

Climate Engagement



Creating a local majority for ambitious climate action

What Are We Trying To Achieve

Drive more engagement & uptake in your projects and activities, as well as general low-carbon behaviour

Effectively counter the anti-net zero narratives emerging and create a climate majority

Encourage, motivate and mobilise people to push Govt and LAs to be more ambitious / increase funding through successful engagement

And What Do We Need To Understand



Why do some projects fail and some succeed?

Why do we rarely make an impact with the people who would most benefit?



It's a good idea / project but it'd ever work in my town...

How do we actually reach past the 'climate bubble'?



Background To Inaction



Quick Quiz - Answers in Chat Pls!



How many people in your country do you think want to take action on climate change? How many would donate 1% of their personal income to tackle it?



86% think people should try to fight climate change through their own actions



89% think their govt should do more to tackle climate change



75% would contribute some of their income to tackle climate change



63% Brits felt somewhat or very negative when they thought about the future of the environment*

Nature: 130,000 people sampled across 125 countries
*ONS

BUT....! Nobody thinks this



In fact, there is a 26% underestimate of these figures when people try to guess the level of Willingness to Contribute of their fellow citizens



And 98% of news stories about climate are negative, which reinforces the lack of perceived desire for action



Most importantly, a small increase in perception of others acting results in a large increase of one's own WTC

Apathy *Isn't* The Issue

Every demographic is worried about climate breakdown

Over 60% of people are very worried
Over 80% are worried

60% acknowledge the UK is already feeling the effects

All demographics overwhelmingly agree that human activity is the driving factor

60% agree that a global, not solely local approach is needed

64% agree UK should be the one of the most ambitious countries in tackling the issue

72% of people say climate change is an emergency

54% vote for candidates who support climate action**

Then Why Aren't We Acting?

Complex set of reasons why people fail to act

**COPING MECHANISMS /
VALUES-ACTION GAP /
BIAS**

Grief – Fear - Anxiety

IMPLICATORY DENIAL

Govts attempts to avoid
chaos & panic

**TRAGEDY OF THE
COMMONS**

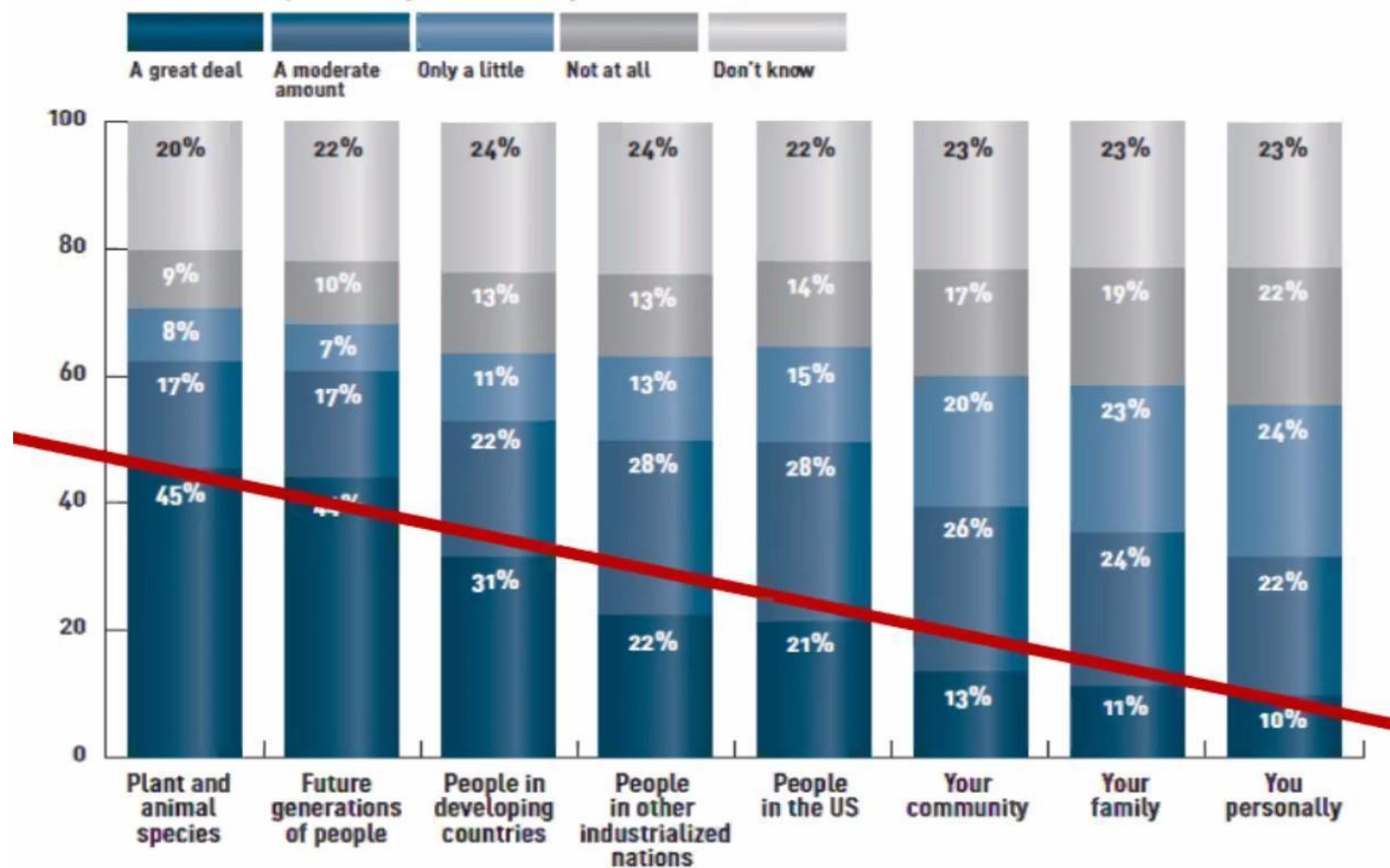
Why should I do it if nobody
else is?

IDENTITY

Natural tendencies +
coercion to divide into
teams

Coping Mechanisms In Action

EXAMPLE: How much do you think global warming will harm...



Public Perception Issues

The public perceive many actions as having a far greater impact on reducing emissions than they do

Which three of the following actions, if any, do you think would have most impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

	Likely	Rank
Recycling	49%	60th
Switching to purchasing renewable electricity	30%	4th
Less packaging	28%	38th
Buying fewer items, or more durable items	22%	46th
Shift to public transport	22%	5th
More energy efficient cooking equipment, using cleaner fuel or renewable energy	21%	9th
Fuel efficient driving practices (e.g. using the correct gear, and driving more slowly)	16%	34th
Growing or producing your own food	16%	23rd
Refurbishing and renovating housing for efficiency	15%	6th
Living car-free	15%	1st
Having a vegan diet	7%	7th
Having smaller living spaces / or co-housing to fill empty rooms	5%	31st
Not having pets	4%	25th



All of these issues make driving serious and meaningful action on climate breakdown challenging by themselves -

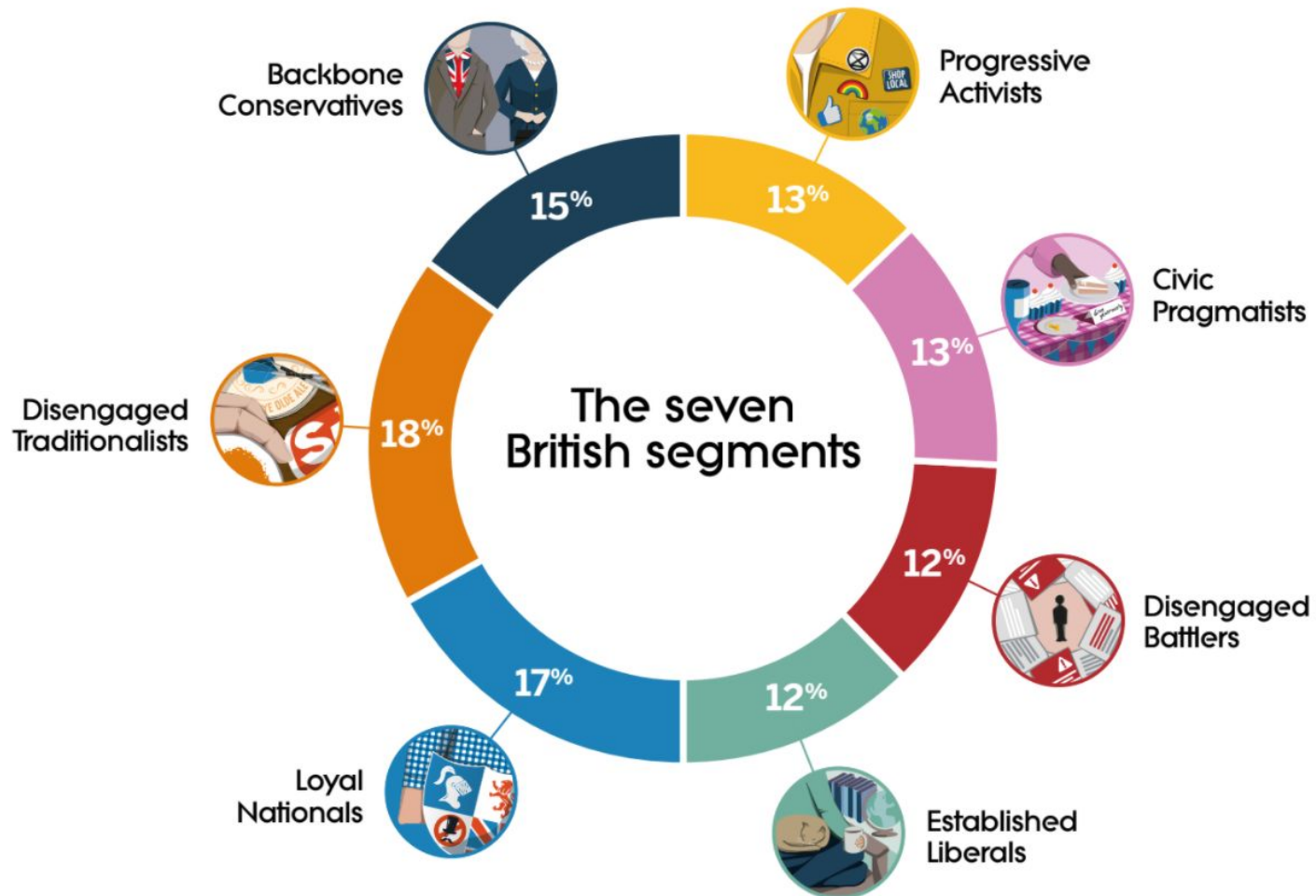
But a bigger unseen issue lurks beneath the obvious...and it's something within our control...

Global country average

Source: Ipsos Global Advisor - Earth Day 2022

• Created with Datawrapper

Britain Talks Climate - 7 Segments



10,385 British adults

Qualitative phase:

- 12 focus groups
- 35 in depth interviews

Civic Pragmatists - 17%

- Caring, kind, practical, charitable, liberal, moderate
- Progressive and community-oriented
- Anxious about climate change



Key takeaways:

- Try to connect your discussion on climate change to social challenges they care about
- E.g. NHS, a resilient economy, empowering marginalised groups
- Channel their pessimism into becoming politically active
- Receptive to messages on pulling together and restoring equilibrium with nature

Established Liberals - 18%

- **Confident, moderate and rational**
- **Global outlook and identity**
- **Feel politically empowered**



Key takeaways:

- They like to hear rational, common-sense reasoning
- They do not necessarily feel personally threatened by climate change
- Motivated by positive arguments about economic and societal progress
- Emphasise that returns on low-carbon investment are financially rational

Backbone Conservatives - 22%

- **Traditional, practical, hard-working, respectful**
- **Concerned about countryside preservation**



Key takeaways:

- Stay with practical, common sense solutions
- Discuss climate change impacts on agriculture, local/seasonal produce, sustainable land management, preserving the countryside and green jobs
- Engage around national leadership successes

Disengaged Battlers - 4%

- **Feel unheard and unrepresented**
- **More likely to be financially insecure, feel exposed to economic downturns**
- **Resilient and want to see a fair, honest and environmentally-friendly UK**



Key takeaways:

- They feel inequality is a major issue
- Receptive to credible narratives on climate action leading to fairer outcomes and equity
- Draw upon relatable local people, projects, and real and diverse green jobs

Disengaged Traditionalists - 9%

- **Hard working, honest, likely to describe themselves as working class**
- **Feel under-represented and frustrated**
- **Do not view themselves or the UK as vulnerable**



Key takeaways:

- Least likely to act or feel concern about climate change
- Open to taking action on the impacts of air pollution and preserving the beauty of our countryside and green spaces
- Engage around green jobs and industry, futureproofing manufacturing and increasing UK-based production

Loyal Nationals - 20%

- **Most likely segment to say they are working class**
- **Patriotic, traditional but are more likely to be anti-big business**
- **Feel the world is becoming more dangerous, which propels them politically**



Key takeaways:

- 60% are 'extremely worried' or 'very worried' about climate change
- Engage on corporate responsibility rather than the burden of personal change
- Discuss local environment, warmer homes, cleaner air, fairness and green jobs
- Draw upon British environmental leadership achievements

Progressive Activists - 10%

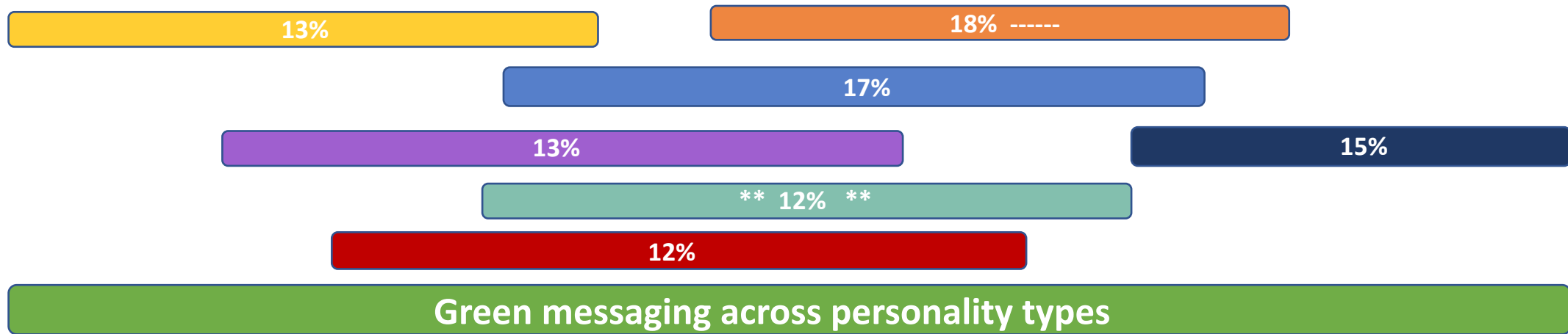
- **Politically active and passionate**
- **Environment and climate change a main concern**
- **United in their concern about creating equality**



Key takeaways:

- Most likely segment to see the country as divided
- Encourage them to engage where they can make the greatest difference and build common ground with others
- Acknowledge their pessimism, but direct this constructively

Why 'Green' Messaging Fails



- Climate change messaging is far more complex than a left-right binary
- Lots of messages actively alienate our target audience

Progressive Activists

Civic Pragmatists

Disengaged Battlers

Backbone Cons

Established Liberals

Loyal Nationals

Disengaged Traditionalists

Why 'Green' Messaging Fails

13%

** 12% **

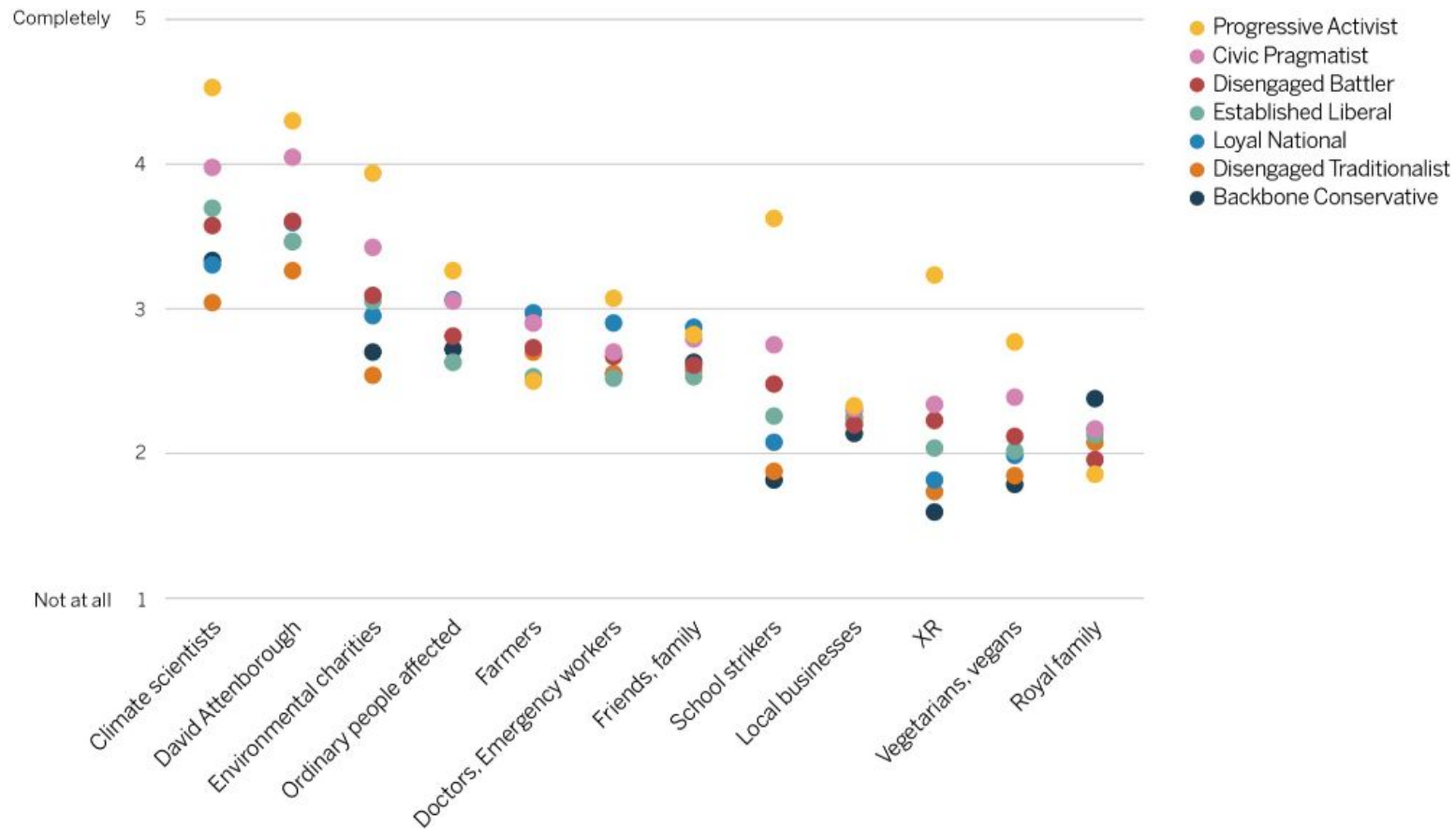
Personal 'Environmental choices'

Probably alienates 33% of personality types
 ie. More than it lands with, who are the ones *already* taking
 personal responsibility

- Progressive Activists
- Civic Pragmatists
- Disengaged Battlers
- Backbone Cons
- Established Liberals
- Loyal Nationals
- Disengaged Traditionalists

Trust - Or Lack Of Trust

How much do you trust the following groups or people to talk about climate change?



Behaviour Change For Climate Action



Driving Community Action



This model breaks down stakeholders into adopter segments, with each group influencing the next. The model also highlights what characteristics improve the probability of the acceptance of a change.

The adopter segments are:
innovators (2.5%)
early adopters (13.5%)
early majority (34%)
late majority (34%)
laggards (16%)

The early majority tends to be more mainstream, and their decisions are influenced by the opinion leaders in their community:

- case studies
- customer testimonials
- addressing specific concerns and objections of this group

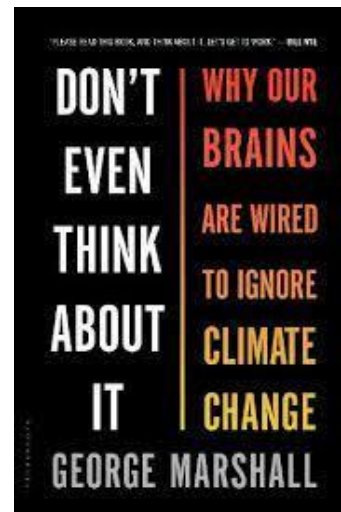
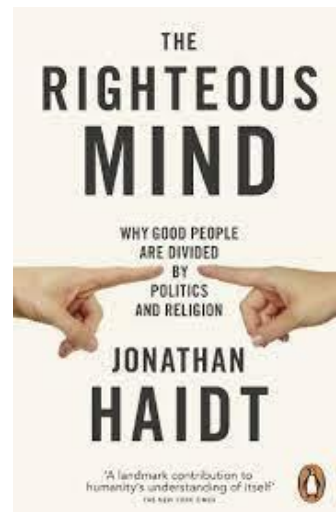
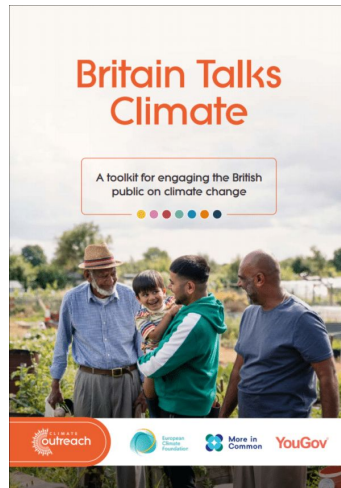
The Chasm



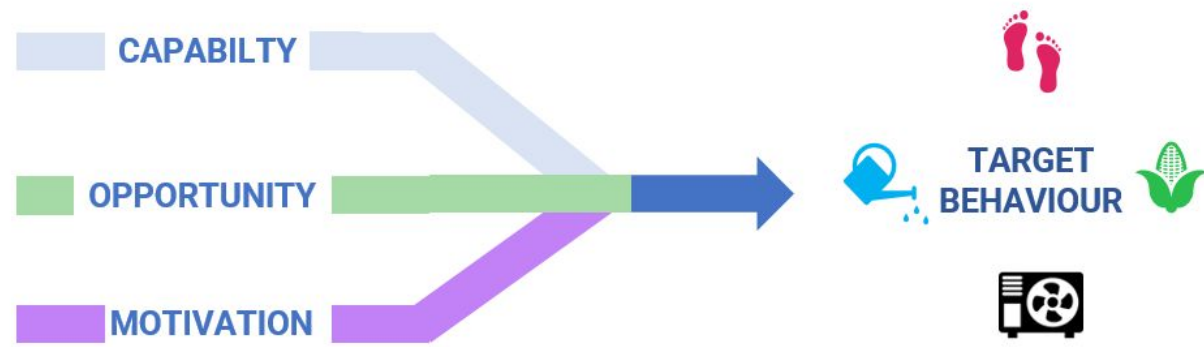
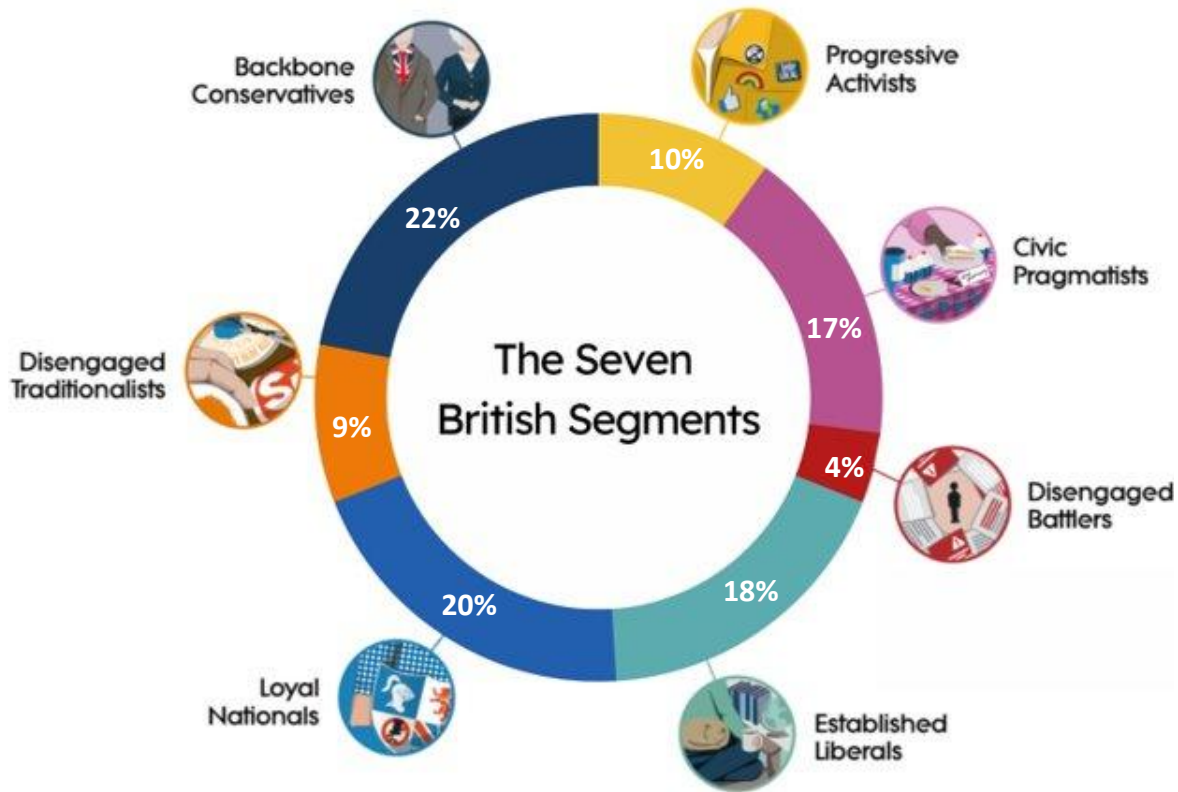
Making A Movement



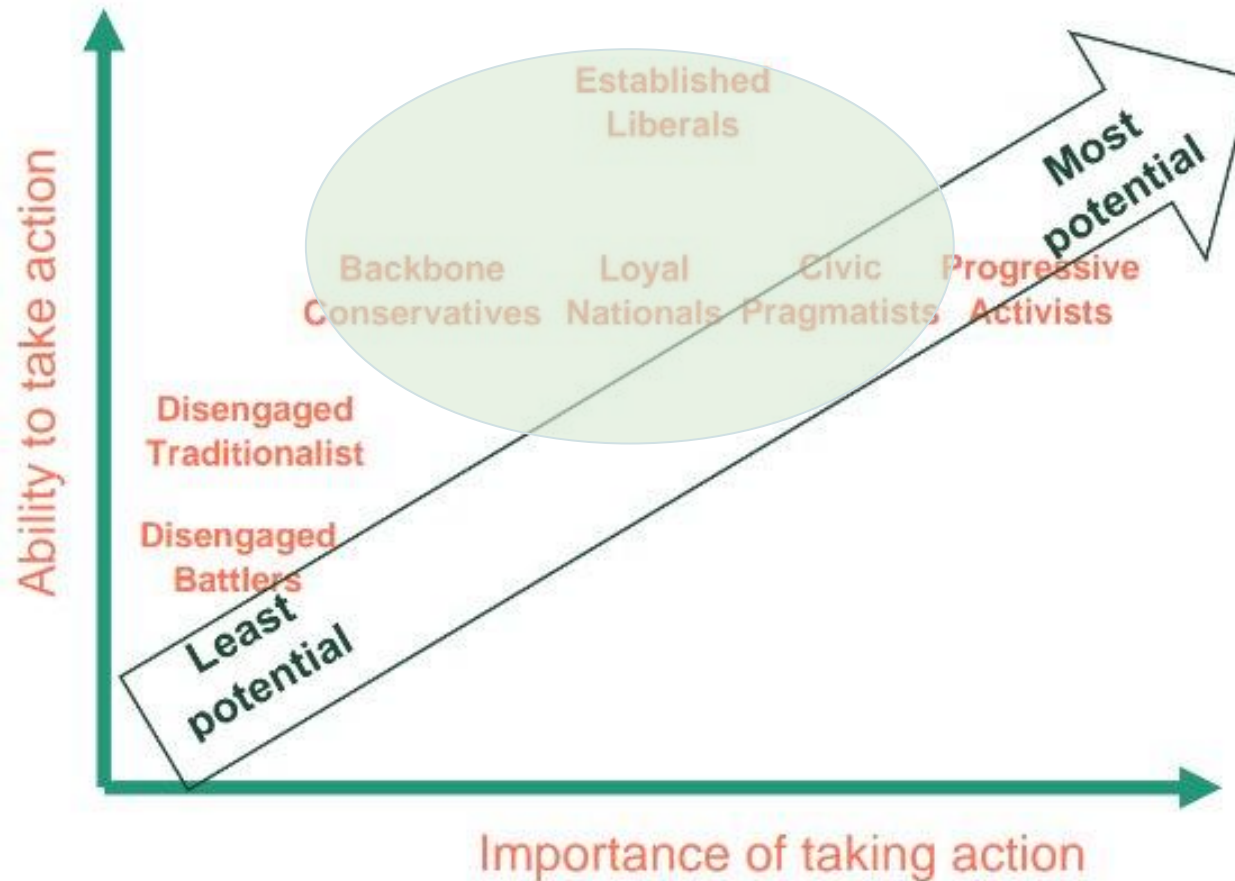
What Research Can Help Us?



Surrey's Persona Types



Turning It Into Practice



Normative Appeals

Goldstein et al, 2008, *A Room with a Viewpoint*

Standard environmental appeal vs. descriptive norm vs descriptive provincial norm

- *‘Help save the environment by re-using your towel’*
- *“JOIN YOUR FELLOW GUESTS IN HELPING TO SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT. Almost 75% of guests who are asked to participate in our new resource savings program do help by using their towels more than once ...”*
- *“Join your fellow guests in helping to save the environment. Almost 75% of guests **who stay in this room** help by using their towels more than once ...”*



25% increase in towel re-use using descriptive norm vs standard appeal



Adding a Provincial Norm - ie ‘in this room’ - saw an even higher increase of nearly 1/3



Behaviour changes happened *behind closed doors*



A separate group in the study rated being a citizen or being male/female as more important to their identity than being a hotel guest

Rethinking Our Approach to Engagement



Designing Engagement

- **Motivations**
- **Shared values**
- **Calls to action**
- **Local Impacts**
- **Amplifying Reach**



In our conversations



In our displays



In our broadcast media

Reframing Our Intros

Climate change isn't just an environmental issue!

It's also:

- A health crisis
- An economic crisis
- A social crisis



Take traffic as an example:

We're top 5 for worst traffic in the country – worse than almost all London boroughs!

40% of Surrey's emissions
from transport

£550m pa in lost
earnings

5.7% of Surrey's deaths –
despite higher quality health care

10 year lower life expectancy
in N. Guildford than rest of borough



Understanding Motivations

I am worried that climate change will... (top five worries per segment)							
Rank	Backbone Conservative	Disengaged Traditionalist	Loyal Nationals	Established Liberal	Disengaged Battler	Civic Pragmatist	Progressive Activist
1	Harm nature and wildlife (49%)	Harm nature and wildlife (34%)	Harm nature and wildlife (52%)	Harm nature and wildlife (53%)	Harm nature and wildlife (41%)	Harm nature and wildlife (67%)	Suffering for the world's poorest (79%)
2	Cause bills/costs to rise (38%)	Cause bills/costs to rise (32%)	Cause bills/costs to rise (42%)	Suffering for the world's poorest (48%)	Suffering for the world's poorest (38%)	Suffering for the world's poorest (57%)	Harm nature and wildlife (75%)
3	Negative impact on children's future (37%)	[Not worried about climate change] (26%)	Negative impact on children's future (39%)	Negative impact on children's future (40%)	Cause bills/costs to rise (30%)	Negative impact on children's future (49%)	Negative impact on children's future (50%)
4	Suffering for the world's poorest (31%)	Negative impact on children's future (24%)	Suffering for the world's poorest (36%)	Cause bills/costs to rise (25%)	Negative impact on children's future (29%)	Cause bills/costs to rise (31%)	Cause bills/costs to rise (19%)
5	[Not worried about climate change] (21%)	Suffering for the world's poorest (20%)	[Not worried about climate change] (16%)	[Not worried about climate change] (15%)	[Not worried about climate change] (18%)	Make some food unavailable (16%)	Make some food unavailable (13%)

Understanding Motivations

Which of the following issues are most important to you when deciding how to vote? (Overall most frequent issues in segments' top three)							
Rank	Backbone Conservative	Disengaged Traditionalist	Loyal Nationals	Established Liberal	Disengaged Battler	Civic Pragmatist	Progressive Activist
1	Healthcare and the NHS (50%)	Healthcare and the NHS (40%)	Healthcare and the NHS (53%)	Healthcare and the NHS (50%)	Healthcare and the NHS (51%)	Healthcare and the NHS (64%)	Healthcare and the NHS (60%)
2	The economy (47%)	Cost of living (38%)	Cost of living (37%)	The economy (42%)	Cost of living (43%)	Cost of living (35%)	Poverty and inequality (53%)
3	Cost of living (27%)	The economy (34%)	Immigration and refugees (29%)	Environment and climate change (30%)	Poverty and inequality (24%)	Environment and climate change (31%)	Environment and climate change (50%)
4	Crime (25%)	Crime (26%)	Crime (27%)	Cost of living (26%)	The economy (22%)	Poverty and inequality (26%)	Cost of living (23%)
5	Immigration and refugees (22%)	Immigration and refugees (22%)	The economy (27%)	Education (19%)	Environment and climate change (20%)	The economy (26%)	Education (17%)

Backing Up The Research

Randomised control trial with exact demographics across groups.

Each group sees only 1 'message'.

Each message is 100-200 words, and all end with a broad c2a 'government must act on climate change'

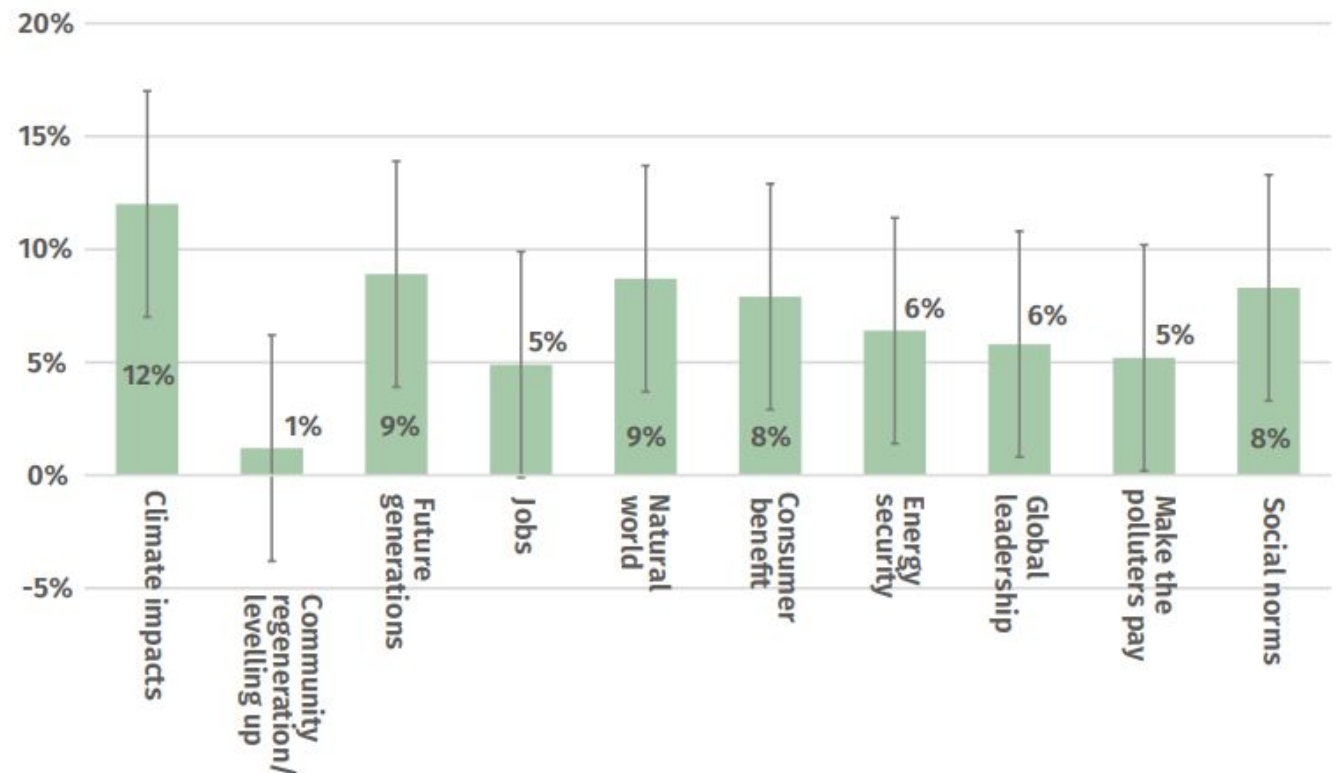
10 messages + control. 3,388 sample size.

Shared destiny narratives + co-benefit narratives

Co-benefit narratives secondary and best used for elite and reactive messaging. They have high levels of agreement in polling but *do not* change underlying belief / drive action

FIGURE 4.2: AS WELL AS 'CLIMATE IMPACTS', 'FUTURE GENERATIONS' AND 'NATURAL WORLD' WERE AMONG THOSE WHO PERFORMED WELL ON THIS METRIC

Change vs control in climate being chosen as a top three issue facing the country



Source: Author's analysis of YouGov data

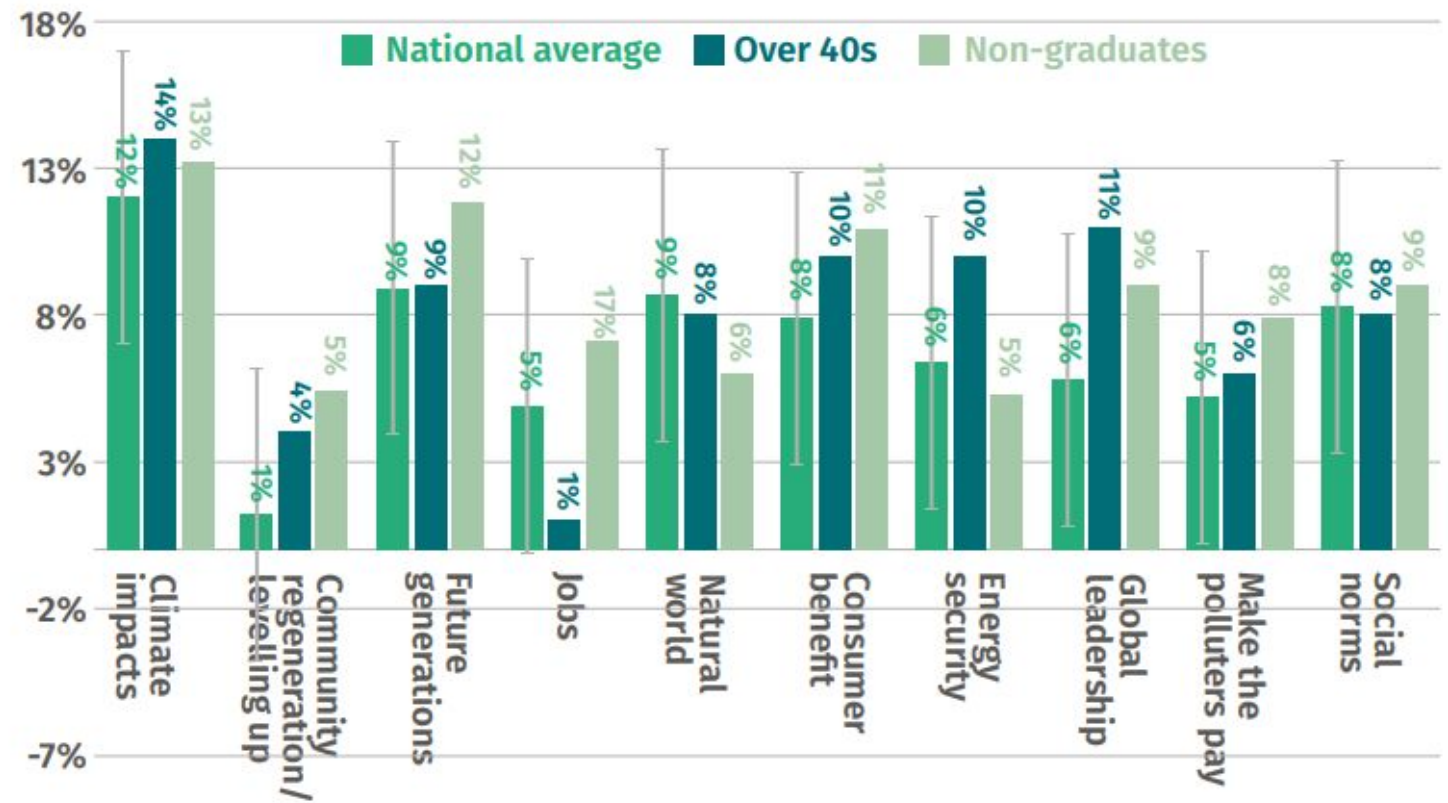
Backing Up The Research

Particular attention on the 2 demographics highlighted as they are more likely to be swing voters, in terms of election and climate policy

[A rising tide: Strengthening public permission for climate action | IPPR](#)

FIGURE 4.3: OVERALL PERSUASION EFFECTS ON THIS METRIC WERE BROADLY REFLECTED AMONG NON-GRADUATES AND THE OVER-40S

Change vs control in climate being chosen as a top three issue facing the country



Source: Author's analysis of YouGov data

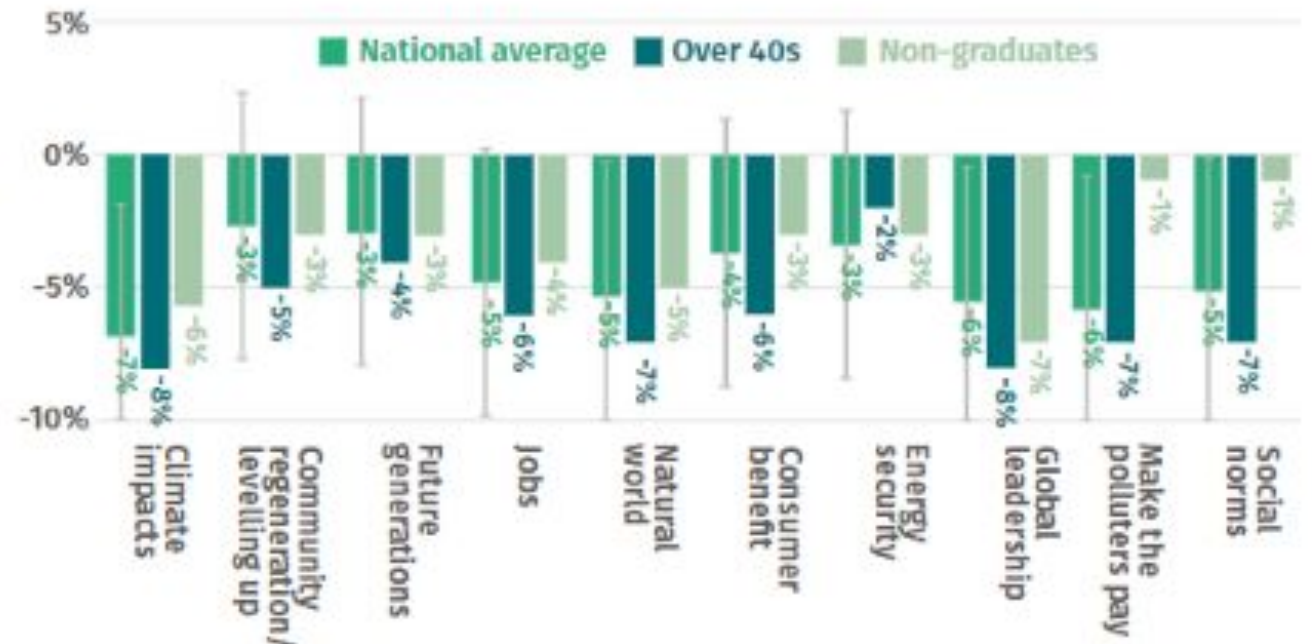
Backing Up The Research



The study also found that opposition to net zero policies across the big 6 was lowered as a result of strategic messaging

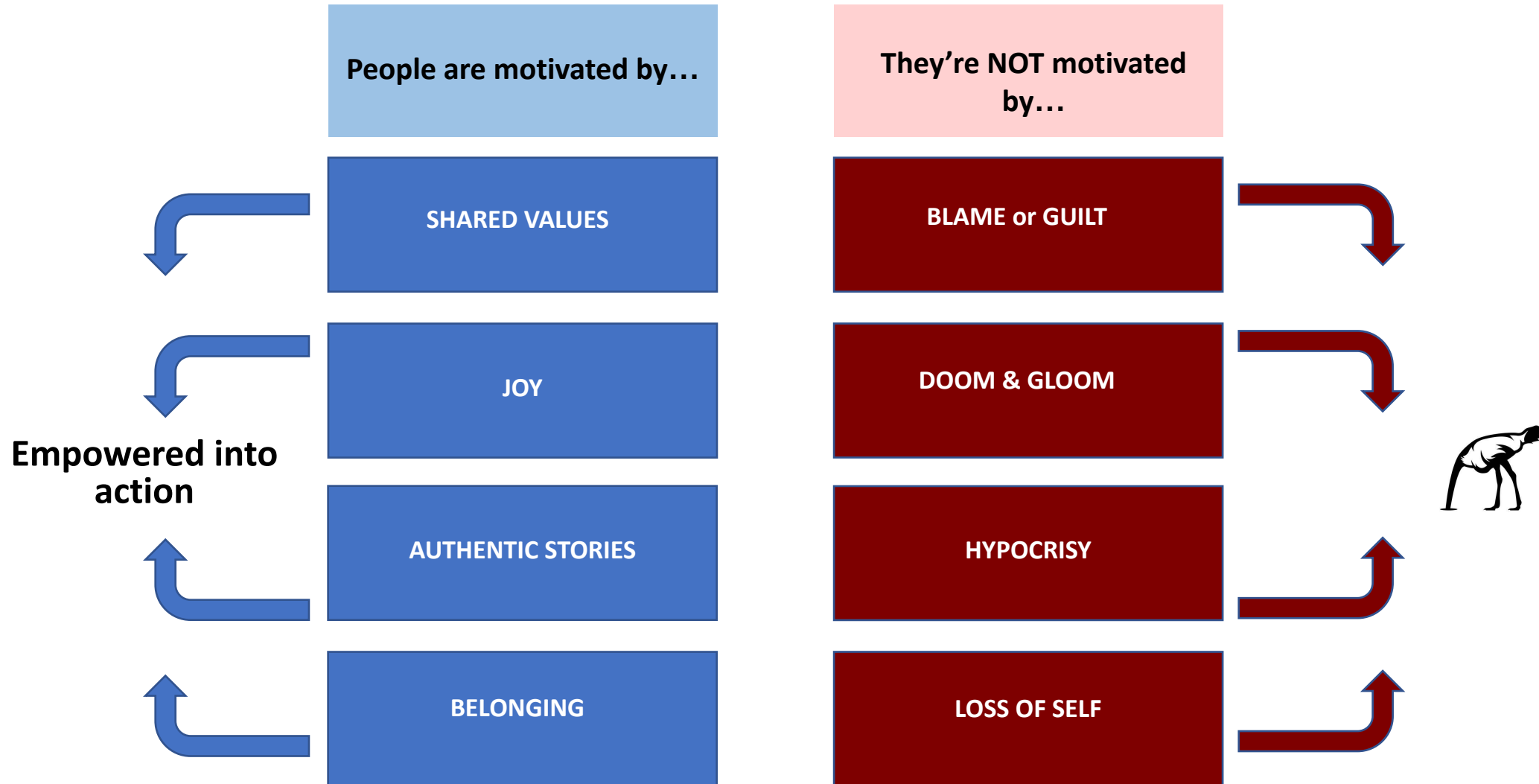
FIGURE 4.6: 'CLIMATE IMPACTS', 'GLOBAL LEADERSHIP' AND 'MAKE POLLUTERS PAY' PERFORMED WELL AT REDUCING OPPOSITION TO NET ZERO

Average change vs control in opposition to six-item battery of net zero policy (policies include: phasing out petrol and diesel cars; phasing out gas boilers for heat pumps; investing in electric vehicles; climate finance; frequent flier tax; 1 per cent on income tax to fund a new generation of renewable energy)



Source: Author's analysis of YouGov data

Motivation Into Action



Personal / Local Impacts

A good place to start with a shared vision narrative is on the impacts of climate change already happening around you - what are the narratives on the impacts below?

**Hook Line collapse
(Wok-Bas)**



**Wildfire
(Wentworth)**



**Flooding
(Godalming)**



Spotting pitfalls in our engagement

1. What's your objective - what is the project trying to achieve?
2. Who are you trying to engage?
3. What are *all* of the barriers that might stop people from getting involved in the type of project you're discussing
 - a. Capability barriers - Physical, psychological, social
 - b. Opportunity barriers - physical, social, time
 - c. Motivation barriers - automatic, reflective, social
4. Do you have the power / pathway to overcome those barriers?
5. What messaging do you currently use on the project - how could you tie health, waste, nature, economy etc in as co-benefits - and what could a good shared destiny narrative be

Breakout Activity - Example Active Travel

1. What is your project trying to get people to do? Is it just information on a wall about transport and air quality? Is lack of information actually a problem?
2. What are the barriers to people actually taking up active travel and ditching their cars in your area - cost, frequency, lack of confidence, safety, knowledge, cultural blockers etc etc etc
3. Most people say they 'don't feel safe cycling on Surrey's roads'. Are you the Transport Authority? Do you know what the LA's policies are? Is there leverage? Are you left with little option other than a campaign?
4. If so...is that what you're actually doing? Or are you still just telling people things that don't improve their feeling of safety? And in that case, would your time be better spent say mapping out safe cycling routes that don't go on roads, and filming people who are known and trusted taking those routes on their bikes?
5. Is your current message too climate focused? What 'norms' can you tie in to show people are *already* doing the behaviour you want to increase?

Designing Engagement



How have residents found your message?



Is the next thing they see consistent with your hook?



How can you generate stats for normalising behaviour?



Trusted Messenger is appropriate to audience?



Primary message on 'shared destiny', tailored to Persuadables



Appropriate & impactful secondary co-benefit messages



Normative appeals



Trusted messenger



***Calls* to action in a way that is likely to resonate (& ideally tracked)**



Continual escalation through networks

Example - Energy Surveys



Primary message on 'shared destiny', tailored to Persuadables



Appropriate & impactful secondary co-benefit messages



Normative appeal



Trusted messenger



Calls to action in a way that is likely to resonate (& ideally tracked)



Continual escalation through networks

Trained residents helping their neighbours & communities reduce bills, keep their homes warm and healthy

Reskilling of residents, and being part of a wider effort to reduce Surrey's residential emissions

Over 580 Surrey have already benefited from a survey in 2024, with over 70% looking to undertake significant energy improvements as a result

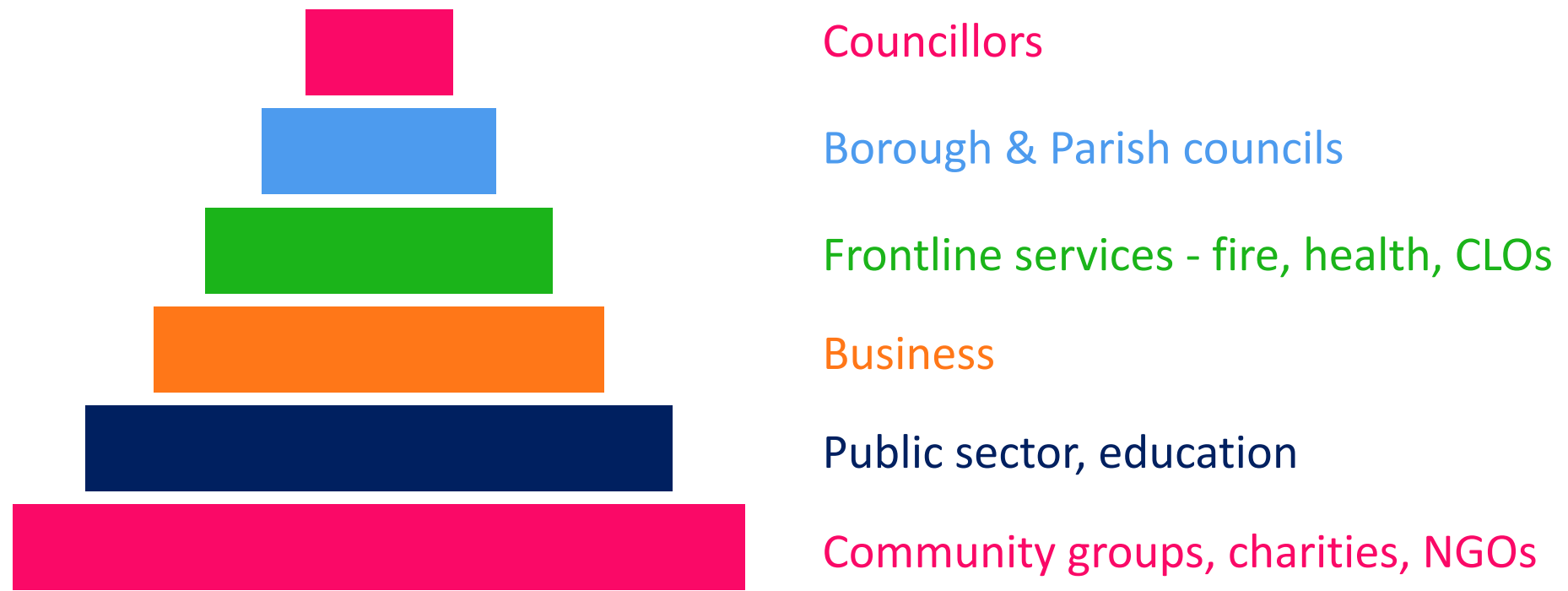
Environmental charity, local authority, but most important WORD OF MOUTH from residents who've had a survey

C2A is *not* just having a survey - it's retrofit funding, community purchase leads etc

BBC News, Surrey Live, councillors, Uni of Surrey, parish councils & newsletter

Maximising Engagement Reach

Community networks are embedded to help build relationships at scale, leverage their local knowledge and influence, and provide a channel for conversation, listening and feedback.



Immediate Actions To Practice

STOP FRAMING CLIMATE CHANGE AS AN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE!

**DON'T USE WORDS OR LANGUAGE JUST BECAUSE IT CONNECTS WITH YOU.
UNDERSTAND OTHERS' MOTIVATIONS**

PEER TO PEER ENGAGEMENT IS ABSOLUTELY KEY

OPTIMISM IS A CATALYST FOR CHANGE – BE REALISTIC, BUT HOPEFUL

LISTEN – UNDERSTAND - VALIDATE

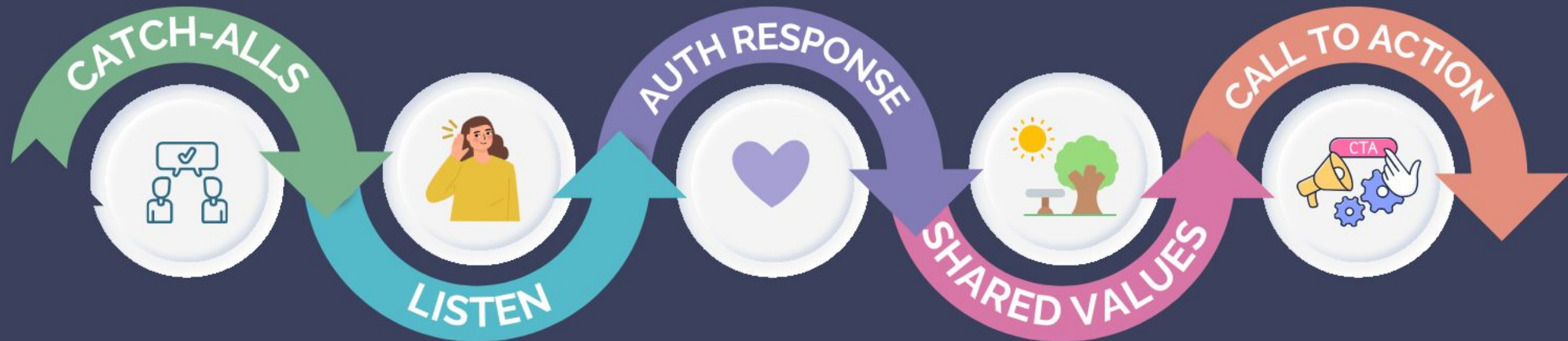
THEN EMPHASIZE THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM IN TERMS OF WHAT THEIR VALUES ARE

CONVERSATION FLOW

Catch-alls are the high priority topics that resonate across most personas

Respond with why the topic you're discussing is important to *you*. What's your authentic story?

Leave them with a call to action ie sign up for an energy survey, get them to join The Water Rangers etc



Active listening is our greatest tool. Listen to understand others' motivations

Tie it in to a shared value where possible

Resonating Safety Nets

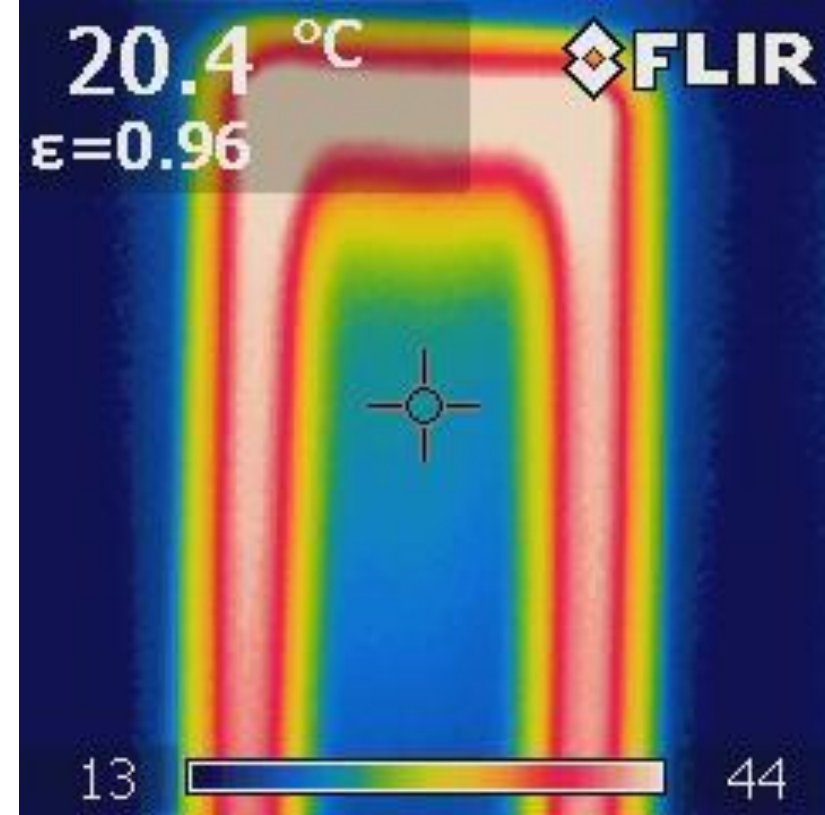
- Place-based local impacts
- Green jobs
- Insulating homes
- Reducing waste and saving energy
- Protecting nature and green space
- Creating a healthier society
- Protecting future generations
- Unaccountable corporations



Why Does It Work

Residential Energy Surveys

- Nationally amplified messaging (energy crisis)
- Excellent health messaging
- Creates good provincial norms - 581 Surrey residents...
- Supports residents in collaborative way without 'vulnerability'
- Offers a solution to a problem
- Builds relationships
- Co-benefits of creating jobs etc



Signpost to
govt funding



Pair with
practical
training



Tackle the 30% of
residential energy
emissions



Build high
impact
relationships



'Hard to reach'
community
benefits

Why Does It Work

Community Fridges

- Waste is a great unifying message
- Offers a common sense solution to a problem
- Measurable impact - creates provincial norm eg X Surrey residents visited the Fridge to cut food waste
- Supports local residents who need it
- Builds relationships



13t food
waste



9000 visits



35.5t
avoided



Next Steps

Remember it's not going to be easy - there are no silver bullets

Read the Britain Talks Climate summary at least

What local experts might you team up with - local uni? College?

Get your team together and brainstorm on your projects - how can you incorporate each of the 6 points on the right into projects / displays / posts / outreach stalls?

Practice!!! This is not something that will come by reading. You need to do it in real life.

You won't get it right all the time. Don't worry if you fail



Primary message on 'shared destiny', tailored to Persuadables



Appropriate & impactful secondary co-benefit messages



Descriptive norms



Trusted messenger



Call to action in a way that is likely to resonate (& ideally tracked)



Continual escalation through networks

Resources



Map Your Projects With This Homework

	Energy	CF	Waste <input type="checkbox"/>	Transport
Catch-alls	<p>Cosy comfortable homes</p> <p>Health benefits from better thermal comfort (reduce damp & mould)</p> <p>Saving £ on bills</p> <p>Reduce emissions</p>	<p>Reducing huge amounts of unnecessary waste</p> <p>About 1/3 of food never even makes it out the field</p>	<p>Wasting money and valuable resources, esp water becoming a scarcity</p> <p>Ending 'throwaway culture'</p> <p>Prioritise care and maintenance over production and throwing away</p>	<p>Surrey in top 5 traffic hotspots in UK</p> <p>Lose £550m to local economy every yr, just from people being stuck in traffic</p> <p>Higher air-poll related deaths than national average</p>
Personal Motivator	<p>What's your favourite thing about the project?</p>	<p>How does it connect with you?</p>	<p>What does it speak to in your values?</p>	<p>Think about those questions and complete in this row for each project</p>
Persuadable Specific	Top suggested motivators for each of the 4 'persuadable' BTC personas			
Civic Pragmatist				
Established Liberal				

Assessing Project Effectiveness: A COM-B Model Guide

To determine if your project will engage the public effectively using the COM-B model, you'll need to assess various aspects of your project in relation to Capability, Opportunity, and Motivation factors. Here's a step-by-step guide to help you evaluate your project:

Project: *ie Community Fridge*

Objectives for Project: 1. *ie Reduce less food waste at home*

2.

Climate Conversations Role Play

[Canva Link](#)

COMMUNITY
FRIDGE



WATER
RANGERS



ENERGY

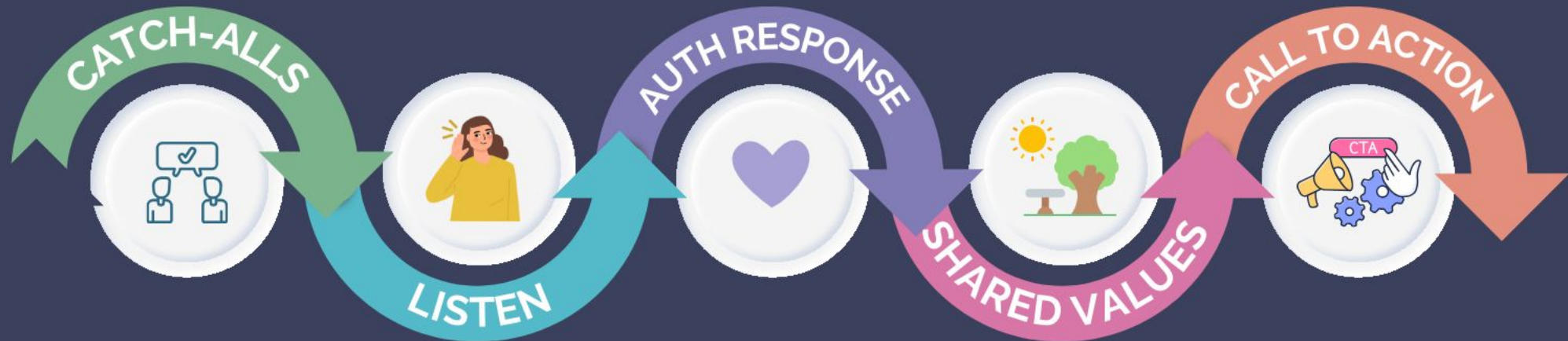


CONVERSATION FLOW

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CONVERSATION FLOW: ENERGY EXAMPLE



Cosy, comfortable homes > Means less risk of damp & mould > healthier homes & less demand on local health services. PLUS - lowered bills for residents & working as a community to tackle climate change

Visitor: *My bills are through the roof. I can't believe it. I saw the boss of Shell got paid about £10m last year. We've got people choosing between being warm and eating on my estate.*

Yes it's a scandal really. Personally I really like this project because it shows what communities can do to support each other to keep people warm, whilst reskilling people and creating jobs...

...but I couldn't agree with you more. It's scandalous that these guys are making £10m whilst millions of us are struggling. We'd love to see this project lead to energy independence for Surrey's communities, with neighbours teaming up to generate clean & cheap electricity.

There's actually a Surrey Community Energy group exploring exactly this if you'd be keen to get involved? As always though these unaccountable companies stand in the way, so if you don't have time to be in the CE group there are 2 quick things you could do about it to help. Ask your MP to vote for the Local Electricity Bill, so residents can gain energy independence and control their own energy generation. 2nd, sign the current petition against the Energy Charter Treaty, which puts all the power in the hands of the polluters.

Questions?

