottom of the agenda so that item 12, "the organisation's commitment to reducing the amount of flights its staff takes" can be properly discussed and scrutinised, given that it has been dropped from the last four monthly CRAP meetings.

Please let us know that you have received this communication, and send us any revised agenda.

Thank you

[as many people as you can get to sign]

CONTINUED

DEALING WITH BUREAUCRATS (CONTINUED)

Bureaucrats will try to exhaust you and to demoralise those who care most about an issue. One way they will do this is to call too many or too few meetings, often at short notice.

Advice: Make sure the bureaucrats can't call meetings at short notice when they know some 'awkward squad' people won't be able to attend. Have regularly scheduled meetings, planned months in advance. Don't let the bureaucrats cancel or reschedule them. So, within any meeting, whenever there is a promise of delivery of information, get it agreed (and minuted) that:

"Information about x is going to be delivered to everyone on this panel by date y in format z [e.g. pdf] by named bureaucrat a. If this deadline is not met, it will be escalated to bureaucrat a's boss, bureaucrat b."

Inconvenient commitments will get mysteriously "forgotten" from the official minutes and "attritional evaporation".

If you're only meeting once a month, it can often be the case that memories have faded, scraps of paper on which you jotted down notes have been lost. The chair of the meeting says "can we take the minutes as read?"

If you say "er, no, chair, there was I think a commitment that bureaucrat a would do x by y" then the bureaucrat or chair can smile and say "well, that's not our recollection/it wasn't there in the draft minutes".

And so a commitment that was made gets dropped, and this demoralises those who fought for it, and makes them more suspicious of the whole process. They then probably drop out, leaving ever-more-pliable people still on the committee... This is an attritional "evaporation" process.

Advice: Those attending the meeting should write their own version of the minutes, and circulate it straight away. A basic outline is as follows:

*"Hi, bureaucrats a and b,
Thanks for meeting with us earlier today/last night. Attached please find our minutes of the meeting, structured around a series of agreed actions, with named individuals and deadlines.*

This is to the best of our ability an accurate account of what was agreed. If you feel that it was NOT, please let us know straight away. If we do not hear from you, we will regard this as an agreement that our account is in fact accurate."

*Yours sincerely
[xxx]"*

Also, members of the community/student groups have to know how to use the Freedom of Information Act, and be willing to use it if the organisation plays silly.

DEALING WITH BUREAUCRATS (CONTINUED)

Bureaucrats will try to baffle you with irrelevant information - long words, jargon, irrelevant facts based on shifting-baselines.

Advice: Learn how to decode their language, and push for plain, simple language in the “code of conduct” as well.

Rewrite their reports as short briefing papers, highlighting

- a) what has NOT been answered
- b) what has been buried and
- c) how much more succinctly and clearly the reports could have been written.



Bureaucrats will try to stack panels with clueless and/or vulnerable people, to deliberately dilute the voices who are demanding proper action

You can spot them easily enough - people with few or no connections to everyone else on the panel, who are employed directly or indirectly by the organisation. They tend to make long vague speeches which then get enthusiastically backed up by the bureaucrats, wasting time and energy.

This is a tricky one to deal with, because you can end up getting into fights about who is “representative” and the fight demoralises and de-legitimises everyone. These sorts of people are best just “contained” - asked to keep their irrelevant comments brief, and invited to either educate themselves or go away .

Bureaucrats can play a long-game, waiting to “take back control”

Members of the community group have to continually explain to new members how the bureaucrats slow things down. Otherwise, as there is turn-over of membership in the panel, the bureaucrats can simply resort to their old tactics.

Why not finish talking about something that’s often quite boring (bureaucracy) with a relevant quote from something a lot more interesting? (Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy)?

“But the plans were on display...”

“On display? I eventually had to go down to the cellar to find them.”

“That’s the display department.”

“With a flashlight.”

“Ah, well, the lights had probably gone.”

“So had the stairs.”

“But look, you found the notice, didn’t you?”

“Yes,” said Arthur, “yes I did. It was on display in the bottom of a locked filing cabinet stuck in a disused lavatory with a sign on the door saying ‘Beware of the Leopard.’”

— Douglas Adams, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*

CONCLUSIONS

SOME GENERAL ADVICE

- You have to work alongside other people, even though that is difficult and/or frustrating. It may be of use to check out some of the elements in our [Active Citizenship Toolkit \(ACT\)](#), particularly the ones on [holding decent meetings](#) and [community organising](#).
- Know the formal structures and the informal ones of the institutional framework you're in. Make sure you keep that knowledge up-to-date and share it widely. Our ACT element on [research](#) may be useful too.
- Be aware of your own group/ecosystems weaknesses. Evaluate every meeting - what worked and what didn't, how many students turned up and how many students showed *genuine* interest in being involved with the group. Keep track of everyone's schedules - exams and essay deadlines can be momentum killers. Doing a skills audit as per the Active Citizenship Toolkit may be helpful, because it shows you where each of the group members stands, as well as where you group collectively stands in terms of different skills. Remember that successful groups do not just discuss their strengths - they also consider their weaknesses to understand their limitations. Doing this enables them to work towards their goals.
- Know how to support yourselves and each other. Remember the bit on individual and collective morale maintenance? That's very important. Acknowledge the validity of your emotions and your group's emotions. It is perfectly normal to feel angry, depressed and terrified. Who wouldn't be, at the current state of affairs? But remember to look out for each other. I recall attending the Black Lives Matter protests, where one of the speakers summed up our predicament perfectly: 'the system will not fight for us, we need to fight for us.' It's true, the system couldn't care less for us, and so we have the moral obligation to look out for each other. At CEM, we have started a series of posts entitled '[Coming to our own emotional rescue](#)' where we reflect on and process our big climate emotions. One of our supporters, Antje Timmermann, has also contributed a piece on [emotional intelligence and parenting](#).

WHAT NEXT?

If you've made it all the way to the end of this handbook, first of all, well done!

We hope that you've found this helpful and informative- we're constantly trying to improve our skillsets at CEM, which means we genuinely love to hear your feedback. Please let us know if this was useful to you, and the ways in which you think we could improve!

Additionally, please sign our petition, and get your housemates/course mates/work colleagues to sign as well! We would really appreciate your support.

[Climateemergencymanchester.net/petition-2](https://climateemergencymanchester.net/petition-2)

PLEASE sign and **GET ALL YOUR HOUSEMATES/COURSE COLLEAGUES** to sign and share the [petition](#).

If you do decide that climate activism (or activism in any other field of social justice) is for you, there are numerous organisations in Manchester that are always appreciative of new members and/or supporters. We've included a list in this handbook over the page.

MANCHESTER ACTIVISM RESOURCE LIST (AS OF SEPTEMBER 2020)

Some disclaimers:

Not all of these groups are active all the time. Not all of them will be to the "taste" of everyone reading this handbook. That's fine, a movement of movements needs diversity. But please, get involved in something bigger than yourself. Learn new skills, keep your promises. The climate crisis needs you. It would be impossible to include an exhaustive list of all activist groups and organisations in Manchester, but if you would like your organisation to be included in future editions of this handbook, or if you think we've missed someone out, please contact us at studentclimatehandbook@climateemergencymanchester.net. Inclusion in this handbook \neq unconditional endorsement.

Many of these groups are intersectional organisations, and the categories they have been divided into are not definitive, but more for ease of reading.

BLM, POC AND RACIAL JUSTICE ACTIVIST GROUPS:

- Decolonise UoM- Twitter: [@DecoloniseUoM](https://twitter.com/DecoloniseUoM) decoloniseuom@gmail.com
- Manchester Abolitionist Reading Group- Twitter: [@tweet_marg](https://twitter.com/tweet_marg)
- Manchester March- Twitter: [@MarchManchester](https://twitter.com/MarchManchester) Instagram: [@ManchesterMarch](https://www.instagram.com/ManchesterMarch)
- Northern Police Monitoring Project- Twitter: [@NPoliceMonitor](https://twitter.com/NPoliceMonitor) npmp.co.uk
- Resistance Lab- Twitter: [@ResLabMcr](https://twitter.com/ResLabMcr) resistancelab.network

DIRECT ACTION HELP/ADVICE

Disclaimer: The authors of this handbook and CEM are not legal advisors, however these organisations will be able to give far more adequate advice and support relating to direct action:

- Green and black cross (Manchester and national) Twitter: [@GBCMManchester](https://twitter.com/GBCMManchester) <https://greenandblackcross.org/>
- Robert Lizar solicitors- <https://www.robertlizar.com/>

FEMINIST/WOMENS' REFUGE GROUPS

- MCR Women's Aid- [@MancWomensAid](https://twitter.com/MancWomensAid) pankhursttrust.org
- Manchester Rape Crisis- [@MCRRapeCrisis](https://twitter.com/MCRRapeCrisis) manchesterrapecrisis.co.uk
- Safety for Sisters- Twitter: [@Safetyforsisters](https://twitter.com/Safetyforsisters) safety4sisters.org
- Sister Supporter Manchester- Twitter: [@SisterMCR](https://twitter.com/SisterMCR) sistersupporter.co.uk/Manchester
- Sisters Uncut MCR- Twitter: [@sistersuncutMCR](https://twitter.com/sistersuncutMCR) facebook.com/sistersuncutmcr
- Women's Voices Manchester: Twitter: [@WomensVoicesMCR](https://twitter.com/WomensVoicesMCR) womensvoices.org.uk

UOM ACTIVIST GROUPS

- BDS Campaign- UoM- Twitter: [@BDSUoM](https://twitter.com/BDSUoM) bdsuom.com
- UoM Disabled Student's Campaign [@UoMDisabled](https://twitter.com/UoMDisabled)
- UoM LGBTQ+ Campaign- Twitter: [@UoMLGBTQ](https://twitter.com/UoMLGBTQ)
- UoM Trans Campaign- Twitter: [@UoMTrans](https://twitter.com/UoMTrans)
- Manchester SU Women's Campaign Twitter: [@women_su](https://twitter.com/women_su)
- UoM Feminist Collective- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/uomfeministcollective/>
- UoM Climate Network. Newsletter: <https://climatenetwork.uk/universityofmanchester/> and Facebook group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/235576884126425>

CLIMATE ACTIVIST GROUPS IN MANCHESTER

- Climate Emergency Manchester- Twitter: [@ClimateEmergMcr](https://twitter.com/ClimateEmergMcr) climateemergencymanchester.net [the folks who put this handbook together]
- Fossil Free Greater Manchester- Twitter: [@FossilFreeGM](https://twitter.com/FossilFreeGM) fossilfreegm.org.uk
- Frack Free Greater Manchester- Twitter: [@FrackFreeManc](https://twitter.com/FrackFreeManc) facebook.com/frackfreegreatermanchester
- Fridays for Future Manchester- Twitter: [@FFFManchester](https://twitter.com/FFFManchester) facebook.com/FFFManchester
- Friends of the Earth Manchester- Twitter: [@FOEMCR](https://twitter.com/FOEMCR) manchesterfoe.org.uk
- Young Friends of the Earth Manchester Twitter and instagram: [@YoungFoeMcr](https://twitter.com/YoungFoeMcr)
- Manchester Green Party Twitter: [@McrGreenParty](https://twitter.com/McrGreenParty) manchestergreenparty.org.uk
- Greenpeace Manchester- Twitter: [@GPMManchester](https://twitter.com/GPMManchester) <https://t.co/jmwPklhayh?amp=1>
- Manchester Labour for a Green New Deal Twitter: [@mcrLabGND](https://twitter.com/mcrLabGND) <https://www.facebook.com/gndmanchester/>
- People & Planet UoM- Twitter: [@PeopleUoM](https://twitter.com/PeopleUoM)
- Rising Up! Manchester Families Twitter: [@RisingUpMcr](https://twitter.com/RisingUpMcr) <https://risingupmcr.org/>
- Save Ryebank Fields [@RyebankFields](https://twitter.com/RyebankFields) saveryebankfields.org
- Trees Not Cars MCR Twitter: [@TreesNotCars](https://twitter.com/TreesNotCars) treesnotcars.com
- XR Manchester Twitter: [@XR_MCR](https://twitter.com/XR_MCR) <https://xrmcr.org/>
- XR Youth MCR- Instagram: [@XR.MCR.Youth](https://www.instagram.com/XR.MCR.Youth)
- Youth Strike Manchester- Instagram: [@YouthStrikeMcr](https://www.instagram.com/YouthStrikeMcr) youthstrike4climatemanchester.wordpress.com

MORE

- Books Beyond Bars- Twitter: [@BeyondBarsUK](https://twitter.com/BeyondBarsUK)
- Global Justice Manchester- [@GlobalJustManc](https://twitter.com/GlobalJustManc) groups.globaljustice.org.uk/manchester/
- Our Shared Cultural Heritage Manchester- Twitter: [@OSCH_MCR](https://twitter.com/OSCH_MCR) sharedculturalheritage.wordpress.com

HOUSING AND ROUGH SLEEPING ORGANISATIONS

- Acorn Manchester- Twitter: [@AcornManchester](https://twitter.com/AcornManchester) facebook.co.uk/acornmanchester
- Greater Manchester Housing Action- Twitter: [@gmhousingaction](https://twitter.com/gmhousingaction) gmhousingaction.com
- Lifeshare- Twitter: [@LifeshareUK](https://twitter.com/LifeshareUK) lifeshare.org.uk
- Manchester Anti-Precarity Network- [@MCR_Precariat](https://twitter.com/MCR_Precariat) manchesterantiprecarity.wordpress.com

INFRASTRUCTURE ACTIVIST ORGANISATIONS

- Better Buses Greater Manchester- Twitter: [@BetterBusesGM](https://twitter.com/BetterBusesGM)

LGBTQ+ ACTIVIST ORGANISATIONS

- Greater Manchester LGBT Social Support Network- [@GMLGBTSSN](https://twitter.com/GMLGBTSSN) gmlgbtssn.org.uk
- Sparkle- the National Transgender Charity- Twitter: [@SparkleWeekend](https://twitter.com/SparkleWeekend) sparkle.org.uk
- WASA LGBT- Twitter: [@WASALGBT](https://twitter.com/WASALGBT) facebook.com/wasalgbt

REFUGEE AND ASYLUM SEEKER ORGANISATIONS

- Manchester Amnesty- Twitter: [@amnestymanc](https://twitter.com/amnestymanc) manchester.amnesty.org.uk
- Manchester City of Sanctuary- Twitter: [@ManchesterCoS](https://twitter.com/ManchesterCoS) manchester.cityofsanctuary.org
- Manchester Migrant Solidarity- Twitter: [@ManchesterMiSol](https://twitter.com/ManchesterMiSol) manchestermigrantsolidarity.org
- Saheli Manchester Twitter: [@SaheliMCR](https://twitter.com/SaheliMCR) saheli.org.uk
- Women Asylum Seekers Together Manchester- Twitter: [@WastCampaigning](https://twitter.com/WastCampaigning) wast.org.uk

UNIONS AND WORKERS' GROUPS

- Manchester SolFed- Twitter: [@ManchesterSolFed](https://twitter.com/ManchesterSolFed) solfed.org.uk

GLOSSARY

ANTHROPOCENE

The current geological age we're living in, characterised by climate and earth systems being heavily influenced and altered by human activity.

BIOME

An area of the planet that can be classified by the flora and fauna that live in it; for example, rainforests, savannas and deserts are all biomes.

CARBON BUDGET

The cumulative amount of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions permitted over a period of time to keep within a certain temperature threshold.

ECO-ANXIETY

Anxiety stemming from concerns about the current and future transformative changes caused to the environment due to human-induced climate change,

FOSSIL FUELS

Fuels formed by natural processes such as the decomposition of buried dead organisms- this includes petroleum, natural gas and coal. These release carbon dioxide and trap heat in the atmosphere.

FRACKING

This is the process of drilling down into the earth to extract hard-to-reach oil and gases, with toxic and dangerous environmental consequences.

GLOBAL NORTH

Largely comprises the "Western" world including the United States, Canada, almost all the European countries, Israel, Cyprus, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Australia, and New Zealand.

GLOBAL SOUTH

Refers to countries in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Pacific Islands, as well as the low and middle income countries in Asia and the Middle East.

GREENHOUSE GASES

These are gases in the earth's atmosphere that can both absorb and emit radiation- these include water vapour, carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, ozone and some artificial chemicals such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE (IPCC)

The intergovernmental body of the United Nations created in 1988 by the World Meteorological Organisation. The IPCC provides objective, scientific information on the risks and impacts of human-induced climate change, and also outlines policy recommendations. It was shaped by US power and has been attacked by denialists for 30 years (Hudson conversation piece)

LOCAL AUTHORITY

An administrative body in local government. Manchester City Council, for example, is this region's local authority.

NET-ZERO CARBON EMISSIONS

This means that the amount of carbon dioxide produced is balanced with the amount removed or absorbed from the atmosphere.

CONTINUED

NVDA

This stands for Non-Violent Direct Action, a public form of protest.

OZONE:

A highly reactive gas composed of three oxygen atoms. It is both a natural and a man-made product that occurs in the Earth's upper atmosphere. Depending on where it is in the atmosphere, ozone affects life on Earth in either good or bad ways.

OZONE LAYER

The ozone layer is a thin part of the Earth's atmosphere that absorbs almost all of the sun's harmful ultraviolet light.

RENEWABLES/RENEWABLE ENERGY

This refers to energy from sources that are naturally replenished on a usable scale- for example, sunlight, wind, rain, tides, and geothermal heat.

RETROFITTING (HOUSING)

To retrofit something is to add a component to something that was not in its initial manufacture. When we talk about retrofitting in terms of energy efficiency, this is largely referring to altering housing or buildings to make them more energy efficient.

SCOPE 1/2/3 EMISSIONS

Scope 1 emissions are defined as all of an organisation's emissions that are directly under their control- this includes gas boilers, vehicles, etc. Scope 2 emissions are indirect emissions produced from the electricity purchased by the organisation. Scope 3 emissions are all other indirect emissions from the organisation's activities from sources they do not own and control, for example the emissions from business travel. Scope 3 emissions tend to have the greatest share of a carbon budget.

SOLASTALGIA

Refers to the lived experience of environmental change, and sparks feelings of emotional or existential distress. As Albrecht (the philosopher who coined the term) puts it, solastalgia is "the homesickness you have when you are still at home".

TUNDRA

The coldest type of biome where tree growth is hindered by low temperatures and short growing seasons. It derives from the word for "treeless plain" in Finnish and Subarctic languages.

UNITED NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMME (UNEP)

Created in 1972 to coordinate environmental governance and activities, especially in 'developing' countries. Also provides assistance to countries in implemental environmental policies and practices.

UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (UNFCCC)

Multilateral environmental agreement created in 1992, with the main purpose of stabilising anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions. There are 197 parties to the convention which attend the "Conference of Parties" (COP) meetings annually.

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANISATION (WMO)

Created in 1950 and consists of 187 Member States and six member territories. The WMO publishes annual reports on global, regional and national temperatures and extreme weather events and also publishes information on other climate change indicators such as sea level rise, and atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases.

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- The University of Manchester: Sustainable Resources Plan. Available at: <http://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=33195>
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Whilst much of the content in this handbook was written directly for this guide, some sections have been amended from Climate Emergency Manchester's Active Citizenship Toolkit- more information can be found [here](#).

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