



# Role of small cities in progressing action on climate change

Dr Alina Congreve

# Public attitudes

- While 93% of the public think climate change is happening
- Only 36% think it is caused mainly by human activity
- Only 25% are very or extremely worried about it

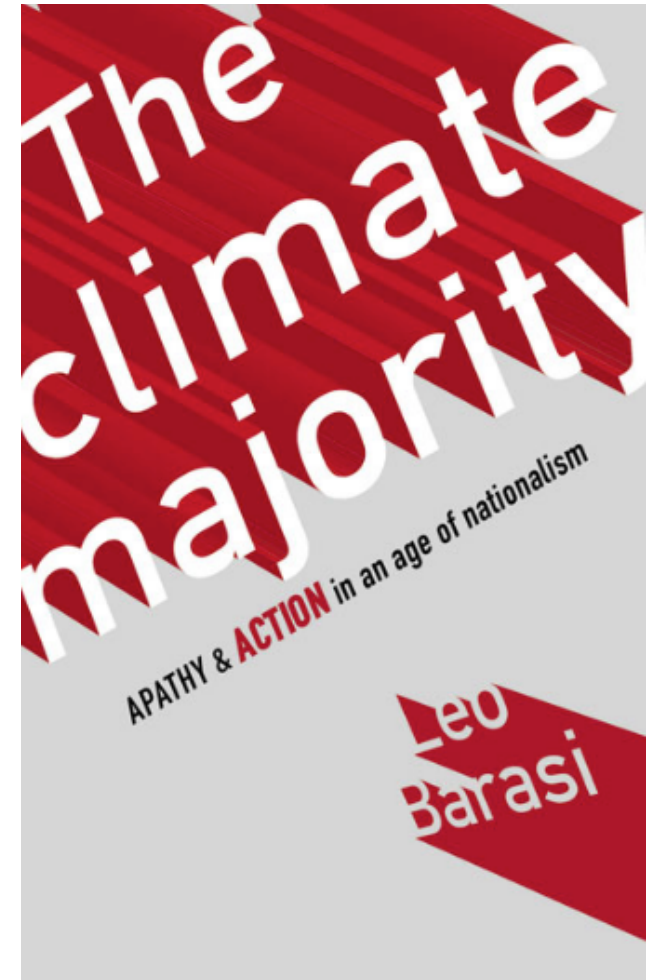
(NATCEN, April 2018)



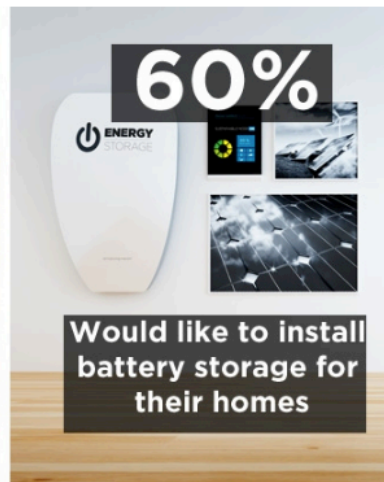
Polling by Yougov for Client Earth  
20 August 2018

# Public attitudes and climate change

- Problem isn't climate denial but climate apathy
- Different from efforts to stop CFCs or lead in petrol
- Psychologists note reasons why most people avoid it
- Problem seems distant
- Impacts mostly in other places
- It will mostly happen in the future



# Attitudes shifted by extreme weather



YouGov and Client Earth  
August 2018

# Technical solutions – Climate KIC



POWERVAULT

## Introducing Powervault G200

Store your energy

- 6 kWh Store up to 6kWh of usable energy
- Lead Acid or Lithium-ion battery technologies
- Emergency power socket as standard
- Economy 7 compatibility as standard



Wikihouse

# National inertia

- Focus of many NGOs to try and change national government policy
- With Brexit and aftermath progress is unlikely
- Key role for cities working with progressive business groups and community groups



# Operationalise green triangle

- Space and support for new green ideas to develop
- Opportunities for researchers and students to take forward ideas
- Keeping talent (and money) in the county
- Provide innovative products and services to larger organisations
- Underrepresentation in start-up support in property and construction
- Have creative spaces already in Herts



Ferners Building Letchworth  
17 studios, flexible meeting space  
Specialist equipment

# Green business pledges – Manchester and Bristol

- **Manchester** – companies publically commit to actions they select
- Upgrade equipment, reduce waste, turning off office lights
- In 2018 focus on single use plastics in 43 hospitality businesses
- Opportunities for engagement with smaller businesses
- **Bristol** – West of England Carbon Challenge
- Businesses take a pledge to reduce emissions by 10% over four years
- Focus on networking benefits and cost savings – more appealing than low carbon
- Award that can be used in branding and marketing



# Energy and buildings

- Trust advice on retrofit from people like you – Green Doors
- Community energy projects – raising funds through community share offers
- Oxford low carbon hub – 38 installations with 4.2 GWH per year
- In Herts GUCE and HEN – St Albans next?
- Council to set planning framework that goes beyond Building Regulations



GUCE – King's Langley

# Narratives framing positive vision of a low-carbon future

People filter information on climate change based on existing cultural and political viewpoints

Rather than fixing 'gaps' in knowledge – focus on attitudes and values that drive behaviour traits

Lack of tangible examples and narratives about what it would be like to live in a low carbon world

- Investment, wealth and cost
- Maintaining independence and freedom of choice
- Visualising the future – possible future and range of alternatives
- Impact of doing nothing
- Changes that are happening anyway
- Quality of life, safe, clean world

# Further reading!

Energy Research & Social Science 31 (2017) 295–302

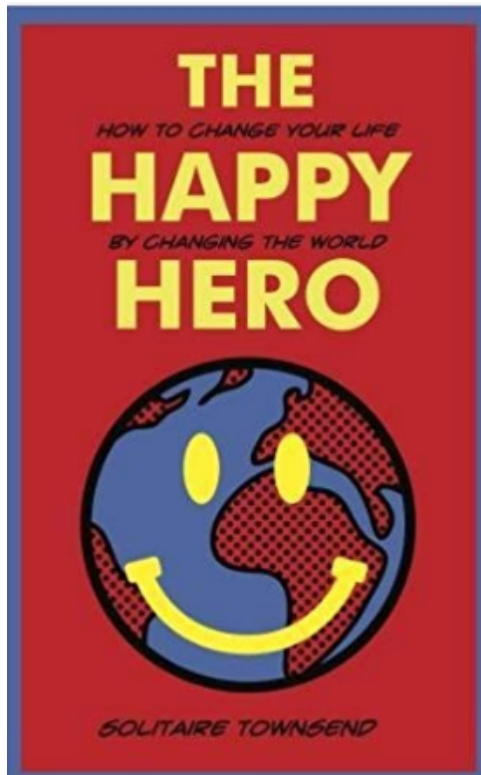


ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

Energy Research & Social Science

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/erss](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/erss)



Original research article

Informing decision making on climate change and low carbon futures:  
Framing narratives around the United Kingdom's fifth carbon budget

Candice Howarth\*

*University of Surrey, Guildford, UK*

