

## Tick Tock – Community action to save the planet

Simon Robinson welcomed everyone to the workshop and introduced the three speakers:

1. Claire Stocks, Campaigner and writer, Extinction Rebellion member.
2. Ian Bocock, Co-founder of Incredible Education and Incredible Edibles
3. Matt Fawcett, Co-founder of Carbon Co-op

### **Ian Bocock, Co-founder, Incredible Education and Incredible Edibles**

Ian gave a brief overview of how the idea for Incredible Edibles came about and explained their aim of developing urban farmers and adopting green spaces for both the benefit of the natural environment and local food production.

Ian explained who “The Diggers or True Levellers” were and discussed whether their ideas of common ownership of the earth by locally self-supporting communities was something we could do in Salford and across the country now.

Incredible Edible are currently developing on an old plant nursery in Winton into a space for the local community. Ian identified a plot of unused land in Little Hulton and questioned whether spaces like these could be turned into a sustainable food production site to stop food travelling miles before consumption.

How do we get people growing? Is local food production a viable option? Is there evidence of this and if so where? Were some questions he left the audience to think about.

### **Matt Fawcett, Co-Founder, Carbon Co-op**

Matt began with the GM Environmental Plan (launched by Andy Burnham) and discussed whether the strategy was enough and what the VCSE sectors role is within the strategy. Matts view was that scientifically the ambitions of the plan aren't enough to get us to where we need to be to prevent a climate crisis and that some of the aims of the plan cannot be carried out as the technology needed to make the changes is unavailable. However Matt believes if it is taken seriously enough it might help with the necessary changes. He stressed the importance of more radical changes e.g. mileage allowances, no overseas meetings; etc.

He informed the audience that the VCSE sectors carbon footprint is small and stressed the need to campaign for systemic change, yet Root and Branch climate restructuring of organisations will also help and recognising current differing experience and advocating for those left behind ‘Just Transition’.

Finally he presented a graph showing Bodies trusted to deliver ‘sustainable community infrastructure’, the third body down (out of 9) was the VCSE sector. Matt believed that the sector have the trust and connections to start making the radical changes needed.

## **Claire Stocks, Extinction Rebellion**

Claire started by asking whether Salford needs to deploy a Climate emergency, which she then confirmed – Yes, it is an emergency. The UN have reported the planet has 12 years to limit a climate change catastrophe. She informed the room that we are already using a planet and ¾ of resources and that 1 million species are facing extinction. She informed the room that Greater Manchester have a plan to become carbon neutral by 2038 and did a quiz to illustrate whether the plan is enough and to see whether the room agreed enough is being done. It was agreed after the quiz that the plan isn't enough, an emergency needs to be declared and politicians need to do more.

The room were then given the option to ask questions and discuss climate change and the sector:

- People turn their minds off to climate change as it isn't impacting their current lives.
- Large funders need to be more accepting / trusting of environmentally beneficial grant applications. Example of a group spending £90,000 on academic research to protect a playground from dirty air even though the benefit of trees is known.
- More responsibility needs to be given to the larger organisations. Corporations need to be tackled first.
- Regarding the Clean Air act of the 60s, relevant changes were made then therefore there is faith the changes will be made now.
- Nothing will change until there is staggering human health implications.
- Confidence in politicians pushing for the right change.
- Confidence that changes will happen but the importance is when the changes happen. There are several people with vested interests stopping important changes e.g. lobbying to stop environmentally beneficial laws.
- The gradual nature of the issue makes it more difficult to deal with.
- Big momentum is needed to demonstrate the people want more to be done. Need to continue with campaigning and keep young people engaged.
- Need to harness the optimism rather than focusing on the negative.
- Salford CVS need to lead as an example to other groups.
- Need to think about how larger VCSE sector organisations talk and promote changes. E.g. towels in hotels, a sign in a hotel room saying '75% of people do not get fresh clean towels every day' has more of an effect on behaviour (people don't request new towels) than 'Not getting a fresh towel helps the environment'
- People are scared the changes will affect their lives negatively. Honesty and transparency is needed to stress the benefits – exemplified of 'Just Transition'
- Discussions to be had around job changes

- People of lower socio-economic backgrounds feel powerless to make change. Need to remind them of their power. Politicians are led by the people not the other way round.

Three practical actions were agreed:

1. Focus on a positive vision – Better than now
2. Redefine success
3. Green new deal.

Simon informed the room that Salford CVS are declaring an emergency crisis.