



# Creative Climate Communications

Exploring Ecological Solutions through the Arts and Community

<b>Creative Climate Communications Toolkit</b>	<b>3</b>
Principles.....	4
Process.....	5
Practicalities.....	6
<b>Research</b>	<b>8</b>
Transition Bro Gwaun: Arts Based Climate Crisis Events: Evaluation 2019.....	9
Gwaunfest (17/7/19).....	10
Theatre Forum workshop (8/8/19).....	11
Ocean Guardians (18/8/19).....	13
Forum Theatre.....	17
Play in a Week and Coastal Path Performance (19-24/8/19).....	20
Fishguard and Goodwick Carnival (24/8/19).....	21
Aberjazz Parade (25/8/19).....	22
Open Mic Nights (8/19).....	23
Climate Crisis Mural with Local Schools.....	25
Pop Up Tomorrow (24/10/19).....	28
<b>Conclusion and Next Steps</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Creative Climate Communications Evaluation</b>	<b>32</b>
Open Space Process.....	33
Workshop Feedback.....	36
General Evaluation Received From Event Participants.....	43
Next Steps.....	47

## **Transition Bro Gwaun (TBG)**

is a grassroots organisation, based in Fishguard and connected to the global Transition Network. We set up and grow local, practical, low carbon projects that the community wants and the environment needs.

transitionbrogwaun@phonecoop.coop

transitionbrogwaun.org.uk

c/o Abergwaun Gateway Club, off Clive Road, Fishguard, Pembrokeshire,  
SA65 9DA



## **Creative Climate Communications Toolkit**

A resource for groups and individuals wishing to develop arts based events and activities to facilitate community conversations about climate change

# Principles

These principles are drawn from the patterns that emerged from the season of arts based climate events undertaken by Transition Bro Gwaun and our supporters. They overlap with the Toolkit Practicalities and are intended to support you to have confidence in starting your own creative climate communications. The details of why, what, when, where and how you plan your activities will be unique to your own context and interests.

## 1. Start with what you know

---

In the same way an ecosystem evolves to suit its environment, start on firm ground and branch out from there. Consider what is appropriate and relevant to the people and places in your local area. Draw on the resources around you, local artists, schools, groups and networks who are working towards a healthy, thriving community and have the capacity to initiate change and make a difference. This also is economical and a low risk in terms of your resources, be they funds or energy.

## 2. Diversity is valuable

---

All thriving projects value diversity, and climate issues particularly present complex and varied feelings and opinions. Choose creative mediums that can work with this, such as participatory theatre, humour, music and community artworks. Build on good relations in the community to face the 'difficult conversations' required by these challenging times. Run events that showcase diverse acts and reach a wide range of different people. Consider different venues, such as the buildings of inspirational projects or outdoor settings in your local landscape.

## 3. Integrate to cultivate beneficial relationships

---

Together we are stronger, just like a forest is sustained by many complex interactions. Joining with other groups and scheduled events is an efficient way to build strong community relationships, combine resources and create fertile interactions. Combine the creative activities with information and links to ways people can make a difference and to build understanding of the issues. 'Eco anxiety' is understandably increasing and our young people are particularly vulnerable to despair and overwhelm. The arts, whether participatory theatre, comedy, crafts or community visioning, offer a powerful method to overcome isolation on climate issues.

## 4. Include the quiet voices

---

Whether as audiences or participants, young people, minority and vulnerable groups' views are often overlooked and yet offer so much. Climate and ecological issues require all sections of society to have a stake in the future and to experience themselves as part of a living earth worthy of our care and attention. Children in particular know and understand more than we realise and have a great capacity to face the challenges creatively and with a warrior spirit. Support quiet voices and respect their ideas and wherever possible follow them up with action.

## 5. Plan then flow

---

All of nature has a blueprint yet creatively responds to its environment. Similarly, have a strong structure and respond to feedback. Be organised in booking venues, artists and participants well in advance. With a good plan, you can experiment and allow for creative and unexpected outcomes to emerge. Devise clear aims and outcomes so that events are targeted and effective. Consider collecting explicit evaluations and feedback from the organisers, participants and audiences to keep you on track and for your next event. Enjoy the magic of the arts and creativity to transform insurmountable problems into solutions and for their ripple effect in the community and into the future.

## Process

Here is a simple design process to plan an effective and enjoyable creative climate communication event.

### Survey

---

- The passions and interests of your group
- Scout local talent, venues and contacts
- Check for suitable existing events to collaborate with
- Consider how much time, money and volunteer hours are available.

### Create a mission statement

---

- Collect together the different ideas for events in your group
- Combine them into a written brief of one or more activities
- Have clear aims and outcomes as a flexible guide to your efforts
- Articulate your mission creatively, e.g. make a joint vision board.

### Analyse your options

---

- Weigh up the pros and cons in terms of effort required to benefits to be gained in terms of time, money and energy
- Troubleshoot potential logistical problems e.g. access to venues, timings on the day, details of facilities and clashing with other events
- Consider your event may stimulate contentious issues and strong feelings in your community and how you are going to meet this.

### Design and publicise your event

---

- Make a plan, include timings, costings, equipment, publicity, refreshments and clear roles to carry out all the tasks involved
- Remember to contact schools, venues and artists well in advance, be prepared to liaise with them for some months before the day
- Publicise the events in different places, including local noticeboards, press releases and social media
- Use 'word of mouth' – seek opportunities to talk to others and get them to help spread the news
- Promote as early as possible and repeatedly up to the event.

### Evaluate and feedback

---

- Did you meet your intended aims e.g. raising awareness, providing solutions or handling difficult issues with respect?
- Within your group, what went well and what would you do differently next time?

## Key Resources

[www.52climateactions.com](http://www.52climateactions.com)  
[www.transitionnetwork.org](http://www.transitionnetwork.org)  
<http://tdd.org.ua/en/declaration-principles-theatre-oppressed>  
[www.robhopkins.net/the-book](http://www.robhopkins.net/the-book)

## Practicalities

Here are the core elements of the toolkit and are the main points to remember in designing and delivering your activities and events.

### People

- Start with your own or your group's creative interests
- Use local artists, existing networks and contacts
- Harness the power of participation and include the audience in the event
- Include young people, they are full of knowledge and solutions
- Community arts processes build togetherness, resolution and empowerment, which are vital in the face of big issues
- Provide refreshments and travel expenses for artists and volunteers when possible



### Places

- Choose venues that are inspiring and / or relevant to the community
- Experiment with varied settings that suit different audiences and create different effects
- Join in with existing events to have a wider reach to new faces and benefit from different groups interacting
- Select venues and events which provide good facilities, such as parking, toilets and refreshments
- Use the space to provide multiple activities for different tastes

### Ideas and Information

- Have a clear focus on what you wish to address and communicate this clearly to the artists, especially with events that are open to the public to perform at
- Combine activities and performances with information stalls and links to relevant groups, so that people have a tangible next step to address the issues raised
- Use the event to publicise the next event or other relevant arts activities
- Consider your aims and the outcomes you wish to generate



## Creative Processes

---

- Select good quality acts - ensure climate change issues are clearly conveyed and presented in an enjoyable way
- Arts and crafts engage the head, heart and hands, people relax, creating ripe conditions for dialogue, and something of meaning to take home
- Participatory theatre creates dialogue, innovative solutions, and gives everyone a voice
- Comedy processes grief and frustration, changes fixed opinions and laughter releases energy to take action
- Murals and group art projects have a ripple effect and are a visible legacy in the community



## Attitudes and Approach

---

- Be aware climate change and ecological issues evoke strong feelings and diverse opinions
- Contention can create positive dialogue, but be mindful to develop good relations and gain support from your community - this will help when engaging in 'difficult conversations' around climate issues and dealing with disagreement and hostility
- Use creative processes and participation to address despair and find solutions, especially with young people
- Have clear aims, model solutions and make available useful resources and contacts so people are not left alone with overwhelming issues
- Use a diversity of creative forms, different audiences and venues to see what works best
- Have respect, flexibility and an inclusive approach, as together we are stronger.

## **Research**

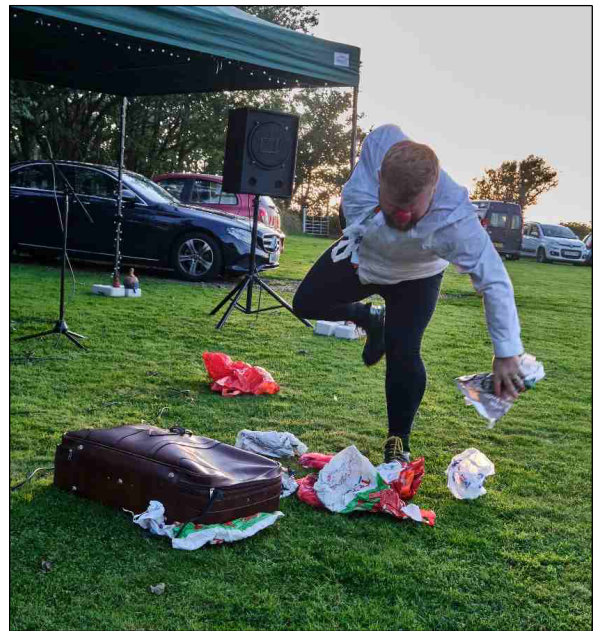
Analysis and Feedback from Arts Based Climate Crisis Events  
Transition Bro Gwaun 2019

## Transition Bro Gwaun: Arts Based Climate Crisis Events: Evaluation 2019

In response to the declaration of a climate emergency and the imperative to cultivate ecosystem and community resilience, Transition Bro Gwaun (TBG) in conjunction with supporters, community organisations and Renew Wales devised a series of arts based events to highlight the issues and empower people to take action. Part of the arts based events programme was to reach a different audience than TBG would traditionally engage with.

Between July and November 2019 we engaged 100s of people in workshops and events, through theatre, music, comedy, arts and craft, information stalls, parades, street mural and visioning. This was possible by building on good, established relationships with artists and local organisations and the voluntary input and goodwill of many people. As each event had a different flavour, there is some variance between the monitoring and evaluation methods used, the common ground being to assess:

- awareness of the causes of climate change
- the consequences of not doing something now
- empowerment to face and engage with the issues
- individual actions taken up 'that make a difference.'



*Owain Roach at Glasfryn Escapes Open Mic night*

Below are the specific feedbacks for each event from various angles.



*'Play in a Week' above Fishguard harbour*



## Gwaunfest (17/7/19)

TBG took Wastebuster activities to Ysgol Bro Gwaun's Gwaunfest event and also publicised the upcoming arts and theatre opportunities for young people. It was also an opportunity to strengthen the relationship with a local school and to be a gentle start to our programme of summer events.

### Feedback from co-ordinators

- Some school staff have requested more be done to address solutions due to general despair affecting children in the school on the issue of climate emergency. Specifically practical actions requested.
- This aspect is taken very seriously by TBG and the adults involved and crucial to meet the lack of solutions being presented by the media.



*Gwaunfest: an annual event at Ysgol Bro Gwaun*



## Theatre Forum workshop (8/8/19)

Gill Dowsett led a day long workshop to devise a piece of Forum Theatre (FT) to perform at the Ocean Guardians event on the 18th of August. FT aims to empower people to address difficult issues, give everyone a voice and affect change in your own life. Despite a press release, posters and promotion at Gwaunfest, attendance was small, only 5 adults and 1 child came along. However, as with the Transition towns ethos, FT embraces the principle 'whoever comes are the right people'.

An introduction to the process and warm up games were followed by everyone suggesting ideas for the core sketch around which would form the basis for the interactions at the performance the following week. We constructed 3 sketches in pairs and experienced the way in which a simple interaction provides scope for diverse and complex issues to be explored and to be met with resolution and togetherness. During the day conversations on these themes established a sense of common ground and how this made us feel less overwhelmed and alone and empowered to continue or step up our activity in regards to mitigating climate change.



*Forum Theatre warm up games*

## Participants' Feedback

Person	Why attending?	Feeling 1-10 at start of workshop	General feedback at end	Feeling 1-10 at end	3 words to sum up how you feel in relation to climate crisis after workshop
1	Concern for future and grandchildren Theatre forum practitioner. Wish to be part of the change.	9.5		10	privileged excited home
2	Support my child's interest in theatre and the environment. Adult helpers were requested	6	Good to be with a group of other concerned people.	10	encouraged grounded inspired
3	Wanted to come.	7	Done lots of theatre, first time though on eco issues. Very helpful.	10	courageous happy proud
4	Interest in FT for 20yrs, never tried before.	7	Impressed by the scope of the process to deal with such difficult issues.	8	inspired empowered revived
5	Interested in arts as means to effect change to meet issues.	5	Can see the scope and power in the method for finding ways forward.	7	connected optimistic impatient
6	Work as TBG waste coordinator and wished to join in.	8	Reassuring that other people are thinking and caring, not alone, confidence that we can do something that matters.	9	connected inspired happy

All participants said that they were a 5, on a scale of 1-5, as to how empowered they felt following the workshop.

## Ocean Guardians (18/8/19)

TBG borrowed a marquee and set up at the Sea Trust event, with the initial thought of performing Forum Theatre piece as described above. Space in the marquee allowed us to have information stalls and activities, engaging people and providing practical advice to meet the challenges of climate change. Wastebusting activities throughout the day included demonstrating natural wax covers to replace cling film, a clothes swap, and making bags and bracelets from old T - shirts. TBG also invited Pembrokeshire Permaculture to take part with information on a range of solutions, from individual actions to global practices, such as regenerative agriculture. Fishguard Extinction Rebellion (XR) brought information about their campaign, their pink boat, played folk music and had craft activities on their stall.

The response of most people who attended Ocean Guardians Day was positive, although one negative comment was reported regarding the presence of XR. TBG members expressed that this in itself stimulates discussion and that controversial issues are part of the 'difficult conversation' they are committed to having to raise awareness.

TBG had a formal table to capture people's views and evaluate the effectiveness of the day near the entrance to the marquee. This was effective in promoting dialogue and evaluating the outcomes of our efforts for future events.

Participating in an existing event (the annual Ocean Guardians Day) was a great way to reach lots of people, including new people. It also meant, the event was publicised well by a number of different groups in different media. The climate arts activities benefited from the diversity of other activities taking place, and from the venue infrastructures, such as cafe, parking and toilets.



## Feedback from Ocean Guardian's event

Big charts were used to give a simple, visible method for people to give their views on the following:

### 1. Everyone can make a difference: what can I do?

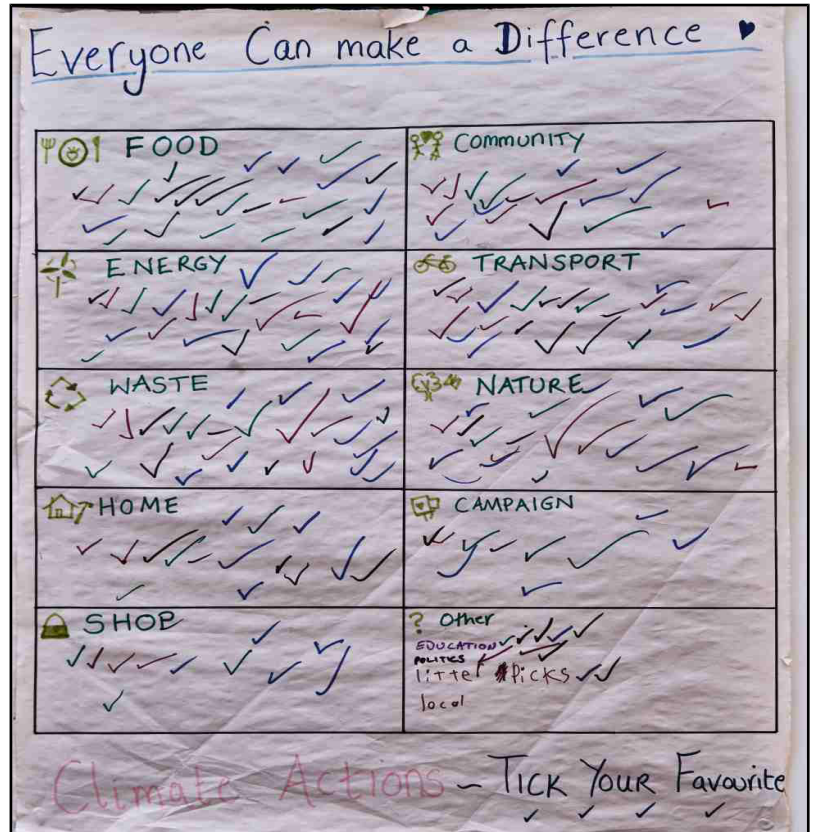
Tick favourite area to take action:

There was equal support for food, energy, waste, home, shop, community, transport, nature and campaigning. People added extra categories of education, politics, litter, localism.

In conversation through the day, many people stated that all the issues are interconnected.

People in general ticked where they wished to see action rather than which area they were likely to act on.

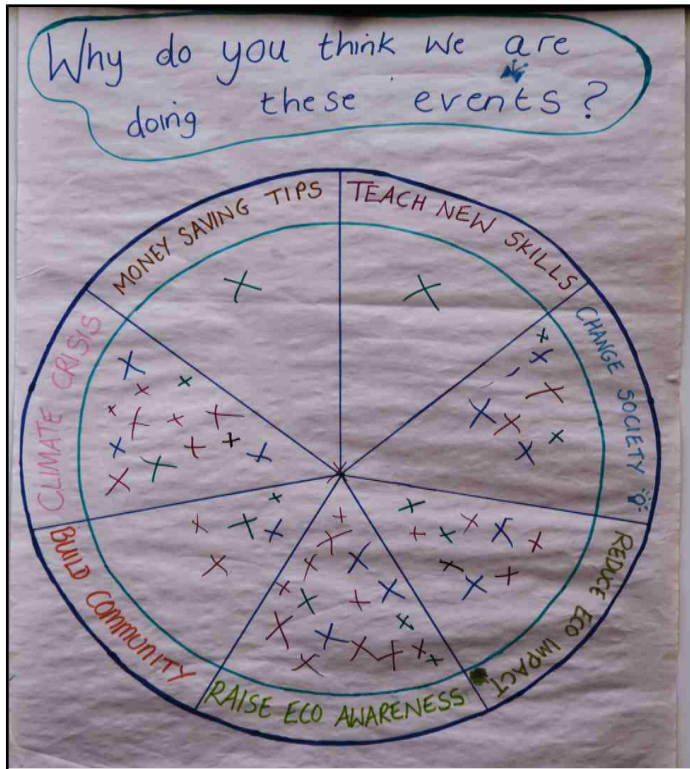
Recommend in future we know which outcome is useful or desired, and either make two charts for these two different questions (where would you like to see change/action compared to which area will you change your habits or take action on), or be clear which question is being asked. This would provide a clearer roadmap for the focus of future activities generated by the group, potentially help people follow up on their opinions with action in their own lives, and indicate what support the community needs to be more resilient.



Specific suggestions/comments people gave were noted separately throughout the day:

- on food waste issues, government should legislate out packaging, make it easier to buy loose veg etc
- buy less and leave packaging at till or checkout
- system change required. (2 people)
- structural problems, policy level action required and I don't mean carbon taxing
- government should provide real incentive and support for agriculture to become sustainable
- education should cultivate eco citizenship
- more provision at recycling points as people leave excessive amounts and waste piles up e.g. West St car park
- standardisation creates waste and pollution
- aggressive approach by some green groups is unwelcome when my opinion differs.





## 2. Why are we doing these events?

Tick which issues you think we are addressing:

Ticks were in the sectors for awareness about climate crisis, raising awareness of eco issues, society change and reducing environmental impact.

We included this question after feedback at TBG's regular wastebusting workshops showed some people thought it was to save money rather than promote ecologically sound practices.

This feedback suggests the purpose of our activities was well understood and that we communicated on the issues we wished to address.

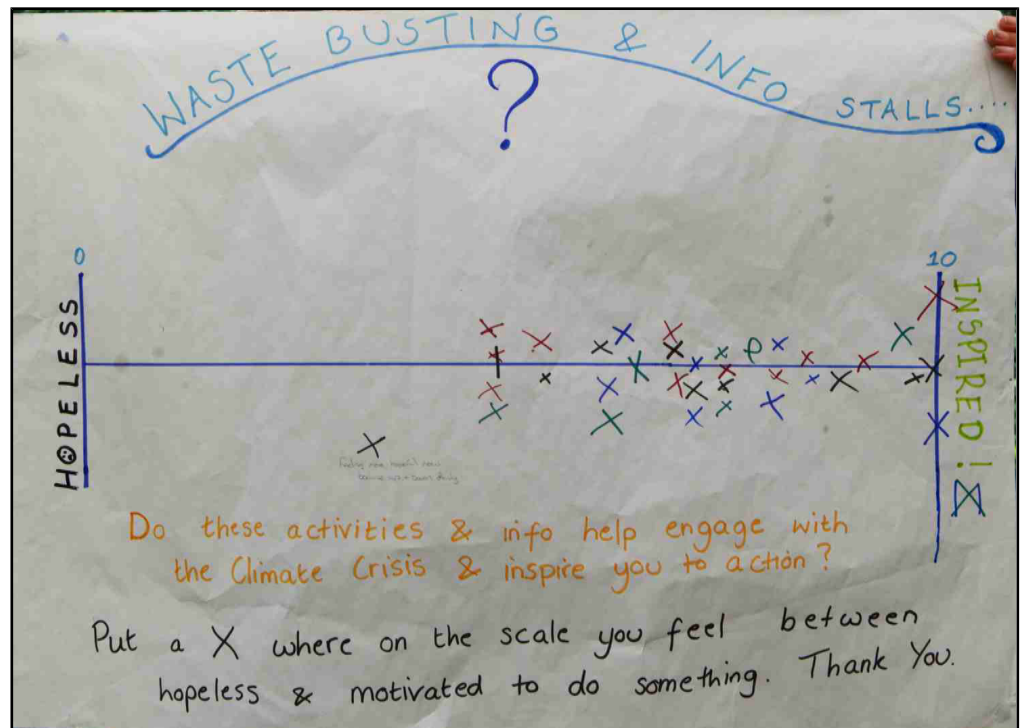
## 3. Do the wastebusting activities and information stalls help you engage with the climate crisis and inspire you to take action?

Put an x on the continuum to show where you feel between hopeless and inspired to act.

36 respondents, equal spread from neutral to very inspired, slightly more x's around the 7 out of 10 mark. In general conversation people were positive this was useful and heartening.

Feedback was also collected from the people who manned the stalls during the day, many of whom have lots of experience at this to compare it with. Specific short feedback forms were created for them and we asked them to evaluate the day around the 3 main aims of how they felt it went in terms of:

- raising awareness of climate change and ecological crisis issues?
- empowering people and engage with the issues?
- identifying actions that people can do 'that make a difference'.



## **TBG Feedback**

---

Becky Wastebuster, Brian, Lesley and Debs.

### **What went well?**

- people felt change possible
- dialogue and engagement with each other, new faces
- upcycled bracelet activity engaged children well, meant parents were happy and relaxed and therefore happy to engage and with the issues
- arts and crafts breaks down barriers and powerfully reaches people

### **Challenging?**

- very cold and hungry.

### **Unexpected or interesting outcomes?**

- new faces
- there was a perception that recycling bags ended up in landfill and this needs following up.
- general confusion around the difference between plastic pollution and climate change

## **Pembrokeshire Permaculture Feedback**

---

Howard Martin and Dot Jackson.

### **What went well?**

- face painting, plaster mould activities
- some awareness raised
- forum theatre very productive in creating discussion
- encouraged by people already doing lots e.g. wildlife ponds.

### **Challenging?**

- got a bit chilly
- freezing and hungry

### **Unexpected outcomes?**

- met lots of people, some I haven't seen for 28 years
- people signed up to our mailing list

## **Extinction Rebellion Feedback**

---

### **What went well?**

- engaging children with our pink boat, puffin and crafts; and through the children we reached the adults.

### **Challenging?**

- dealing with negative perceptions of XR e.g. the Heathrow drone protest (which was never implemented as XR decided it would be detrimental.)

### **Unexpected outcomes?**

- craft activities went very well
- multi tasking, tourism and left luggage service!

Following the Forum Theatre, described below, Sian from XR gave a talk on why they are taking direct action. Over 20 people listened and at the end were asked through a show of hands whether following the talk they felt more hopeless or more inspired about facing the challenge of the climate crisis. Unanimously, people voted they felt better for hearing it.

## Forum Theatre

Three sketches were performed on the topics below to stimulate a process of dialogue and solutions:

- buying cheaper food rather than more sustainable food
- throwing plastic away and recycling
- carpets, recycled alternatives and impacts

The audience, spect-actors, were then invited to interrupt the sketches, explore the issues, and offer alternatives to solve the challenges. A number of children readily got on stage and took part, adults also contributed from the audience. People were willing to discuss and open to information, and the complexity and contradictions of our actions felt like they could be tackled through this process without anyone getting offended or feeling stupid. In particular, the process gave the young people present a voice and they participated with confidence, creativity and enthusiasm.



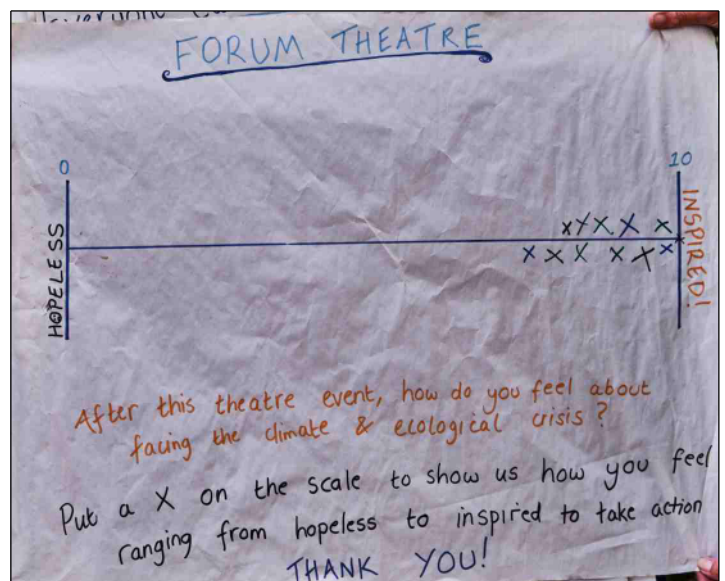
A big chart asked the same question as with the other activities:

**Did the Forum Theatre help you engage with the climate crisis and inspire you to take action?**

Put an X on the continuum to show where you feel between hopeless and inspired to act.

11 respondents, equal spread, slightly more x's around the 7 out of 10 mark.

The theatre spect-actors ( participating audience) were invited to feedback through 3 questions on short forms left on the seats: we received 14 completed forms out of an audience of about 50.



## Collated Audience Feedback Responses

Transition Bro Gwaun would love to hear your views following this event...

Did you learn something about climate change and environmental issues? if so what?

- Excellent, children/young people beautifully engaged. Learnt lot about carpets as I was thinking to cover my wooden floors- maybe not.
- Found out about recycled underlay.
- That even if more expensive, environmental options are worth it.
- Yes. Get eco carpet.
- It's good to look for solutions.
- Children are very aware of these issues.
- Yes. That some people think it's pointless doing anything.
- Yes. People care.
- Yes.
- Always. Music, theatre, arts, science and more. Naughty to burn toxic fuel oil.
- That rubber and foam are bad for the environment.
- That foam takes thousands of years to evaporate.
- Value of discussion.
- Encouraged by the young people's knowledge, they said it was great fun and educational.

How do you feel about the issues now e.g. hopeless, inspired, the same as before!

- Inspired by the positive approach and looking at issues.
- Inspired.
- Like I should do something.
- Inspired.
- Inspired.
- A little more inspired and less hopeless.
- Same as before.
- Hopeless.
- Hopeful and determined.
- Always inspired, have to be.
- I feel inspired because I never knew how bad plastic is for the environment.
- Inspired!!
- Inspired.
- Inspired.

Everyone can make a difference. What action do you feel inspired to take?

- Leave my house without carpets and put the energy into the garden or let the garden look after itself.
- Sharing information.
- Don't get cheap 49p stuff.
- Think carefully about the consequences of something (of what I buy.)
- Work on my greenhouse to grow my own nectarines (I live in hope!)
- Carry on recycling and making informed choices.
- More consideration of the impact of personal choices.
- Use less plastic and recycle more.
- Good to see community spirit and Ocean Lab being used. Global people power, ban toxic oil, take over the World Bank.
- To use as little plastic as possible.
- Buy less plastic.
- Find out more.
- Help organise more theatre.



## Forum Theatre Leader's Feedback

1. How did you find the planning process working with TBG to put on these events?  
(Positive, negative and unexpected outcomes.)

I'm always a little hesitant at the beginning of any prospective project as the processes involved in Forum Theatre (Theatre of the Oppressed) are complex to explain. This truly is experiential learning. TBG were clearly open to understanding which helped immensely. Though I knew, as always and understandably, the proof of the pudding would be in the eating. There are many levels to this work and after 25 years I am still learning too. I was also concerned that people's perceived fears might hinder the potential - the work deals with emotions in all of their many forms. Climate change can by nature tap into existential anxiety.

2. What do you think was the general feeling of the audience to environmental issues and climate change?

The audience had chosen to be there and thus were clearly prepared to engage with the issues. The children present (maybe with less free will to be there), nevertheless engaged incredibly with the process of challenging attitudes and finding solutions. This is often the case. I still think that Forum Theatre is a great way to engage people in dialogue. There are within the body of work (Theatre of the Oppressed) a set of principles that are important to work within.

3. How did you find it working with them on these issues?

- what went well?
- what was challenging? See above response
- any unexpected outcomes?

4. Do you think people felt more able, less able, or the same as when they arrived, to face environmental challenges and take action after the theatre?

One of the many aspects of Forum Theatre that I really hold to be of importance is the way it reminds us of our similarities, particularly on an emotional level. There is great sustenance and relief in knowing we are not alone. With issues as big as this, it is so important to acknowledge our truths (truth is therapeutic – Augusto Boal). The audience laughter and dialogue at this event – matched a sense of we are all in this together and I think this releases energy to be activated to change.

5. Did they come up with actions? any examples welcome!

Yes – reminding the “litter bug” that plastic can kill sea creatures.  
That you can take your own paper bags when buying fruit etc.  
That small actions can make you feel empowered.  
Many options and alternatives to using rubber/plastic underlay with carpets.  
Ideas of who needs information and where to find it. Etc.

6. General comments / ideas for taking these themes forward

I have sooo much more I could say – many many examples of how this way of engaging with people has worked in the past, present and it's potential, what it provides, etc etc etc However, for fear of letting my passion spill over – I better end now or it'll be a book!  
I remain open to dialogue and motivated to do what I can – my grandchildren are motivation enough!

## Play in a Week and Coastal Path Performance (19-24/8/19)

Outcasts summer school agreed to join with TBG by focusing their 'Play in a Week' on the climate crisis. 21 young people attended and were given the theme of #What can I do? They enthusiastically performed the finished work which was well received by family, friends and general visitors along the coast path on the Saturday night. The young people made a series of sketches and interactive pieces addressing pollution, waste, attitudes and biodiversity and species loss. Like the Forum Theatre event the power of young people to engage an audience made this event very potent and worthwhile.



### Leader's feedback

#### Positive:

- incredible level of understanding of the issues.
- creative and effective theatre independently devised by participants.
- diverse, humorous and powerful art.

#### Negative:

- unviable to combine with a carnival float due to insurance and time required.

#### Interesting:

- the young people engaged the issue from a place of empowerment, they were not despairing, more like attacked the theme with a warrior spirit.

## Fishguard and Goodwick Carnival (24/8/19)

The local Extinction Rebellion group (XR) had asked to have a Carnival float and had initially been accepted, but due to some local concerns XR was requested not to attend the carnival following tension on social media sites. It seems the demands of XR have been associated with extreme vegan positions and taken as an attack on farming. This was resolved peacefully – by withdrawing but asking for ongoing discussion with the Carnival organisers - this indicates more understanding of the issues would be useful to cultivate positive, non divisive solutions on both sides.

TBG, working with the Outcast Theatre youth group, had also planned to have a Carnival float but then decided against this, largely because of the time and work required and the feeling that it was not the best event to initiate a climate conversation and that it would be very difficult to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness. TBG, considering this later, concluded it probably was inappropriate to have a float powered by a diesel tractor as it was giving the wrong message on emissions, and probably in the future a 'walking' entry would be more appropriate.



*The carnival is a popular local event*



## Aberjazz Parade (25/8/19)



Members of Extinction Rebellion and TBG joined in a small parade with a lively jazz band from the Gorsedd to Fishguard Town Hall. The activists were requested to not bring placards and instead used fancy dress, some depicting the XR 'dead canaries' concept, and their model pink boat (a symbol of the boat allowed to occupy Oxford Circus at London demonstration in April.)

About 6 onlookers were interviewed for their feedback, plus supporters fed back informal conversations they had had, or overheard. Due to the diffuse nature of the event it was limited to get an overview of how the climate crisis aspect was perceived.

### Main Feedback

- General confusion over the dead canary costumes, a number of people assumed they were chickens and a few people expressed they liked the 'chickens' being involved. However, agreed the discussion that ensued was fruitful to raise awareness about species extinction and climate change being a warning for the future of humans.
- General disapproval of protests that disrupted everyday life and approval for arts as a medium to raise awareness about environmental issues. Concern the XR pink boat would disrupt traffic.
- Suggestion for more advertising of arts climate events. e.g. on the Golden mile, as many had been unaware of the theatre and open mic events.
- Feedback from the Aberjazz organisers was very positive – they appreciated TBG and XR taking part, and were grateful we had not used banners as they felt it would have looked like a climate change event. They appreciated the absence of information/banners meant many people did not understand what the canaries nor the pink boat depicted and suggested that something explicit concerning climate and ecological issues might be fine IF it was humorous.



*XR members portraying 'the dead canaries' concept, not chickens!!!*



### Organiser's Feedback

The intention was to provide open mic sessions at events that had already been planned and had a regular audience. It was hoped to stimulate a conversation on the climate crisis among those who would not normally attend such an event.

Two events were originally chosen. The first opportunity, at a barbecue at lower town Fishguard, was in the end abandoned as an open mic venue as it was deemed unsuitable. The setting meant the audience was intent on their meals and the view and not focused on the performance by Fishguard Folk group. As we had never undertaken the organisation of such an event, we learnt that the venue needs to be carefully chosen to lend itself to this type of event, specifically where the performance can be heard, seen and is welcome.

The second event at Glasfryn Escapes was agreed after viewing the site and discussing it with the organisers, and was much more suitable for the reasons mentioned above.

### Open Mic at Glasfryn Escapes 31/8/19

A variety of artists were invited to perform, including Owain Roach and Deb Winter. Local artists played music, sang and performed poems. As normally happens at Glasfryn Escape evenings, the BBQ and bar was provided by Cafe on the Quay. Between acts, Brian from TBG interjected short presentations from local groups (Transition Bro Gwaun Community Fridge and Wastebusting, Greening Fishguard and Goodwick and Extinction Rebellion), explaining ways people could get involved locally in activities related to the climate crisis. It was encouraging that when the audience was asked who knew about the community fridge and where it was, there were several people who did not know. This was very encouraging as it meant we had reached a wider audience!

Approximately 20 members of the audience (*approximately 60 people attended*) were interviewed informally for feedback on the event. As a general comment it would be worthwhile holding another open mic session next summer and there is value in looking at providing 'entertainment' at an existing event to reach a wider audience.



*Owain Roach of National Theatre Wales*



*Deb Winter, storyteller*



## Audience Feedback

---

- When we laugh, we can change our minds and our fixed opinions.
- The plastic comedy sketch was very effective.
- Absolutely the arts is important for serious issues, reaching people through different channels is key.
- You have to be in the mood for this stuff to effect you.
- Always events like these make sense, it's like pushing a snowball downhill, it gathers momentum and power.
- Why are you having a meat BBQ at a climate crisis event?

## Feedback from TBG Organisers and Artists

---

- Gazebo, lights and PA worked well.
- Professional acts were brilliant, lots of good feedback on facebook.
- Negative comments still had value for promoting discussion.
- Invited back by venue.
- Worked well to intersperse acts with info from local groups and how to get involved.
- Acts that weren't booked in threw timing out a bit, and weren't always about the climate crisis.
- Payment or travel and food costs for artists would be great.

## Do Differently Next Time

---

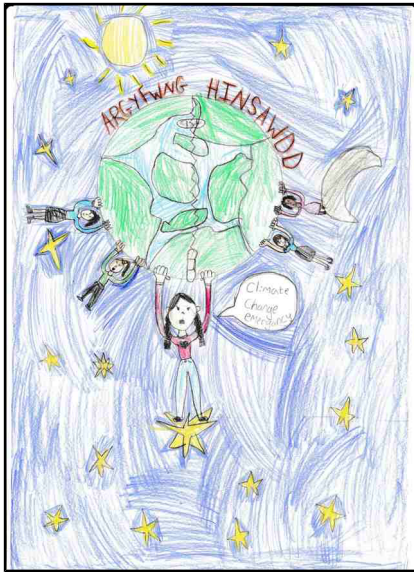
- confirm acts earlier
- advertise earlier
- ensure performers have a clear brief to focus on the environment and the climate crisis.



## Climate Crisis Mural with Local Schools

As part of the 'Enhancing Pembrokeshire' funding, Becky the Wastebusting Project Leader, worked with local schools and The Point youth club to produce artwork for a mural on the walls around Fishguard fire station. Letters were hand posted to homes in the vicinity to communicate what was happening, as the mural would be visible from some people's windows and the location is a frequently used footpath. The children created pictures expressing their feelings around the climate crisis and plastic pollution. Then in two workshops a professional artist worked with the children to create a vibrant mural from the original artwork. 20 children took part in the actual mural workshops in October and November. The artist cost £500, which covered the workshops, paints and his time to conceive the mural design.

### TBG Coordinator's Feedback



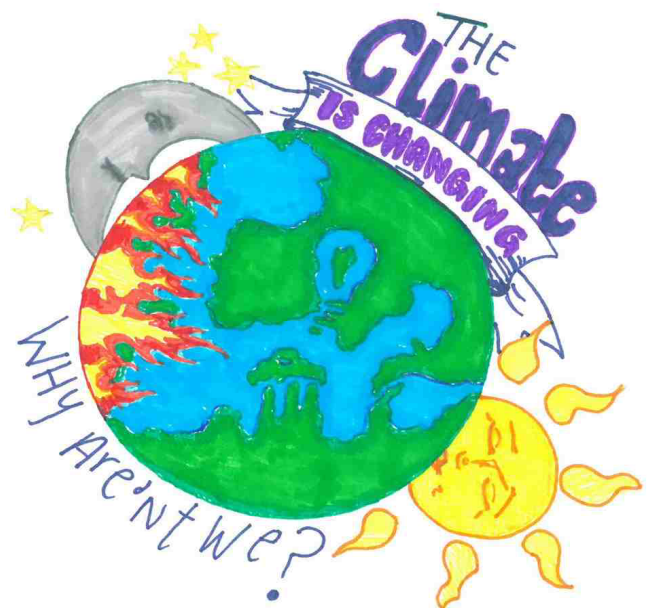
The process began with casting the net wide by contacting all the schools in the area as it is important to be as inclusive as possible and make such a project open to many in the community. We did considerable liaising with the schools over some months and press releases in the local newspapers. It's important with a project like this to make contact way in advance in order for schools to be able to incorporate the activities into their timetables. 50 pieces of artwork were created in the schools and Point youth centre which the artist used to devise the mural concept, picking out specific images and combining them into one piece.

However, on seeing the artists initial plan for the mural, we noted that he'd focussed almost exclusively on the positive solutions that the children had drawn but had given little space to the climate crisis anxiety many were clearly expressing in their artwork. We stressed it was important to acknowledge this too, so he made changes to reflect this.

The owners of The Gateway centre and one local person expressed concern that a mural would 'open a can of worms', sending out the message to young people that they could graffiti the buildings and walls in the area. This led to the mural being relocated on the adjacent walls by the fire station (with their permission) rather than in the Gateway carpark. With diplomacy, this difficulty was settled amicably and did not become a major issue. However, we noted that referring to the artist as a graffiti artist, rather than a mural artist, gave out the wrong signals and although graffiti is usually seen as a respectable art form nowadays, that to some people it still raises concerns. Like other aspects of the 'difficult conversation' around climate change, these points of contention can be useful for dialogue and need to be handled with tact and respect for all viewpoints.

The young people created a diverse and powerful collection of artwork, depicting their thoughts and feelings around the climate crisis, issues of plastic pollution in the oceans and in general about the earth, animals and the impacts of contemporary lifestyles on ecosystems.

TBG plan to create an exhibition of the 50 individual artworks to give further voice to the young people's viewpoint and to extend the creative climate conversation in our community.





## Positive Outcomes

Reaction to the finished mural has been good – lots of positive posts on facebook, excellent local media coverage, and the Gateway Club itself are now very pleased with it as it significantly brightens up the area. They particularly liked that many of the children had written their speech bubbles in Welsh.

The process itself has a ripple effect within the school eco clubs and at The Point. This has led to dialogue and further exploration of the issues independently of the mural project. It will also have rippled into family discussion and for the people who pass the mural.



*The Point taking the issues forward outside of the mural project*

A public mural is a legacy, its finished imagery is powerful and positive, as are the messages, e.g. 'Save Our Seas' and 'Earth First'. The young people's voice is here for everyone to take notice of.

The artist also made every child who took part in the workshops a graffiti style name plaque to take home.

## Challenges

We're aware that spray paint has its own environmental impact and we learnt that more ecologically sound options are soon to be available.

Everything in modern life has impacts and we have to weigh up the benefits of a project like this in raising awareness and empowering the community in relation to its negative impact.

## Interesting Outcomes

A mural lifts an area, gives a neighbourhood a sense of place and a feeling of community health and wellbeing.



## Participants' Feedback

---

Mr Jones of Ysgol Wdigh said it was great to get the children out of the classroom and mixing with other schools. The LSA said 'the project was great.'



## TBG Final Thoughts

---

There was not scope to get direct, verbal feedback from the children involved on this occasion. The workshops were hands on and packed with the practical activity, involving lots of people, and a busy workshop schedule. For anyone organising a similar project, and if evaluation and feedback is important to what you are doing, it is best to explicitly build it in to the timings and activities. However, in this case the importance was in the participants process and the potential ripple effects of the mural locally and within the schools and youth group beyond the making of the mural itself.

We look forward to the exhibition of the 50 artworks in the near future.





## Pop Up Tomorrow (24/10/19)

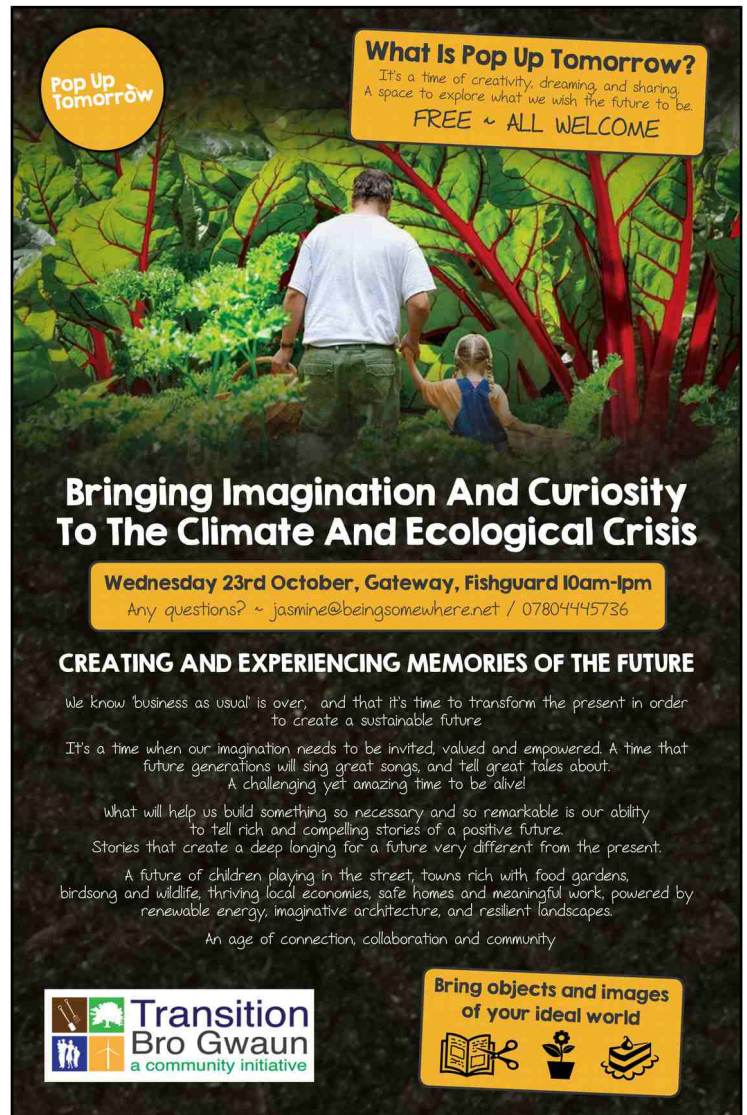
As part of the Transition network's week of national events, TBG hosted a 'Pop Up Tomorrow' workshop. Participants engaged in a range of activities to unleash our imaginations and vision a resilient future as a way of navigating the climate crisis. The workshops are strongly linked to Rob Hopkin's new book, 'From What Is To What If: unleashing the Power of the Imagination to Create the Future We Want'. This book is based on years of research into the climate and ecological crisis and the most effective way to meet this challenge.

The poster received positive feedback and enthusiasm for a creative approach to the climate crisis on social media and at the TBG AGM. However, the event was advertised at short notice and on the day only five people attended. This was felt to actually be perfect as it allowed members of the core group of TBG to hear each other's vision and thoughts. Hopefully, this will help us to plan our next steps as a group for our activities and approach in the time ahead.

The workshop was also proposed as a taster for a year long programme of monthly events, Vision 2020, cultivating connection to place and community.

The day began with each person sharing an object that represented qualities of a resilient and positive future.

We then explored what currently exists in our world as a positive force for transitioning to a resilient future and mitigating the effects of climate change, and what we find challenging in making those changes.



The workshop ended with making Vision Boards, a useful technique for:

- harnessing the power of the imagination and subconscious
- communicating complex feelings and sharing diverse views
- forming connections between ideas
- giving confidence and impetus for ideas to become reality.

This is the beauty of a joint vision.

## Participants' Feedback

---

### Positive:

- experimenting and sharing; the right people definitely came!
- colour, sentience, thoughtfulness and an integrated small group
- a privilege to spend time with some wonderful people
- focussed, travelling together
- space to feel, not just think

### Negative:

- could have been warmer at Gateway building
- spent long time preparing and challenged by tooth ache
- it unleashed some grief in me (a good thing really) as it was a lovely group process
- not finished my collage
- began to feel very tired and headachy towards end

### Interesting:

- the images that emerged from the collage and time machine exercise
- small group, good soup, Brian's art and Chris' vision
- diving into other people's imaginations was fascinating
- loved showing answers rather than intellectualising
- a different and unexpected (time machine) vision of the future.

### What are you drawn towards for 2020?

- encouraged to work with others in TBG to do creative exercises to unleash potential
- deep ecology, connection, art
- consolidation, change, fun
- fermenting, communicating
- Jasmine's monthlies!!



## **Conclusion and Next Steps**

What Was Learnt And How To Take It Forwards

## Conclusion and Next Steps

The whole season of events has gone very well in achieving the outcomes of raising awareness of climate and ecological issues and towards inspiring people to take action and providing resources for them to do so. Even dealing with contentious issues is possible and constructive with creative techniques and through the medium of the arts. Notably, it was agreed that if you know your community and have cultivated good relations, then 'difficult conversations' were possible. This healthy dialogue is the basis for meaningful action and building trust in a context of crisis and potential strain and conflict.

There was general confusion around the difference between plastic pollution and climate change. Activities could be structured to unpick this and raise awareness of the causes and consequences of both, this in turn may empower people to understand the impacts of their own lifestyles and the choices they can make to meet the challenges of climate change, pollution and ecosystem repair.

Addressing the causes of climate change and adapting to them are different, though overlapping spheres. By having a clear focus on desired outcomes and by presenting relevant solutions, this has the potential to create a higher uptake of targeted actions e.g. reducing consumption reduces pollution and its effects on ecosystems and reduces emissions, whereas restoring biodiversity mitigates climate change and creates resilience to adapt to it.

Fear breeds fear, despair and anxiety creates disempowerment and apathy. We witnessed that humour, crafts, visioning and theatre processes work with overwhelming challenges and deep feelings on many levels and can transform despair and apathy into an ability to take action and the strength to face difficulty, complexity and grief. We must also recognise that as adults we have a particular responsibility to address our own fears, and to acknowledge those of our children and to provide opportunities for them to manage their feelings. The theatre and mural activities particularly highlighted how, when children are engaged and listened to, they are empowered to come up with creative solutions.

The evaluation of the events has been used as the basis of the Toolkit (the front of this document) for using creative communication in relation to climate change. We trust the information in this document will provide ideas and inspiration for all those working to engage their communities in a conversation about climate change and to empower people to take action.

The process was consolidated at a Renew Regional Event, hosted by TBG at the Gateway on 27th of November. About 50 people from diverse community groups met to share their learning and ideas, network and plan ways forward. The day included using Forum Theatre to explore 'blocks to getting started' in communicating climate issues creatively; a presentation of TBG's arts based events, and live performances of storytelling, comedy and music. There were opportunities to network and share ideas, including an Open Space session for participants to raise issues, discuss and share their knowledge.

Workshops to support groups to engage their community through the arts were held in the afternoon on:

- Planning and evaluating arts climate conversation events.
- Arts and crafts waste busting activities.
- The role of humour and comedy.
- Working with young people using theatre and the creative arts.
- Using Forum Theatre for exploring solutions.

Following this event, all feedback and any next steps have been incorporated into this report for the benefit of Renew Wales and people interested in creative climate communications.

---

The Trustees of TBG would like to thank everyone who has contributed to our programme of Arts based Climate Crisis events. In particular we'd like to thank Jasmine Dale for the huge amount of work she has undertaken to evaluate the project and to produce this toolkit. We are also indebted to Renew Wales for their support in developing this project.



## **Creative Climate Communications Evaluation**

A Renew Wales Regional Event hosted by Transition Bro Gwaun  
27th November 2019

## Open Space Process

Participants were asked to consider what aspect of creative climate communication they most wished to explore or contribute to. The individual responses were grouped into 5 themes, to which people were free to move between during the 45 minute session. Participants noted thoughts and insights that arose within the discussions and are transcribed below.



### Theme 1: Education and Young people

---

- Education 'pedagogy' - traditional/Victorian school system? Not fit for 21st century?
- New curriculum - 'ethical citizens of Wales and the World'!
- Results vs wellbeing of the child!
- Sounds good! WAG/Estyn 6 AOLE's - humanities (geog, history, RE, Politics). 4 Purposes (Donaldson): Ethical Informed Citizens; Enterprising, Creative; Healthy, Confident Individuals; Ambitious.
- Barriers: confidence in subject; time/results pressures; risk assessment; time to try new lesson plans - link up the 'subject'!
- Older generation need to move along with the younger generation.
- 'World is not a subject'! ESDGC

### Theme 2: Engaging the Disengaged

---

- Hub/place to start; paid staff/dependence; generate; involve existing groups: Brownies, Round Table. What are people's views / what are they already doing?
- People want to do something, need for change NOW!
- Process of change - making it normal, automatic, acceptable.
- Communication inPembrokeshire PLANED: talking! Teaching people behind doors; it's not our problem, no fun!
- Measure the carbon impact!
- TBG: involve people via other things: cafe, wastebusting activities, social event.
- Too slow!
- Slow process: frustration!
- Funding opportunities: Creating Change (Arts Centre) Battersea.
- witness a 'new normal'.

## Theme 3: Inclusion / Diversity

---

- Finding common ground: our Place; the value of compassion is all humans' common ground.
- For practitioners to be aware of the in-group/out-group phenomenon.
- Not forgetting that we are all part of a larger non-human whole - interdependence.
- Being brave enough to talk to those you perceive as "the other": with respect; because it can be the seed of evolutionary ideas; avoiding defensiveness.
- Offer support and informed practical solutions: understand the problems; be gentle.
- Recognising this is a shared problem at a global level, that our small actions have big consequences: these may be shared solutions.
- Fast tracking the wisdom of age regards fixed opinions, open dialogue and active listening.
- How do we stay true to ourselves and also engage with people who are different?



## Theme 4: Social/Economic/Political/Technical Solutions

---

- Sue the polluters!
- Consumerism to circular economy. How?
- How can innovation and technology improve our existence?
- Make contaminators / companies pay for future damage NOW.
- Car registration on takeaway packaging from Drive Thru's.
- MacDonalds to employ people to litter pick.
- Local energy networks can release economic and climate justice in tandem. Blocked by OFGEM, Westminster and WAG denial.
- Need political will and action.
- Facilitate agricultural change - legislation.
- Horizon Awards and other £££ for collaborative projects.
- Economics VV climate friendly practices.
- Banking / computer failure: back to cash.
- Look at solutions for tomorrow - can't fix today's problems with yesterday's solutions.
- Climate justice is social justice.
- Barter economy / Time banking
- Neighbourliness.

## Theme 5: Emotions

---

- Can we bring 'Work that Reconnects' forums and space for supporting feelings into places where society / work / professionalism keeps us numb and holds us in our heads, not our heart.
- Recognise own despair, emotions.
- How can we share it safely. authentically, down to the "ordinary".
- Using the emotion for action.
- FEAR - no solution. People want to protect what they've got, their lifestyle.
- Others may not respond because they are avoiding their emotion or despair.
- Gratitude - a resource and an opening.
- Grief.
- Keep the things that are of value - Jem Bendell.
- Listen to. Hearing. Give space to. Active Listening.
- Eco - anxiety workshops with kids (currently happening in Ireland).
- Finding place for connection.
- Curiosity.
- Understanding what they are concerned about. What's underneath what they are feeling? What are their needs.
- Compassion. CARE. Cry together.





### Session 1 – Planning and evaluating arts climate conversation events

---

An opportunity to discuss how your group can design an effective project. Led by Jasmine Dale, this workshop will look at what would work for your group and the resources required to make it happen – come with your ideas and questions to work on in the session.

#### Leader's feedback (Jasmine Dale):

Groups represented in this workshop included Artis Community, Climate Engagement coordinators from the Pembrokeshire Coastal Forum and Milford Haven Port Authority, TBG, Cwm Arian, PLANED, and Friends of the Earth.

**Positive:** We used the time effectively to brainstorm ideas addressing each participants question e.g. specific creative activities, how to choose venues, how to project manage an event with many varied aspects and linking up with partners to be more effective.

**Negative:** I would have liked to impress more strongly the power of using a step by step design process to develop ideas and implement them effectively, as some participants were blocked by the problem of having ideas and not knowing where to start.

**Interesting:** the participants themselves. What a wealth of committed and interesting people! Also, it was fun to have the comedy workshop happening next to us, the noisy exuberance added to our session.

#### Participant feedback (Corinne Cariad):

To guide the session Jasmine went around the circle and asked everyone why they were attending, this raised the topics for consideration during the session (tips for running events; bringing arts into events; increasing and maintaining engagement over a 2 year project; generating XR activities to engage families and grandparents; fresh ideas). Some of these are succinctly covered in the Toolkit part of the Creative Climate Communications evaluation report, written by Jasmine.

All participants were encouraged to share their ideas and experiences as relevant to the topics raised. The ensuing discussion included:

- Start with who you know and what you know, use the group's enthusiasm, connect with other groups/organisations in your area, have a clear goal/statement/vision to help guide and keep on track.
- Suggested resources: Transition Network, Permaculture Network and their resource at [52climateactions.com](https://52climateactions.com), the work of John Seed and Looby MacNamara.
- With activities aim for something people can engage with and consider the audience. E.g. If wanting to engage parents separately provide organised activities for their children. Having activities people can opt into/out of easily can help if people are hesitant/unsure/don't know much about the subject, something they can observe first and then join in with.
- Ideas, like climate change, become normalised. It was a bit unusual to express concern for wildlife or plastic pollution, these are now mainstream concerns.

The session finished with a check in that everyone had given and received what they wanted and considered what they had enjoyed/benefited from at the event. Finally making a commitment of 'What I've learnt and will do'.

## Session 2 – Waste busting activities

Getting the message across through practical art and craft activities. A hands-on session of collaborative weaving with fabric and denim off-cuts, wax wrap making and examples of Pembrokeshire Remakery upcycling, led by Becky Lloyd.

### Leader feedback (Becky Lloyd)

Hands on craft activities allowed for conversations to flow due to the therapeutic nature of the activity.

### Participant feedback (Dot Jackson)

An attractive display was laid out presenting scraps of material being creatively used. There were two sections:

- 1) Christmas Trees of twig and ribbon width recycled materials and the same materials made into wreaths.
- 2) denim strips showing knitting/ weaving, sewing strips together to make pieces of fabric with potential for various uses.

The weaving was the interactive part - the idea being a collaborative weave - each person taking one strip of denim to add their contribution.

Peoples attention was primarily drawn on this day to the Christmas decorations. A lot of interest was shown in the creativity and effectiveness of the finished items. Questions were asked as to sourcing the materials. e.g. where could they find willow or flexible alternatives to try making their own. Good discussions were generated on how to be creative with resources to stop them going to waste and also of importance was seeing how things of beauty can easily be created from scraps. Becky and Moya were at hand to ably answer queries and inform. I picked up that, perhaps for another time, participants would have enjoyed having a go with making the Christmas items, the bonus of this, them realising what they could achieve with little other craft experience.



## Session 3 – The role of humour and comedy in climate communication

Ben Ferguson and Owain Roach lead this session with exercises, games and discussion around the value of humour in communication.



### Leader feedback (Ben Ferguson)

Both the workshops were well attended.

Discussion sessions on the value of humour revealed that people felt:

- It can be an icebreaker/break through formalities.
- It has the power to create forceful juxtaposition of ideas (break through received wisdom) and to paint a vivid picture.
- It can "keep things light" - BUT comedy can be dark too.
- Some felt anxious about the potential for comedy to "poke fun" - prompting the thought that we need to be kind.
- On the other hand, comedy has a very historic role in speaking truth to power from commedia del arte to court jesters to Spitting Image.
- Comedy and jokes get away with saying things/adopting positions that may otherwise be too controversial.
- It can help us to safely share our weaknesses, and sometimes making a joke against myself can put others at ease (Owain's clown with the plastic bags does this).
- It can have a powerful therapeutic effect, supporting us in our despair.
- BUT it also risks distracting us from reality and we don't want to use it as a crutch/means of catharsis that takes us away from the urgency to act.
- It can help us safely express difficult emotions such as anger.
- Laughing and smiling is essential to our wellbeing. Laughing more equals better wellbeing.



Two takeaway quotes from the second session:

*"Humour shines a light on the ridiculousness of the human condition"*

and

*"Humour makes the impossible tolerable."*

We discovered that Owain is developing some environmentally conscious stand up comedy material. We analysed some material about the recent changes to Pembrokeshire recycling and found that the material:

- Invoked empathy and supported people with the feeling of being challenged to change.
- Processed some anger/resentment at change, and by sharing helped people not to feel guilty.
- We weren't sure if the material would improve recycling behaviour change or not, and our thinking about how to achieve that, in addition to the material we considered, was not conclusive.

Another piece of Owain's material we discussed was a joke about XR - in brief:

*"I was so moved and in awe of that lawyer at the XR protest who glued herself to the pavement. It just filled me with respect and gratitude. I can't say I felt quite the same when my son glued himself to the checkout in WHSmith!"*

We found this:

- Highlighted and included the opposing social viewpoints towards XR protesters - guardians of the environment, or naughty disruptive children?
- Included both extreme viewpoints - everyone could laugh at this together.
- This might mean the two extremes are more able to see each others perspectives.

A third bit of Owain's material will need some more detail from him if possible as I did not grasp it well enough to do it any justice. It drew a comparison between Greta Thunberg and imported lager (I think this may have been about "reaches the parts other beers/teenage activists cannot reach"). I think this then set us in a timeframe with the '80s, and the skit ended in imploring "The Wombles - did they Womble around for nothing??!)

This highlighted:

- Our sensitivity to the unkindness that has been directed towards Greta - as soon as her name came up, people felt uncomfortable (and were then relieved!) - edginess gets our attention!
- The longevity of human impact on the environment and our history of one human/environmental crises and existential threats.
- We observed that Greta may be the great antidote to a (lager addled?) state of human numbness to the climate crisis.
- We decided the Wombles should be brought back as guardians of the climate and should facilitate all future citizens assemblies.

We spent the last fifteen minutes of each session writing our own material in groups and presenting mini cabarets. Participants were given the option of writing a very short skit, or populating and performing "joke templates" on a climate change theme, such as:

- Why did the X cross the road?
- How many Y does it take to change a light-bulb?
- What do you get if you cross an X with a Y?
- Knock knock!

This was a high pressure exercise, and very successful. No group failed to come up with some material, with a great mix of sketches and gags. I have (terrible!) videos of a couple but messed others up and sadly can't remember all the material.

- The "Gaseous Giggles" entertained us with personifications of carbon dioxide and ozone.
- Ellie told a joke for her group - "How many XR rebels does it take to change a lightbulb?" Answer: "One to research ECO friendly lightbulbs, one to arrange a supply of green electricity, one legal observer, four consensus decision-makers,, and finally - you need two more to superglue it in!"

- Another group set up a protest scene, while a telephone call on the side added hilarity as the callers couldn't hear each other over the background chant of "extinction rebellion". Once that was interpreted as "stinky bellybutton", Greta Thunberg was echoed in the offended caller responding "How dare you!" and hanging up.
- Brian told a few jokes ending up with one in which the punchline was something about being pointless - flawlessly delivered. 'Knock, knock – who's there? No-body – we've all gone extinct.'

Oil in oil, it went very well and in spite of the shortage of time no-one reverted to anything too crude and none of the material could be described as scraping the bottom of the barrel (boom boom). It was actually great to see what could be developed so quickly, leading to the thought of "where next?" on this theme. I foresee a very achievable "Climate Cabaret in a Day", or an ongoing series of Cabaret work. Also how about "The Big TBG Book of Climate Jokes."

What was missing from our workshop? Well, I look forward to any feedback from participants, but if given more time I think a wrap up session asking what people had that they could take away and use in their everyday lives would have been useful and may have been effective in securing action beyond the day.



### Participant feedback (Lesley Matthews)

The workshops I attended were focused on the use of humour and comedy to engage with the public in helping them to address the climate emergency. The workshops were led by Ben and Owain. The group began with a warm up exercise and then both groups discussed the role of humour and its effect. We looked at the positive – humour and laughter can be relaxing and positive experiences, but can also be challenging. Humour can also be used as a weapon too and we must be careful not to use humour to humiliate or belittle.

The groups then divided into smaller groups of three and each group devised a humorous sketch or told a joke with the topic of climate emergency. It was amazing to see the high standard of the sketches – and with only five minutes to prepare!

Both workshops were excellent and the leaders were first rate'.

## Session 4 – Working with young people using theatre and the creative arts

---

Summary of summer activities with youth theatre and Scouts groups in Fishguard, engaging young people in discussion and exploration of climate change issues, led by Jana Davidson. Followed by a short group improvisation, concluding with Q&A.

### Leader feedback (Jana Davidson)

It was good that people had choice as those that did mine did actually have an interest of working with young people. Most had questions and queries at the ready and so it was a very off the cuff content with it going in it's own direction both times. All attendees were happy at the end and we could have easily gone on longer but they left feeling they'd gained from it.



### Participant feedback (Chris Samra)

The workshop leader outlined the process and outcomes of the Outcast Youth Theatre summer school as follows:

A group of children and young people came together for one week to plan and produce a play. The theme given to them by the adults was '#What can I do?' In comparison with previous summer schools, they needed much less input/direction from the adult and were very solution focussed. There was a wide age range – the older ones (16 -18s) took on leadership roles. The issues focussed on were – plastics and microplastics, biodiversity loss and animal extinction, impact of the fashion industry, trees and rainforests.

They developed a one hour long play, which was performed outdoors, along the coastal path. Those young people not so keen on acting took responsibility for all the technical backup required for the performance.

Learning points for working with young people:

- Don't lead or dictate subject matter – be there to provide help and support if asked. Let the young people know they can ask for help.
- Encourage improvisation

The workshop attendees were then given the challenge of developing their own mini- performances on the same theme – interestingly these performances were much more focussed on the blocks and difficulties to '#What can I do?' and less solution focussed than the young people's approach.



## Session 5 – Using Forum Theatre for exploring solutions

---

Led by Gill Dowsett, this workshop will be an exploration of the ways in which forum/legislative theatre can be used to create dialogue and explore solutions for issues around climate change. It will focus on 'me, you and us', embracing UBUNTU – I am, because you are, because we are.

### Leader feedback (Gill Dowsett)

My workshop was designed to give participants a taste of the processes involved in forum theatre. This is just a small component within the originator Augusto Boal's "Theatre of the Oppressed". The methodology is not theory but experiential practice, consequently I could only provide a very small taste of the work. I ran out of time in both workshops and therefore hope participants went away more intrigued than confused.



### Participant feedback (Corinne Cariad)

Opening with a gong bath to welcome participants set the tone for this session. Followed by an introductory circle and playing games from Augusto Boal's 'Games for Actors and Non-Actors'. These demonstrated the power of games to 'pull people into the now'. Gill went on to explain the beginnings and key concepts of Forum Theatre - started by Boal as Theatre of the Oppressed in Brazil in the 1960s, with a central belief of 'The time is now, who you are is enough'.

Gill explained that Boal believed 'truth is therapeutic' and Forum Theatre has been used effectively in schools and with disenfranchised, or disaffected groups, giving people a space to be heard, and for those in power to hear and reflect. Legislative Theatre can be used to consider policy and Gill has used this process with local authorities and with the Welsh Assembly, leading to policy change to benefit the communities involved.

## General Evaluation Received From Event Participants

### Positive and Useful

- the 1st exercise (Forum Theatre) - the importance of finding common ground e.g. farmers who also support XR. Looking for the commonalities - being 'emotionally intelligent' to tackle myths/ fears/ conflict
- No more 'us and them'...Just US!
- the diversity open space group
- come to an event/activity without having fully formed expectations...let the participants take ownership!!
- the food
- from Deb Winter, "One of the best events I've ever been to in the community sector - really lively, participative, active. You really 'met people where they were' - i.e. you had a room full of motivated and energetic people and you used that energy. I've been to so many 'death by powerpoint' conferences and this was the exact opposite - energetic, creative, inspiring. Really well-organised too, and excellent, brief and to the point facilitation. Oh, and humour, lots of humour too. Really one of the best of these types of days I've ever been to. I often get bored at conference-type events and truant (long dull presentations etc), but today I was wishing it was longer!"
- Good energy and creativity put to good use.
- It was very engaging. I didn't really have any idea what to expect and I'm also not as knowledgeable about the subject material as most, however I felt like I was able to contribute while also learning really valuable tools and learning about other people/organisations which could be helpful to my environmental goals.
- It was a really enjoyable day which gave lots of space for interaction and networking. Maybe having a facilitator or scribe in the open Space Activity, to facilitate the conversation. Sharing food/ ideas together in a really open and supportive space. Break out session upstairs were great, and entertainment on Climate issues after lunch was amazing to stimulate the mind after food. Really inspiring that volunteers run the kitchen and the fridge shed crew.
- Liked how structured it was, wouldn't have minded if the workshops were a bit longer.
- It was really good to meet lots of positive people doing great things in the arts world, which is not something I am part of in my everyday job. I enjoyed the first part of the day particularly, the forum theatre was thought provoking and it was great to hear about the outcomes of the events that took place in summer. Great to have the sheets on the wall for contact details rather than having to rush about giving out business cards. Lunch was amazing except for some really stale buns!
- Generally useful and inspiring. Got ideas for use in our community and for personal use. Networking potential excellent. Very entertaining, as well as informative, although, sadly, I missed the dramatic piece in the beginning.
- Very inspiring day. It just shows how much can be achieved when a passionate group of people come together and work together on making effective change.
- Great to come away from a day on the climate crisis and be inspired and uplifted. I really enjoyed hearing about the creative climate communications work, and enjoyed the humour and creativity during the day. Great to have the food from the community fridge, and the volunteers involved. Loved the mural nearby.
- What a fantastic event!! Informative, fun, interesting... really enjoyed and proud to have been a part of it all, so thanks for having me and Finlay.
- Just big thanks to everyone - I am still blown away by the day really - what a cornucopia of commitment, talent and real nourishment from all around, and a lot of good things to come I am sure.
- It was a fantastically inspiring day that gave lots of food for thought. And good opportunity for networking too.

## Negative and/or challenging

---

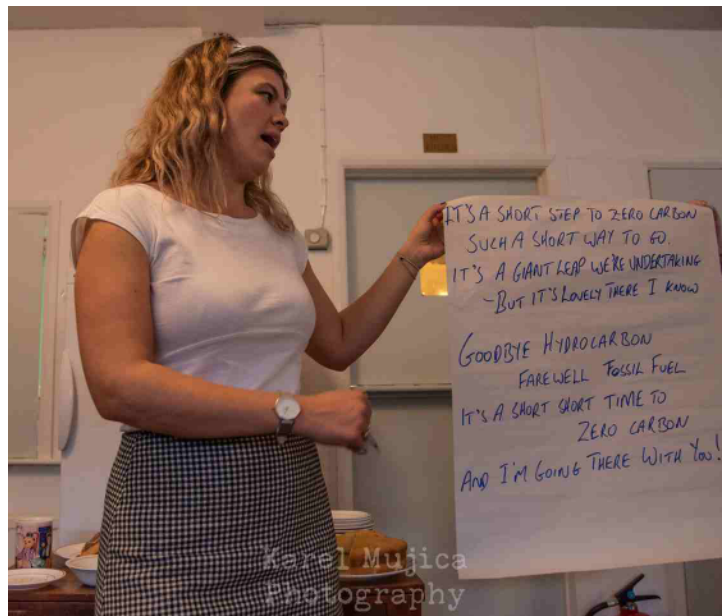
- How misunderstood/misrepresented XR are.
- Assumptions around 'science'.
- Not really negative, but the workshops at the end of the day really needed to be longer to get into the subject.
- The individual workshops at the end of the day I felt I got the least out of. That was the main area I feel could be improved as I wasn't sure what I was meant to be doing/learning from that and at times I wasn't sure if the leaders were either.
- Use of space during the breakout sessions. It was really difficult to hear and people were getting frustrated and not hearing relevant information in one group.
- The afternoon workshops were more like discussions and I found it really difficult to hear what people were saying over the comedy workshop session... they should have been the ones to go upstairs in a room where the door could be shut! Ironically someone else from the comedy workshop came and told us to be quiet! A bit more thought needed on structure and placement of the workshop sessions. As much as I liked the music and performance side of things, I find 'sing alongs' a bit awkward and felt it was forced at times. I would have liked to see more than 'the usual suspects' and at time I felt it was like preaching to the choir - i.e. more people needed from the communities who are not currently engaged with climate change for whatever reason. They would have had a lot to contribute (in the open discussions like how to engage the disengaged etc).
- Even vegans like cake and there wasn't any. (Don't know how to do a sad face).
- A lot to take in during the day but after some time of quiet reflection realised how much I had learnt.
- Great chance to network, maybe in future it would be good to have a list with attendees and contacts? I see there was somebody from SpanArts but I didn't know on the day and would have spoken to them.
- There wasn't any chance for participants to intro themselves – this would support the networking aspect better.





## Unexpected Outcomes

- the fact that creative work/art can be interpreted really differently than intended, and that this can be another opening to new conversations (e.g. chickens or canaries?! climate change or brexit?!)
- Ben and Owain packed a lot in to the comedy workshop - I was surprised to find I and two others had written and performed a short comic sketch with only 10 minutes prep! Amazing what you can do in the right atmosphere with lively people.
- No, just a great day.
- It was just very interesting to see the breadth of people. The gentleman who is an engineer and commented that he saw things from a solution perspective more than emotionally intrigued me as a potential avenue for communicating with people from a different point of view. It was good to hear about initiatives already happening which are similar to my goals, I hadn't expected that.
- Didn't expect such a variety of people or a bookshop! Could have had a few more local eco-vendors next time?
- Seeing Ben perform his songs. Amazing! Respect! Had no idea he was so talented as an entertainer.
- How powerful Forum Theatre and other forms of theatre can be in communication.




## Resources

- Books: Matt Harvey 'The Element in the Room' poetry
- 'From What is to What IF' - Rob Hopkins
- Ant Rogers of Pembrokeshire Nature Partnership - very knowledgeable and has a huge network of projects and groups.
- 'Letters to the Earth: Writing to a Planet in Crisis', edited by Anna Hope – a collection of 1000 letters written by everyday people from around the world.

There were very few feedback responses on the day, tight time schedules may have contributed to this. A survey was sent out afterwards to capture further evaluation, and these responses are collated above. The general hubbub through the day indicated people found the event stimulating and useful. The networking board was very full, and a list of 'offers and wants' has been circulated by the event organiser, Corinne Cariad, to all participants.

# Network ...

## OFFERS



collaboration / partnership in all thing sustainability and community engagement → Cwm Arian Renewable Energy  
[holly@cwmarian.org.uk](mailto:holly@cwmarian.org.uk)  
01239 698559  
[www.cwmarian.org.uk](http://www.cwmarian.org.uk)

**Eco-Schools Wales**  
Kiri.howell@keepwalestidy.cymru  
@EcoSlems (twitter / f.b).  
www.KeepWalestidy.cymru  
www.FEEGlobal

Sarah Sims Williams 07733095484  
LiBU - Everybody Matters  
escape@escapeyourchains.co.uk  
We want to take LiBU into groups & orgs & businesses to change the culture - get involved.

SPANARTS - arts for social change  
[www.spanarts.org.uk](http://www.spanarts.org.uk) - conversations on collaborative projects engaging Pembrokeshire communities that arts in climate & ecological issues info@span-arts.org.uk

WORK THAT RECONNECTS  
[clare.e.adams@gmail.com](mailto:clare.e.adams@gmail.com)  
0781 237 8834

## WISHES

Collaboration opportunities between people working in climate change in communities and sharing of educational resources.  
(Alex Cameron-Smith, Coastal Communities Adapting Together (ccat) project  
• [alex.cameron-smith@pembrokeshirecoastalforum.org.uk](mailto:alex.cameron-smith@pembrokeshirecoastalforum.org.uk)

contact details for anyone prepared to be in/help with forum theatre and climate change.  
~~gill~~ [gill.dowsett@gmail.com](mailto:gill.dowsett@gmail.com)  
[fforum@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:fforum@hotmail.co.uk)  
[diana.groom@btinternet.com](mailto:diana.groom@btinternet.com)

To engage all schools with Climate Change action through the Eco-Schools Award programme.

To take Work that Reconnects. Despair + empowerment, gratitude, grief, moving this into Schools for teachers & kids  
• govt / local council  
• groups working on these ecological & climate issues.  
[clare.e.adams@gmail.com](mailto:clare.e.adams@gmail.com)  
0781 237 8834



## Next Steps

There is clear evidence of a desire for an expanded version of the event - in a bigger space (with separate rooms), with more time for workshops, and a suggestion of 'eco stalls'.

Ben Ferguson expressed that it would be achievable to create a "Climate Cabaret in a Day", or an ongoing series of Cabaret work, and to publish "The Big TBG Book of Climate Jokes." The Artis Community in Llanelli suggested a pan-Wales network for groups involved with this sort of work, to share and support each other to develop Creative Climate Opportunities, especially for young people of the future. A pan-Wales network could link the many groups and organisations doing some really inspiring things. We hope this event is the instigator of such a network.

Inspired by the Climate Communications Toolkit and the positive feedback from this conference, Transition Bro Gwaun will continue to engage with our community in a conversation about climate change and to work with individuals and groups wanting to take action. We are submitting a bid to the National Lottery Climate Action Fund in partnership with Cwm Arian and Eco Dewi for funding to develop and expand the project across North Pembrokeshire.

