

# Chester World Development Forum

## Notes of CWDF Meeting held on Tuesday 16 November 2021 in The Unity Centre, 7-9pm



Hosted by Gill Miller on Zoom, chaired in the room by Terry Green

**Present in person:** Terry Green (CWDF), Georgina Wilson (CWDF), John Tacon (CWDF), Ann McCarthy (CWDF), Vicki Jenner (CWDF), Alison Knott (Chester FoE, and Chester & District Climate Action), Andrew Needham (Campaign for the Protection of Rural England), Terry Walsh (CWDF), Anne Saxon (XR), Jeff Lee, Andy Hamill (XR), Katy and Brian Rowe (Christian Aid), Sean English (Greenpeace), Linda and Stewart Shuttleworth (CWDF), Sarah Batchelor (St Michael's Church, Newton), Niall MacFadyen (Hydrohub, Hynet), Kathryn Gornall (Good Energy), Paul Bowers (Green Party CW&C Councillor for Helsby); Madeleine Broderick (Neston Earth Group).

**And Via Zoom:** Gill Miller (CWDF), Bernard Payne (CWDF), Charlie Cooke (Transition Tattenhall Group), Jo Conchie (Chester & District Climate Action), Nicholas Brown (Chair of Chester Green Party), Nala Rollo (FoE and Chester Climate Action)

**We offer sincere apologies to those people for whom the Zoom link didn't work. There were some technical difficulties following the local internet connection failing.**

### Gill Miller's introduction to the outcomes of COP26:



## Cop26 - a brief overview Challenges, frustrations, smiles and tears

### Challenges and frustrations:

- 197 countries took part
- Incomplete legacy of Paris agreement eg finance
- Geopolitics and national agendas eg China, Australia, India, Saudi Arabia
- Not enough leaders with disaster mindset
- Power of the fuel lobby
- Talk transferring into action?

### Some good:

- Positive impact of young people and campaigners – had enormous influence. Mass feeling which must continue. **“The progress achieved..... was only possible because of the power of the people young and old....to demand action”** Al Gore
- Explicit recognition that the future is now
- 1.5°C is there – just
- Critical role of CO<sub>2</sub> and methane (cut by 30% by 2030)
- Halt deforestation by 2030
- Fossil fuels are on notice, despite opposition

- Finance is now the central issue
- Loss and damage is recognized but in the form of loans and grants – veto of new “Glasgow loss and damage facility”
- Agreement on biggest loopholes in carbon trading and transparency of recording emissions

### Good but not good enough:

- 1.5°C is still there - by a thread
- Lack of ambition on meaningful targets
- Finance – promises. But too much is loans, not grants, leading to more debt
- Fossil fuels, especially coal – banks and institutions can still invest; not all car producers committed to electric vehicles. What about action on oil & gas?
- Dependence on new technology to reduce impact of lifestyles
- Limited focus on nature, agriculture; absence of nature-based solutions
- Too much ambiguity in the declaration

### What happens now?

- 2022 in Cairo expects more ambition
- Countries need to go home and deliver. Behind the scenes pressure on governments especially India and US. Joe Biden has to get agreement through Congress in US
- Technology
  - find sites and finance for CCS (Carbon Capture Sites)
  - grow sufficient saplings and find spaces for reforestation
  - find affordable, substantive alternatives to fuel ships, aircraft, steel & cement production
- Keep politicians focussed

### So what happens now?

*Jennifer Morgan, Greenpeace International*

“It’s meek, it’s weak, and the 1.5°C goal is only just alive, but a signal has been sent that the era of coal is ending. And that matters.”

So, what happens here in and around Chester? We need to keep up the pressure ...

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There followed a lively discussion, with contributions from other local groups, including:

Andy Hamill (XR) - gave an account of his time at COP26, participating in the “Fridays for the Future” march on 5th November and the “Global day of Action” on the 6th. View of XR is that COP26, like all before it, has failed as we have yet to see any reduction in carbon emissions. Until the words of our political leaders are turned in to action, we have to assume that we are heading for a catastrophic 2.8°C of warming and a huge amount of species extinction. He recommended watching Yann Arthus-Bertrand’s Film Legacy “*Notre Héritage*” which was premiered in the Green Zone at COP26. In it he “reveals a suffering planet and the ecological damage caused by man.”

Sean Anglish (Greenpeace) – Greenpeace’s views largely echo the points raised both in the presentation and XR. Expressed concerns over the reiteration of the same flimsy promises of past COPs, with new extended deadlines and the lack of ambitious targets that are so far in future they will be down to other government leaders to uphold; concern that there is very little in the way of penalties against governments failing to uphold their promises. For example, Brasil’s President Bolsonaro and his promise to reverse the damage from deforestation by 2030

Niall Macfadyen (Hydrohub and Hynet) talked about the importance of carbon capture. This provoked discussion around Hynet’s plans to produce ‘blue’ hydrogen – somewhat controversial. There are to be 2 public debates – one in Chester, and one in Ellesmere Port – to hear all sides of the argument. Niall mentioned other plans – discussions to take place

between Andy Burnham (Mayor of Greater Manchester) and Louise Gittens (CW&C council leader) on low carbon housing.

Andrew Needham (CPRE) – Methane reduction is crucial – just as polluting as fossil fuels. CPRE is keen to campaign on this issue.

Alison Knott (FoE & Climate Action) – commented on the disappointing result of COP26 and expressed the group's concerns about financing climate change amelioration measures.

Kathryn Gornall - attended the Youth Gathering on the weekend before COP26 began. She talked about how impressed she was to meet so many young people from all over the world who were all so committed to working for climate justice; a source of optimism.

John Tacon (CWDF, Chester Sustainability Forum) – good that the national contributions are now to be reviewed every year as opposed to every 5 years prior to COP26.

Paul Bowers (Green Party) – commented on plans for Helsby to become first “hydrogen” town and raised residents' concerns

Ann McCarthy (CWDF) – possibility of local action for all those interested, for example, a lobby of banks which continue to invest in fossil fuels (primarily HSBC & Barclays).

## **Business minutes**

**1. Welcome:** TG chaired the business meeting. Apologies received from Linda and Stewart Shuttleworth, Catherine Green.

**2. Minutes of the last Forum Meeting held on 14 September and matters arising**  
No matters arising.

**3. Finance update**

Balance of £210.68 in the bank and £6.27 cash in hand in bank. Cheque for £30 raised to pay for room hire of Unity Centre for this meeting.

**4 Communications - CWDF website and social media:**

GW reported on the increased interest in our Facebook page. Photos of our recent activities are on the page. GW urged members to “like” the posts which can generate more interest on Facebook and Twitter. “See it, share it, like it”.

**5 Forthcoming CWDF events:**

- 14 December - Informal CWDF pre-Christmas get together, with updates from the groups who are Forum members and from individuals. There will be an opportunity to formulate questions for Chris Matheson which can be given him in advance of our forthcoming meeting with him.
- 28 January 2022 - Chris Matheson, MP for the City of Chester, answering our questions on development issues.

**6. Other items for the latest CWDF Diary update:**

- Andy Hamill: Sunday 21 November at 10:30 - protest over extension to Northwich incinerator, organised by Transition Northwich
- Alison Knott: Action Day led by National FoE on 07 December. Alison will send details
- Sarah Batchelor: Chester Wildlife Champions – courses being run at Zoo. See the Zoo website for details

**7. Date of next Forum meeting:** Tuesday 28 January at 7pm in the Unity Centre.