QUESTIONS RAISED IN EVENT CHAT

1. **How do we ensure that this plan and communications stays objective and open to debate and doesn't stray over into propaganda? We have seen particularly over the last few years how non-approved narratives have been closed down without the use of reasoned debate**.
Answered live. SG climate change communication is evidence based, drawing on the latest research, and is open and transparent on its sources. This is a key principle of engagement in the strategy.

2. **Can local authorities sign up to become trusted messengers?**
There is no need to 'sign up' as a trusted messenger and it is not a formal network. We use the term 'trusted messenger' to mean an individual or organisation who works to engage the public on climate change and enjoys the trust of their audience.

Local authorities are a key trusted messenger group with which SG is keen to work in partnership, in order to:
- most effectively engage their public on climate change and encourage behaviour change
- identify other key trusted messengers within the authority who should be supported and involved

If local authorities are interested in building capacity and getting certification, the Carbon Literacy Project has developed a carbon literacy training toolkit for local authorities. The toolkit is free and you do not need a certified trainer to deliver the training. The training takes 7 hours in total.
Local Authorities - The Carbon Literacy Project

3. **Can we have a little bit more information on the Open Government Climate commitment?**
The Scottish Government is taking forward it's new Open Government climate change commitment to establish a stakeholder network to deliver on participation and engagement across climate change policy, providing advice, accountability and transparency on Scottish Government actions. Reaching a diverse, representative audience of Scottish society will require collaboration with the many and varied organisations across Scotland best placed to deliver these activities. The commitment is seeking to respond to a need to consolidate and widen the existing pool of stakeholders regularly consulted, streamline consultative processes, and maximise opportunities to drivepublic participation and engagement in climate policy delivery.

The Network is currently being co-created with a core stakeholder group so the specifics are currently being designed. We are aiming for the Network to consult and feedback on existing and climate policies in development.

Key links:
- Scotland's OGP Action Plan: Scotland, United Kingdom (opengovpartnership.org)
- OGP Steering Group: Open Government Partnership Steering Group - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

4. **Great to have a date for Climate Week this year. Will Climate Week in years to come be on the same week every year/announced earlier in the year?**

Climate Week 2022 is the week commencing 26th September, and our aim is to run it the same week every year from now on (last week of September).

5. Can you share some info on the accessibility checklist?
The Public Engagement team is developing an Accessibility Checklist, a short guide to be used when developing virtual or in-person events and digital communication on climate change. The Checklist is meant to be a starting point for you and your team to think about considerations, accommodations, and tools to improve the inclusivity and accessibility of the work you are doing. We hope that the Checklist will inspire further reflection on what being inclusive and accessible requires in your area of work.

The Checklist is evidence based and being developed with input from accessibility and inclusivity colleagues. We are developing this Checklist to deliver on our commitments in the Public Engagement Strategy, deliver engagement work that is available to all. We will circulate it through the forum once finalised (June/July 2022).

6. Can you please provide more details offline on the planned Public Engagement Grant Funding Scheme?
Please note that this is subject to final approval and we can therefore not share details at this point. We hope to make public information on the scheme in the summer.

We are currently developing plans to support grant funding that would enable organisations and groups across Scotland to lead their own climate change engagement initiatives as 'trusted messengers', in line with the strategic objectives of 'understand' and 'act' in the Public Engagement Strategy. We intend to pilot a new funding mechanism approach this year (2022/23).

Our aim is to support activity that focuses on climate engagement, as opposed to climate action. Being targeted at 'trusted messengers' – individual and organisations working to engage their audiences on climate change, from small local groups to national stakeholders – would support engagement across a wide section of the Scottish society that is required to embrace the transformational change needed to reach net zero.

7. Our question was around balance on funding – our area has a well-established hub (NESCAN) which has been recruiting new funded sustainable development roles. Are there plans for more funded roles within local authority sustainability/climate change teams, so they have the required resource to support growing community hubs?
The Scottish Government is committed to enabling community-led climate action in recognition of the role communities can play in making our transition to net zero a success. Evidence shows that an individual's knowledge of the lifestyle changes needed is insufficient to change their behaviour in isolation. Research has shown that community climate action performs a key function in facilitating behaviour change. The Climate Actions Hubs are therefore essential in raising awareness and enabling people to, collectively, explore and adopt low carbon behaviours and build local capacity for continued bottom-up change.

Local climate action can raise understanding and acceptance of the difficult changes needed at a societal level, and therefore provide Scottish Government and local authorities with an opportunity to get local buy-in, reducing resistance to some of the more difficult decisions we will need to implement in the years to come.

The Hubs will nurture and build a strong network of community groups, as evidenced by NESCAN. They will look to engage with communities who are not currently engaged, increasing the diversity

of voices they represent. They have access to a range of technical expertise and support through our wider stakeholder working group. We therefore believe the Hubs provide an opportunity to support local authorities and Scottish Government on our pathway to net zero. We do not foresee this adding significantly to the work of local authorities, rather we view the Hubs as being a useful resource for them. However we are open to further discussions as the Hubs are established and we can see how this works in practice.

8. **As a psychologist - I am wondering which behavioural change theories the SG's behaviour change attempts are based on?**

The Scottish Government recognises that, just as there is no 'silver bullet' for changing behaviours, there is no single 'best theory' of behaviour change. There is a wide array of behavioural models and theories that offer valuable insights for policy development.

The ISM (Individual-Social-Material) tool was created for the Scottish Government to combine the most pertinent factors and influences from multiple disciplines into a practical tool for policy makers. The different elements of the ISM model draw primarily from behavioural economics, social psychology, and sociology. Each of these underpinning disciplines offers a different view of human behaviour and the relative role of the individual, within a wider social and material context. More information on the theory underpinning the ISM tool is available here: https://www.gov.scot/publications/influencing-behaviours-technical-guide-ism-tool/documents/

While the ISM tool is the high-level guiding framework for developing behaviour change policy for climate change, the Scottish Government also makes use of other models of behaviour change for designing specific interventions. For example, Transport Scotland recently made use of the COM-B model to inform the "Route map to achieve a 20 per cent reduction in car kilometres by 2030" (p.21).

9. **Maybe we should start talking about engagement and incentivising? I think that would help focus projects across all three ISM levels. "engagement" puts a lot of focus on the individual change, whereas "incentives" puts focus on societal and material. We need both!**

Yes, we agree that incentivation (and decentivation), along with engagment are all useful behavioural interventions. Low emissions choices will be made by individuals, households and communities, but these choices will be embedded in wider cultural changes, and must be supported by adequate infrastructure, investments, and institutions. This means going beyond interventions that focus on encouraging individuals to make specific behavioural choices, to understanding and influencing the factors which enable or constrain how people meet their needs (including mobility, housing, and nutrition), both individually and collectively. Behavioural interventions include social norming (engagement), taxes subsidies and incentivising, infrastructure (cycle lanes etc), and choice architecture. We need an array of interventions to get us to our net zero targets.

10. **Within our LA, resources are put on delivery of behaviour change projects. We seldom have resources to actually research the change (baseline and how behaviour actually changed after the intervention). Anyone with experience that can share how they've managed to get funding/time for the whole spectre of behaviour change projects?**

Not a question for SG. One to discuss at a future event?

11. **How can you share this learning on behaviour change at a national level to allow LA's to apply it locally in their climate change messaging and campaigns? (this is one of the key questions for us)**

This is a key question for us. Effective collaboration between the public (and private) sector(s) is needed in order to deliver system change. System change is what we need to ensure behaviour change is brought about effectively and sustainably. System change including transformative, socio-cultural change therefore requires coordinated action from all categories of actors – from individuals and communities, to corporate, institutional, and infrastructure actors. We are very keen to share with LAs our learning and research findings, and to hear and learn from them/you on past and ongoing behaviour change initiatives. We have already started to work on the organisation of a workshop centred around behaviour change which will cover some theoretical elements but also practical steps that can be taken. It will be interactive as it is essential to hear from Local Authorities about what has and hasn't worked in the past.

12. **When looking at behaviour change in a wider context, this will come into contact with climate change deniers or those who are more apathetic to making changes, so will strategies/plans look at how to bring everyone along on the journey?**

We need urgent climate action and the pace of the change required needed to meet our target means that all sections and sectors will have to transition to low carbon. Moving toward becoming a net zero nation will require all aspects of Scottish society (including those less apathetic to making changes) to embrace significant changes in order for us to meet our ambitious targets. That means engaging everyone right across society. We are fully committed, including within our Public Engagement and Behaviour Change work, to a fair and just transition to a net zero nation; which places people, communities, and businesses at its heart.

13. **Any views on messages that are given out to the public by various companies that seems to quickly solve the problem for them. For example, flying from Edinburgh airport there are posters saying 'offset your flight at a click of a button'. So, for many folk, the problem is quickly fixed and behaviours don't need to change. So many companies also claim to be net zero now - you'd be excused for thinking 'what's the problem, when the issue has been dealt with already'.**

Mixed messaging, including from the private sector is a concern. A recent House of Lords evidence session on *Mobilising action on climate change and environment: behaviour change* ([available here](#), Q120) Lord Witty had argued the role of communications in commercial sector is at least as important as what the Government tells consumers. In April 2022 we conducted a Public Engagement Strategy (PES) baseline survey of almost 1,800 people representative of the Scottish public indicated trust in the private sector is low (see Figure 4 below).

What is clear is that we can no longer be too narrow in our behavioural responses to climate change. Additionally, the pace and scale of change required to meet our targets means that we cannot afford trade-offs between sectors and aspects of our lives. This is all part of the society-wide, systemic changes that are needed to reach net zero. These are some of the messages which we all need to consistently and effectively convey to the public.
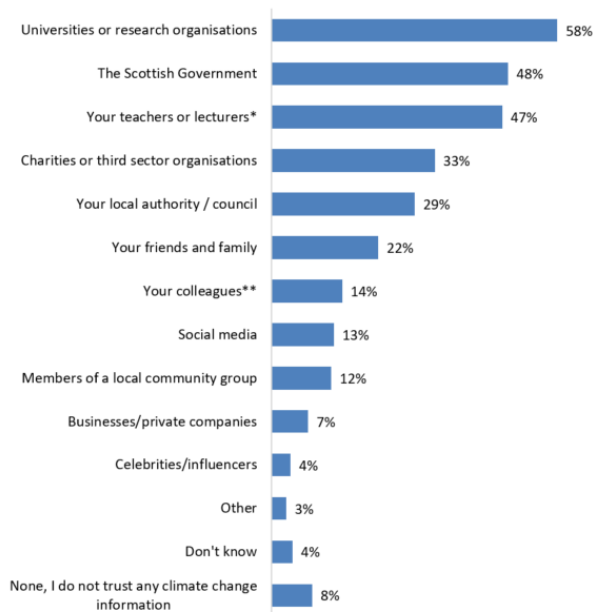
Figure 4. Which of the following groups would you trust to give you information or advice about climate change?

Unweighted bases (1782), multi response question
*only those in education (106), **only those in employment (953)

14. How do we ensure that focus is on societal and infrastructural change as well as the individual?

This is one of our main challenges. Both need to work in tandem, and we are currently putting a greater emphasis on societal and infrastructural change as a way to support individual behaviour change. We need more a more effective collaborative approach to ensure we are joined-up and intervene at the right points of interventions. For example, this may mean having to take advantages of different phases of the policy-making process in various sectors in order to engage and encourage the public to change theirs behaviours and shift to low-carbon lifestyles. Ensuring that the focus is on societal and infrastructural change as well as the individual will require that we coordinate policy actions from all categories of actors – from individuals and communities, to corporate, institutional, and infrastructure actors. We will also have to operate at the intersection of behavioural, cultural, institutional and infrastructural change.

The ISM (Individual-Social-Material) is useful in this regard as it enables us to focus on the individual, societal and infrastructural changes (material). Additionally we apply a systems approach/or interlinked practices lens. A Systems approach takes into account the systems that individuals live in, including social, material and cultural factors, as well as individual attitudes and values.