

The coaching effect- helping public leaders act on climate change: a view from Wales, UK.

20 years of climate change work– local government, public agency, academia, community, Welsh and UK level.

Welsh and international discourse on future generations.

How can public leaders shift into a space that is uncertain, uncomfortable, long term and complex?

Reflections on the situation in Wales – a country with a Future Generations Act, requires government and public services to plan over the long term for future generations

....with major climate risks to the economy, infrastructure, landscape and communities.

How can coaching help leaders on strategic, organisational, operational and community levels?



Dr. Alan Netherwood
Netherwood Sustainable Futures

Honorary Research Fellow in the
School of Geography and
Planning, Cardiff University, UK.

alan.netherwood@gmail.com



Discounting the needs of future generations remains the norm despite legislation, commissioner and duties on public bodies

evidence is building that **leaders in public bodies, local and Welsh government are struggling** on long term and future generations elements of the Act.

approaches to finance, strategy, investment, services, infrastructure and development are slow to change and in most cases do not factor in relationships between generations

long-term outcomes vague, aspirational, poorly defined and long-term policy challenges tackled by small initiatives or projects- not transformation of strategy or delivery systems to safeguard future generations

limited reflection on the **efficacy of current delivery systems** to tackle long term issues or service reform over the long term to benefit future generations

unfocused on place-based challenges such as the resilience of landscape, infrastructure, ecosystems which future generations will rely on

need for a **deliberative approach** to consider needs of future generations, and to explore relationships between different generations over time



Exploring relationships between generations

inter -generational needs between current and future generations

This activity is deliberate and mutually beneficial to both groups of people e.g. actions which maintain a soil resource upon which current agriculture and future agriculture might be reliant.

trans-generational needs beyond current generations

This is activity that we may not benefit from now, so that future generations can maintain their own, and their descendants' well-being. e.g. activity to reduce emissions to provide a stable climate and adapting to climate change so communities are tenable.

Deliberative approach



multi-generational needs supports multiple generations of people as a by-product of addressing the needs of current generations.

e.g. investing in green infrastructure for open space now can benefit current generations but longer-term benefits to biodiversity and carbon sequestration may be even more significant for the well-being of generations to come.

intra-generational needs focusing on outcomes within a current generation

e.g. activity which focuses on the present such as developing a day care centre next to a school to encourage support within current generations. The centre may or may not be there for future generations.

Focusing on representation and place is essential

Representation of Future Generations

Distinguish between

- long-term inter-generational investment **between generations**, and
- policy and interventions which focus on the future welfare of **current generations**

Acknowledge **inter-generational bargains**, including consideration of policy choice and trade-offs

Represent the **needs of the yet to be born** as a pre-requisite for effective long-term planning.

Establish **new approaches to institutional governance, policy and behaviour** to represent citizens yet to be born

Place and Future Generations

Inter-relationships between our spaces – **where future generations will live out their lives**– and their ecological sustainability, are critical to thinking about meeting their needs

Our thinking on future generations should be **making physical characteristics of communities more central** to well-being planning

Marginalising spatial differences in well-being planning risks underplaying the factors which might inform **growth and degrowth narratives in different communities**.

Research Paper : A shift in governance, policy, and delivery for future generations? Well-being Planning in Wales. Discussion Paper Dr. Alan Netherwood & Dr. Andrew Flynn, School of Geography & Planning, Cardiff University July 2020

<https://www.researchgate.net/project/Well-being-and-future-generations>

Leadership for the climate emergency...really?

Declared...good...what then?

So what?

Level of change....charge points...or £millions on infrastructure

Is activity at the right scale?

Is it at the right pace?

Low hanging fruit ...or systemic change?

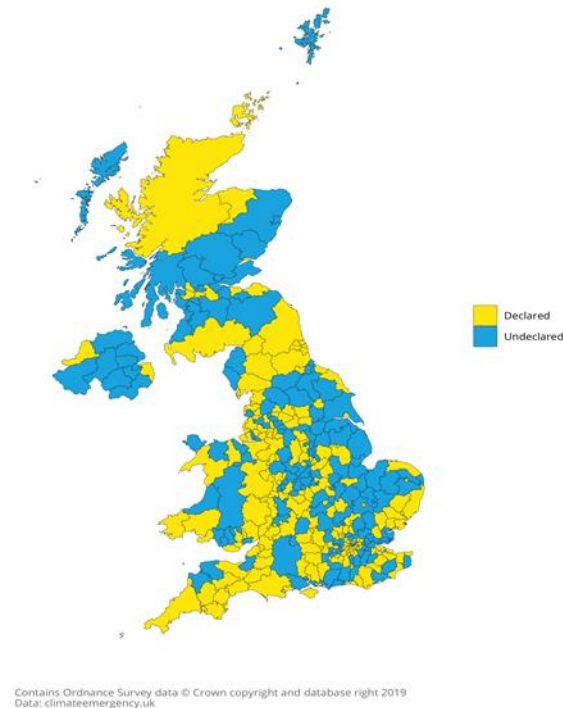
Carbon-centric or climate risk too?

Creating the conditions for others to act?

What constitutes good leadership for a climate emergency?

How do future generations benefit from what you are doing now?

UK councils declaring a climate emergency
as of 15 July 2019



North Wales Climate Mitigation: Recommendations for a regional response to the Climate Emergency. Netherwood Sustainable Futures. Executive Summary May 2020

NETHERWOOD SUSTAINABLE FUTURES
Sustainable Governance Policy Practice

NORTH WALES CLIMATE MITIGATION:
developing a regional response
to the climate emergency

Introduction & Executive Summary



Dr. Alan Netherwood – May 2020



Challenges to leaders are complex, strategic, systemic and (for communities) existential

sufficiency of current systems, plans, strategies and investments

integrating climate risks into forward plans across multiple sectors

cascading risks and **systemic risks** as part of forward planning

the challenge of identifying **multiple adaptation options** for specific risks

stronger **collaboration** will be needed between governments , local authorities, public bodies, third sector and communities to plan for individual and cascading risks.

national, sector and issue specific plans need to **develop enhanced approaches**



Fairbourne, Gwynedd, Wales UK



Well established responses for climate adaptation planning at any level – but what is the level of leaders' ambitions?

- **capacity building** so that climate risk and levels of resilience are communicated to key audiences to engage the community
- **evidence gathering** on impacts, risks and required interventions so that climate risks are better understood through available evidence
- **detailed forward planning** so that communities of interest and the right people are involved who need to manage climate risks; and operations alter on the ground to account for climate risks.
- **broader strategic work** so that climate risks are planned for properly to inform forward planning e.g., analysis on the costs of action/inaction of planning forward (or not planning forward)



Fishguard &
Goodwick

Newcastle
Emlyn

Skewen



Challenge – multi level approach needs multiple skills

Strategic leadership on climate risk

Scenario: *Future climate risks and community viability*

Future flood risk, sea -level rise and land instability has placed a community under serious threat of becoming unviable.

You have been tasked to lead a regional enquiry into how manage this type of scenario y bringing partners together to establish understanding of risks, gaps in knowledge, governance, funding, implementation and accountability.

How would you lead colleagues and partners to explore and implement a regional approach to 'letting communities go'

Organisational leadership on climate risk

Scenario: *Integrating climate risks into the day job*

You have been tasked to make sure that your organisation's approach to climate risks is well-evidenced, meaningful and well communicated to staff, the public and stakeholders.

You have a national and regional climate risk assessment which identifies multiple and cascading risks to the communities you serve. These need managing by multiple stakeholders

How would you lead colleagues and partners to do integrate climate risks into your work, well enough to be open to external scrutiny?

Community leadership on climate risk

Scenario: *Establishing a citizen's jury on climate change*

You have been tasked to establish/contribute to a citizens' jury which examines the sufficiency of current plans for dealing with future climate risks.

How would you lead colleagues and partners to contribute to, establish and implement the jury to support the community?

Operational leadership on climate risk

Scenario: *Funding for managing more frequent, intense, recurring severe weather events*

Current funding approaches will be inadequate to deal with projected climate change which will include more frequent, intense and severe weather events, which are already placing a major burden on public finances.

You have been asked to lead a task force, in response to the climate emergency to develop cost/benefit analysis to support a changed approach to funding emergency and contingency planning.



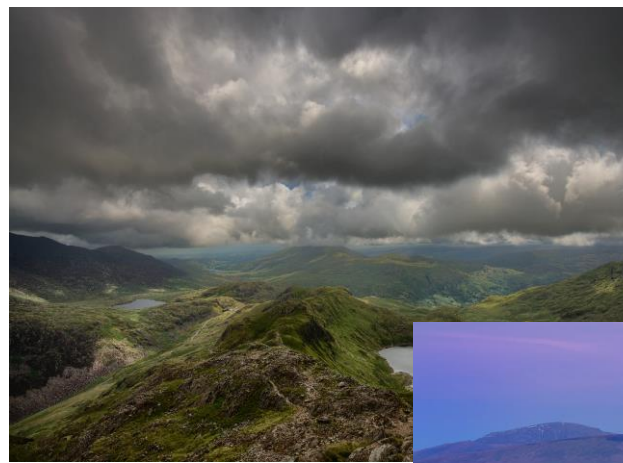
My question: What can coaching bring to the table on climate risk?

increasing advocacy
for future generations?

addressing systemic
barriers of short
termism?

get leaders into the
space to address
inter-generational and
trans-generational
needs?

challenge normative
approaches to
leadership?



Natural
Environment

Communities



Infrastructure



Economy



Multi-level
governance

