

# Climate Commission for UK Higher and Further Education



## Virtual Evidence Gathering Meeting: Priority 4 – Deep Adaptation

**Date:** 19th May 2020 – 10:00 – 11:30 -

[https://www.eauc.org.uk/shop/mms\\_single\\_event.php?event\\_id=6915](https://www.eauc.org.uk/shop/mms_single_event.php?event_id=6915)

### Purpose of the Meeting

This is an initial evidence gathering meeting where we have invited some key stakeholders relating to this priority topic. We will be asking the expert witnesses to respond to the key questions as outlined below. We will then open the discussion to the wider audience for input. The aim is to provide guidance to the Climate Commission that we are asking the right questions and focussing on the correct areas that are needed. The recording and notes from the meeting will be publicly available.

This is the early stages for the Climate Commission and output, advice and support for the sector will emerge at a later stage based on the analysis of the evidence from this meeting and other inputs. Following this event further meetings and discussions will be held to help the Climate Commission develop the practical guidance and outputs for the sector for each priority.

**Lead Commissioners:** Chair: **Professor Joy Carter**, Vice Chancellor, University of Winchester and Commissioner for Climate Commission; **Florence Barrett**, Student, Plymouth Marjon University and Student Commissioner for Climate Commission; **Alex Bols**, Deputy Chief Executive, GuildHE and Steering Group for Climate Commission

### Invited Expert Witnesses:

Name	Organisation
Prof Jem Bendell	Professor Sustainability Leadership, University of Cumbria
Alison Green	Director, Scientists Warning
Dr Justine Huxley	CEO, St Ethelburga's
Caroline Hickman	Climate Psychology Alliance

### Background Briefing:

#### What is the need?

If climate change has already passed the point of no return then deeper adaptation might be needed. We need to recognise and discuss how bad it could get and build mechanisms for this. We need to explore climate anxiety and develop safety measures for staff and students.

#### Key questions:

- What responsibility should universities and colleges have in introducing concepts of deep adaptation to their students?
- How best might they do this and what support might be needed?
- How do we build resilience within students, both physical and psychological?

#### Suggested solutions:

- Toolkit for Universities and Colleges on Deep Adaptation, including an "off-the-rack" discussion outline on how bad it could get and the need for deep adaptation and how institutions can respond. This

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should include outlines to enable discussions amongst groups of students, staff, senior management teams and board of governors. This could include outlines for an hour-long discussion, half-day or full-day session. There could also be some challenging reflective questions to consider.

## Key Reading:

- Blog on Deep Adaptation, Professor Jem Bendall <https://jembendell.com/2018/07/26/the-study-on-collapse-they-thought-you-should-not-read-yet/>
- Deep Adaptation: A Map for Navigating Climate Tragedy. Professor Jem Bendall - <http://www.lifeworth.com/deepadaptation.pdf>
- Video "This civilisation is finished: So what is to be done?" Rupert Read - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzCxFPzd00Y>

## Key Expert Witness – Biographies:

### Caroline Hickman, Climate Psychology Alliance (CPA)

Psychotherapist, therapeutic social worker & homeopath. Currently researching children/young people's relationships with nature & climate change and interested in exploring therapeutic responses to climate change trauma. She is leading on CPA therapeutic outreach.

### Jem Bendell, Professor of Sustainability Leadership and Founder of the Institute for Leadership & Sustainability, University of Cumbria

Jem Bendell is a Professor of Sustainability Leadership and Founder of the Institute for Leadership and Sustainability ([www.iflas.info](http://www.iflas.info)) at the University of Cumbria in the UK, which co-delivers a sustainability-themed MBA programme with over 2000 students online from around 100 countries, with the Department of BLPSS and the Robert Kennedy College.

Jem provides strategy, leadership and communications support for chief executives in business, politics and civil society. Previously with the United Nations, he has since served on the boards of international investment funds and small charities.

In 2012, the World Economic Forum appointed him a Young Global Leader for his work on sustainability.

With over 20 years of experience in promoting innovative action for sustainable development, Professor Bendell has written over 100 publications on related topics, including five books. In 2013 Jem was dubbed "Professor Bitcoin" in the media for his explanation of the importance of digital currency when the University of Cumbria became the world's first public university to accept it for payment of fees.

He is a regular commentator on current affairs through his articles in national newspapers and websites.

### Alison Green, Director, Scientists Warning

Alison Green is a former Pro Vice-Chancellor (Arden University) and Dean (Open University) who at the end of 2018 traded academia for activism. She is a cognitive psychologist and expert on human

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learning and thinking. Currently National Director (UK) of Scientists Warning.  
([www.scientistswarning.org](http://www.scientistswarning.org))

She is also known for garnering academic support for Extinction Rebellion from its inception. See:  
'Facts about our ecological crisis are incontrovertible. We must take action.'  
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/oct/26/facts-about-our-ecological-crisis-are-incontrovertible-we-must-take-action>

Alison co-edited the hugely popular Extinction Rebellion book 'This is not a Drill'. She went on to gather support from the international community with 'Act now to prevent an environmental catastrophe' - <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/dec/09/act-now-to-prevent-an-environmental-catastrophe>. Alison has co-authored with scientists Michael Mann and Katherine Hayhoe a widely cited paper supporting School Climate Strikes <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/364/6436/139.2> published in the journal science. Most recently, she authored a letter calling for action from the academic community, which was signed by over 1,000 academics and scientists, and published in the Times Higher Education Supplement <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/scholars-want-sabbaticals-and-placements-fight-climate-change>. Alison is a committed activist, speaker and writer.

## **Dr Justine Huxley, CEO, St Ethelburga's**

Justine is the CEO of St Ethelburga's & leads on vision, strategy and programme innovation. Her focus is on growing resilience for social & ecological collapse, whilst holding a long-term vision for a just, sustainable and spiritually meaningful world. St Ethelburga's has for 2 years been delivering intensive residential trainings for community leaders on deep adaptation and repurposing for climate collapse. Her first book, Generation Y, Spirituality & Social Change is about young adults living a radical new vision of faith and action. She has a Ph.D in psychology and previously worked on the trading floor of a global investment bank.