



ADAM SMITH  

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PANMURE  
HOUSE

## THE HUTTON SERIES

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### SESSION FOUR REPORT THE RESPONSE FROM CONCERNED CITIZENS

Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
14:00 – 15:30

The Hutton Series on Climate Change is a series of events taking place across 2020-21 at Adam Smith's Panmure House, bringing together a diverse cross-section of experts, business leaders, scientists, and concerned citizens in the service of one simple aim:

to identify *ten key priorities, innovations & actions to mitigate the climate crisis.*

Our panellists for the fourth session were Lara Funk (PhD candidate at Heriot-Watt University), Cristina Chapman (Deputy Head of External Affairs at The Cabinet Office (UK), Alka Sathyan (a fourth-year student of BEng (Hons) Electrical and Electronic Engineering from the Dubai Heriot-Watt campus) and Kelly McBride (Director of Policy and Practice at The Democratic Society), who delivered opening statements followed by a debate and discussion chaired by Prof Iain Stewart, Professor of Geoscience Communication at the University of Plymouth, and Director of its Sustainable Earth Institute. The panel discussion was interactive, featuring audience polls and an opportunity to ask questions about the key priorities, actions, and innovations to mitigate the climate crisis.

The event was hosted virtually by Panmure House and simultaneously live streamed as an interactive webinar via Facebook and the Panmure website. The broadcast is available on the [Panmure House website](#).

Write-ups are produced after each session by the Lyell Centre and the Research Centre for Carbon Solutions, and published on the Panmure House website. A final write-up will be produced ready for distribution at COP26 in November 2021.

Hosted by Dr Caroline Howitt, Programme Director: Panmure House

Chaired by Prof. Iain Stewart, Director – Sustainable Earth Institute, University of Plymouth

Introduced by Professor Richard Williams, Vice Chancellor, Heriot-Watt University

## THE PANEL

Lara Funk (PhD candidate at Heriot-Watt University)

Cristina Chapman (Deputy Head of External Affairs at The Cabinet Office (UK))

Alka Sathyan (fourth-year student of BEng (Hons) Electrical and Electronic Engineering from the Dubai Heriot-Watt campus)

Kelly McBride (Director of Policy and Practice at The Democratic Society),

## THE RESPONSE FROM CONCERNED CITIZENS

### Quotes, unattributed, by the panellists

*“We as humankind have the privilege of perceiving the world quite differently from every other living being, and it is a privilege and we need to use effectively. We need to be able to see the world and appreciate the world differently” – Paraphrased from James Hutton*

*“Greta is a divisive figure; however, she has probably done more for climate change than in my lifetime since Blue Peter told me in 1986 about the effect of aerosols and greenhouse gases.”*

*“Extinction rebellion has a really important role to play in terms of exerting pressure on our legislative system, our political system, our economic system, in terms of social licence to operate,”*

*When asked about radical action - “I think I was kind of curious, but everyone’s definition of radical seems to be different”*

*“There is an extremely delicate balance between understanding the environment of economy and then how it balances out with the economy of the environment”.*

### Governance

- Leadership must come from influential world leaders, leading academics and the most innovative minds in business.
- We must ensure that our systems of governance are fit for purpose if they are to deal with the challenges ahead, and ensure that governments are accountable for climate-change inaction.

- Create opportunities through citizen's assemblies for public involvement on the learning and development journey.

## Visibility of actions and results

- Give consumers more visibility about what industry and government are doing to address climate change issues.
- Instigate discussion on inclusivity and recognise differences within and amongst communities.

## Motivation and incentives

- Motivate the public through good examples, rather than negative reinforcement.
- Achieve genuine sea-change in our behaviours through economic brilliance, entrepreneurial brilliance and the discovery of those things that are going to make people want to behave and consume differently.

## Health, happiness and wellbeing

- We need to think about our economy in a different way and utilising measures like the Happiness Index as a different way of gauging what we perceive as success and growth.
- Create a central space where people can come to find information and inspiration about issues
- Shift from a consumer-driven, resource-driven economy towards an experience-driven, human contact-driven economy.
- Use the experience and learnings from COVID to understand the impact of climate change about how we deliver goods and services, and the way that we come together in professional ways, as well as what makes us happy. Our reaction to COVID is speeding up the ideation process and our ability to come up with solutions, because we can bring more people together more quickly with different minds and expertise.
- Encourage consumer responsibility, to drive change for a more sustainable and greener economy and deeper understanding about how we affect nature. Ultimately, the well-being of nature affects our well-being.

## Learning

- Create more opportunities for citizen's assemblies to learn about an issue and include talks about exclusivity and differences within and amongst communities.
- Learning in community action, education, and provision of opportunity in the energy transition in training and in the workplace and home environment.
- Universities should be centres for the proliferation of ideas, where conventional thinking is challenged. Research funding requires more risk-taking and teaching needs to move out of silos often defined by out-dated accreditation and professional norms.
- Build a systems approach to climate change science that integrates with our education systems, including training on climate literacy in our schools.

## Poll results

Audience members were asked to take part in the following Mentimeter polls:

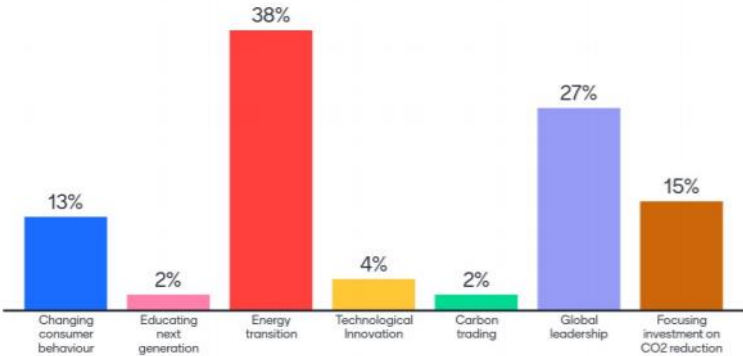
**Rank the following in terms of importance in combatting climate change:** Mentimeter



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# What is your number one priority in mitigating the climate crisis?

Mentimeter



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