## Big Climate Conversation - Generations Working Together Summary 2019

After the declaration of climate emergency by the Scottish Government, Generations Working Together decided to get involved and took part in the Big Climate Conversation, an initiative that focussed on climate conversations in the community. These events gave us the chance to ask people about climate targets, actions and what we could be doing. We undertook these sessions throughout autumn 2019 and asked the groups about their thoughts on climate change and how these fits in with intergenerational work. This is a summary of what we learnt from our sessions.

- 67 people took part in our Big Climate Conversation
- The areas where the conversation took place include Forth Valley, East Dunbartonshire (including residents from Glasgow), Aberdeen (including residents from Aberdeenshire), Lanarkshire, Argyll and Bute, and the Highlands.

Out of the people who attended, about 80% knew a lot about climate change, while about 20% said that they knew a little bit or very little. The views differed throughout the sessions but the words most associated with climate emergency included: Plastics, Flooding, Rubbish, Think, Humans, Weather, Melting, Misunderstanding, Future Generations, Landfill, Fuel, How to get about, Misrepresenting, Disaster, Radical Action, Apocalypse, Need for Action, Disease, Rising Sea Levels, Aspirational, Catastrophe, Fire, Rapid response, Inaction, Not enough action, Danger, Scary. When asked about how urgent is climate change action on the scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being most urgent the average number that the attendees picked was 8.

There was a discussion about the action that needs to be taken by the Scottish Government at all the groups and key priorities for the groups included:

1. Build more wind turbines
2. Create a circular economy in Scotland
3. Incentive tree planting
4. Improve town planning
5. Circular economy – fixing and repairing things – this links to intergenerational and non-ownership
6. Promoting and supporting public transport and getting people to use their cars less or incentivising car and transport sharing
7. Reusing waste and turning this into energy

All the groups mentioned that tree planting should
be one of the most important ways to reduce $CO_2$. All the groups also
mentioned that we need to be careful when creating systems that will
cost people more money, as this may discourage them or make certain
things such as flying only accessible to rich people.

There were also additional ideas of what could be done to tackle climate
change:

• Ensure energy efficiency in new homes
• More shared space campuses i.e. are home nursery
• Rethink community planning
• We need to make roads bigger for cycling
• Local flying could be cut down
• More localised growing
• Ensure Home Economics is on the curriculum of all school
• Encourage initiatives such as Men's Sheds
• Tie in offshore wind energy top offset reluctance to phase out oil
• More education for young and old more time to make things achievable
• Parking fees for Sundays
• Create and encourage collectives where people can put in things they
don't need that others can use

There were points of contention, specifically on the themes of flying and
vegetarian diet. Many participants mentioned that they wanted more than
just extra taxes, they wanted the government to be bold in their actions.
Some participants also mentioned that it was often the business rather
than individual people who were the biggest polluters.
Being an intergenerational charity, we were not surprised that many
attendees mentioned things such as shared campuses, re-use and the
ability to pass environmental knowledge through generations. It was
mentioned that talking about children's future was very effective and that
we could all learn from different generations. Many participants
highlighted intergenerational projects that we support, such as
intergenerational gardening to combat climate change. Most of the
participants were very interested in the climate conversation and were
happy to be allowed to contribute.