

BLACKPOOL CLIMATE CO-RESEARCH REPORT

By Tarpey, Rhodes, Lindley, Erlacher-Downing, Pollock



We would like to thank those who supported us on our research journey!

Big thanks to everyone who took part by filling in a survey or agreeing to be interviewed - it couldn't have happened without you!

ESRC SCDTP for funding Viktoria's PhD,
and her supervisors Prof. Angie Hart, Prof. Julie Doyle and
Dr. Barbara Mezes.

BoingBoing CiC for offering in-kind staff time, the
Resilience Revolution and Blackpool Youth Climate group for
advising on the project and helping with recruitment.

We also want to give particular thanks to:

Caroline Beswick, for offering advice and support on
co-research in practice.

Katy Davies, for doing a fantastic job in creating the
infographics.

Rochelle Morris, for training us in survey design and
supporting the infographics.

We would be excited for you to use our findings but please reference this report:

Tarpey, A., Rhodes, A., Lindley, M., Erlacher-Downing,
V. and Pollock, H. 2022, Blackpool Climate Co-
research Report, Blackpool: BoingBoing CiC.
Available at: www.boingboing.org.uk/climate-co-research-report

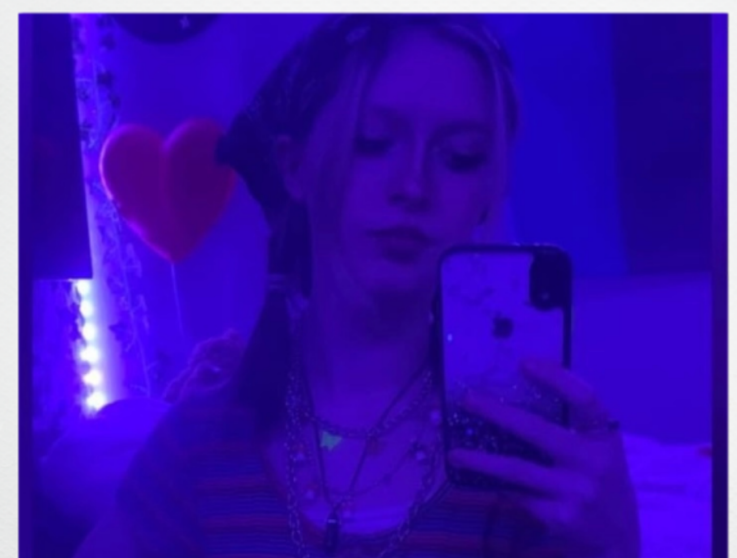
About Us



ALICE TARPEY, 12

Hi I'm Alice I'm 12 and I've always cared about the environment and I believe that as a team we can combat climate change.😊

Hi I'm Annie, I'm home educated, a vegan and love theatre and film. When climate change issues were in the news it made me want to be a part of making the world a better place.



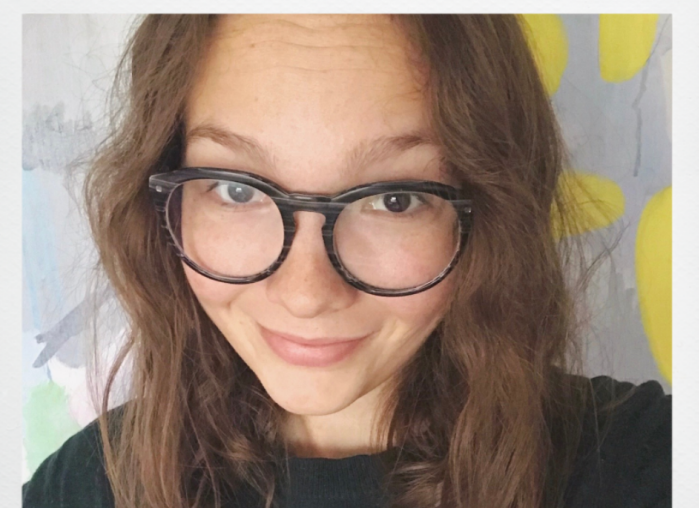
ANNIE RHODES, 14



MAYA LINDLEY, 18

Hi, I'm Maya - I love being involved in different youth environmental groups to implement positive change and next year I will start studying Sustainable Development at University.

I'm Viktoria, I am a PhD researcher and am living off-grid. I love being involved in climate activism of all sorts because I feel as a collective, big issues like climate change feel less overwhelming and together we can make a real difference!



VIKTORIA ERLACHER-DOWNING, 27



HENRY POLLOCK, 34

I'm Henry, I quit my job in automotive design in search of something more meaningful and after a PhD in metaphysics have been lucky enough to end up working with the Blackpool Climate Co-Researchers!



The Project

Young people have increasingly engaged in climate strikes, youth climate groups and climate actions. However, engaging with a big problem like climate change can take a toll on young people's mental health, resulting in increased worry and hopelessness (Ojala 2012).

In fact, little is known about how young people feel about climate change, especially in areas in the UK often left out of research, facing additional adversities, and rarely does research actively work *with* young people to answer research questions.

We wanted to try a different approach to investigate the link between climate change and mental health, so we set out to do research as a team of 3 young people, 1 young PhD researcher and 1 co-production worker.

Our aim was to find out what young people in Blackpool thought and felt about climate change and how the results compare when we asked the same questions to adults in Blackpool. These are the questions we asked:

1. How can we turn our climate concerns into action that makes the government listen?
2. Thinking about the climate, what would your ideal future look like?
3. What is stopping us from achieving this ideal future?
4. What do you think / feel about climate change?
5. Are you aware of any resources that help young people to cope with the climate crisis?
6. How can resources for young people be improved?



What we did

We conducted surveys in October 2021 to find out how young people felt about climate change and whether they were aware of any resources that could help them cope.

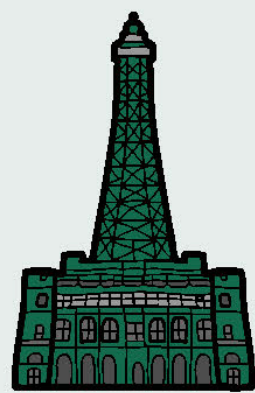
The surveys were initially done online-only but we soon found out that it is much more accessible for young people to fill in a paper version. A benefit of the paper version was that the co-researchers could reach out directly to other young people, and did not rely on a third party, e.g. teachers, to pass on the information.

We also reached out to adults in Blackpool with roles that relate to the environment. We interviewed a secondary school teacher, a member of the youth council of Reserva and a member of the Blackpool Council Climate Emergency task force.

We also reached out multiple times to local politicians, including both Conservative MPs as well as the local Green candidate but did not receive any responses.

We are very concerned that it is so hard for us young people to reach even our local politicians, and are appealing to them to improve their ways of communicating with young people.

WE SURVEYED 3 ADULTS AND
20 YOUNG PEOPLE FROM
BLACKPOOL ABOUT THE
CLIMATE CRISIS.



We asked them to rank some options in the order of most important to least important.

HOW CAN WE TURN
OUR CLIMATE
CONCERNS INTO
ACTION THAT MAKES
THE GOVERNMENT
LISTEN?



ADULT'S RANKING

- 1 Use more platforms to raise awareness
- 2 Engage politicians personally (e.g. ask Boris Johnson what future he wants for his children and for his children's children)
- 3 Regularly write to politicians
- 4 Mass protest/strike (like the schools strike)
- 5 Vote GREEN
- 6 Get some high profile/celebrity support (like what Marcus Rashford did for school meals)



YOUNG PEOPLE'S RANKING

- 1 Engage politicians personally (e.g. ask Boris Johnson what future he wants for his children and for his children's children)
- 2 Get some high profile/celebrity support (like what Marcus Rashford did for school meals)
- 3 Mass protest/strike (like the schools strike)
- 4 Vote GREEN
- 5 Use more platforms to raise awareness
- 6 Regularly write to politicians
- 7 Sign petitions to help climate

AGREE

Adults and young people almost fully agree one of the most important actions is

Engage politicians personally (e.g. ask Boris Johnson what future he wants for his children and for his children's children)

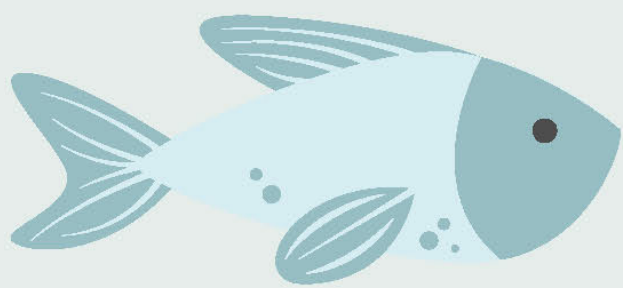
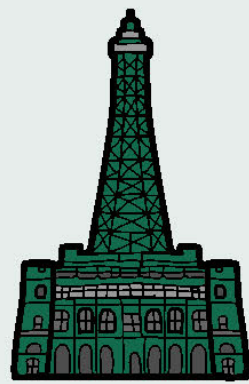
DISAGREE

Adults and young people disagreed on the order of importance for every action

Young people added an action

Sign petitions to help climate

WHAT WOULD
YOUR IDEAL
FUTURE LOOK LIKE?



"**FUN FACT, FISH
DON'T LIKE THE
TASTE OF
PLASTIC
PACKAGING**"

ADULT'S RANKINGS

- 1

Real action from governments
- JOINT
- 1

Renewable energy for net-zero carbon emissions
- 2

Large scale rewilding and protection of species/ecosystems
- 3

Green transport is the norm
- 4

All products are reused or recycled
- 5

Local, seasonal food without plastic packaging
- JOINT
- 5

Equal access to sustainable goods/products



YOUNG PEOPLE'S RANKINGS

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Real action from governments
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Local, seasonal food without plastic packaging

AGREE

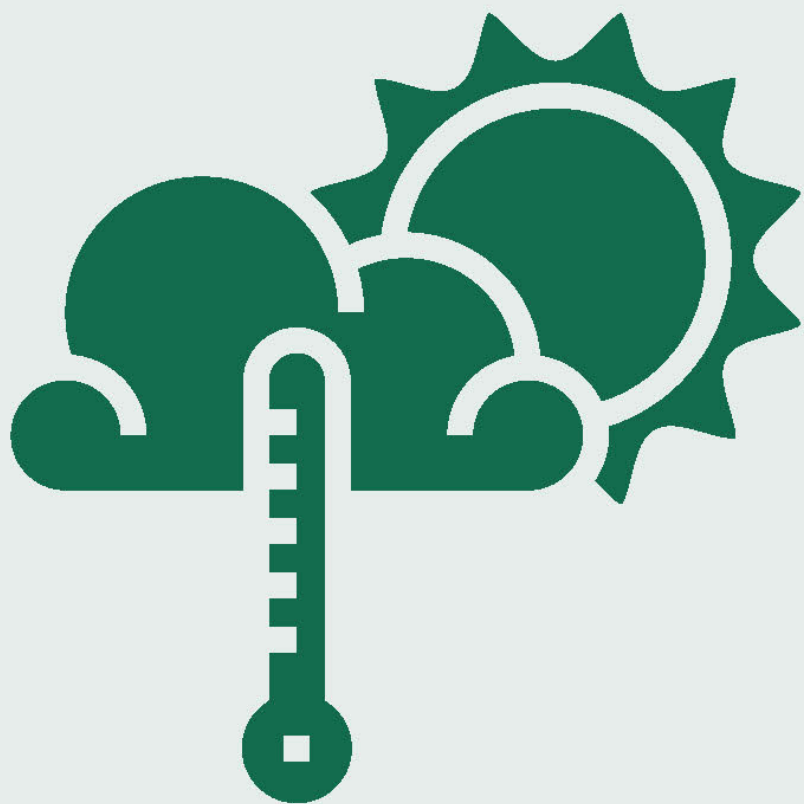
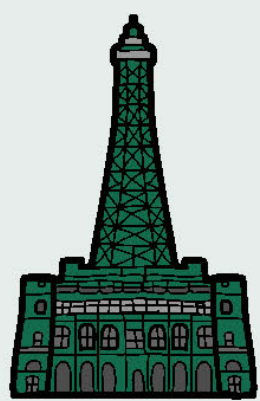
Adults and young people agree the most important actions are

- Real action from governments
- Large scale rewilding and protection of species/ecosystems

DISAGREE

- Equal access to sustainable goods/products
- Green transport is the norm
- Local, seasonal food without plastic packaging
- All products are reused or recycled

WHAT IS STOPPING US FROM ACHIEVING THIS IDEAL FUTURE?



THERE ISN'T MUCH ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT



ADULT'S RANKINGS

- 1 Individuals and organisations enjoy convenience too much
- JOINT
- 1 Not enough coordinated action from governments
- 2 Climate targets aren't tracked/enforced enough
- 3 Individuals and organisations are not given enough motivation to go green
- 4 There are more immediate pressures for the government to focus on - e.g. COVID, the economy etc.
- 5 It's not enough of a priority for voters
- 6 Lack of clarity about climate change

EVERYONE WILL IGNORE UNTIL THE COMPLICATIONS START ARISING
E.G: POLAR CAPS MELT AND SEA LEVELS HAVE RISEN

YOUNG PEOPLE'S RANKINGS

- 1 There are more immediate pressures for the government to focus on - e.g. COVID, the economy etc.
- 2 Not enough coordinated action from governments
- 3 Individuals and organisations are not given enough motivation to go green
- 4 Individuals and organisations enjoy convenience too much
- 5 Climate targets aren't tracked/enforced enough
- 6 It's not enough of a priority for voters
- 7 Lack of clarity about climate change

AGREE

Adults and young people agree the third most important factor is Individuals and organisations are not given enough motivation to go green

Adults and young people loosely agree that it is not voters that are stopping us getting to the ideal future and that there is not a lack of clarity around climate change

DISAGREE

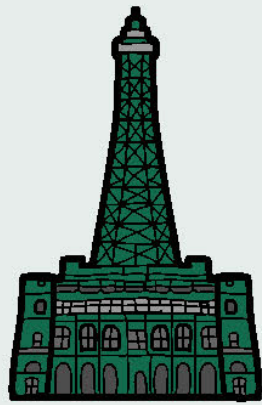
There are more immediate pressures for the government to focus on - e.g. COVID, the economy etc.

Climate targets aren't tracked/enforced enough

Individuals and organisations enjoy convenience too much

Not enough coordinated action from governments

THE ADULTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE
AGREE TOTALLY ABOUT
RANKING ON HOW RESOURCES
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE COULD BE
IMPROVED.



THE ADULTS AND
YOUNG PEOPLE
AGREE ON ALL
STATEMENTS FOR
THIS QUESTION

ADULT'S RANKINGS

- 1 It should be covered as standard in schools
- 2 Young people should be given opportunities to run their schools in an environmentally friendly way.
- 3 There should be more obvious/easily accessible resources for young people to follow a career in climate issues
- 4 They should be more accessible/better advised
- 5 It should be easier for youth groups in different areas to join forces
- 6 Nothing needs to be improved



LACK OF EDUCATION
ABOUT HOW BIG OF AN
ISSUE IT IS.

MOSTLY PEOPLE OLDER
THAN 25 HAVE NOT BEEN
PROPERLY EDUCATED
ABOUT THE CLIMATE.

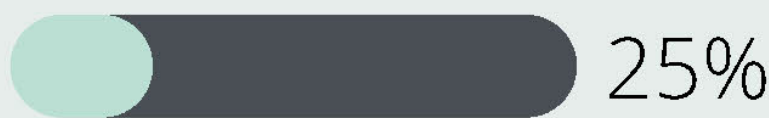
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DO YOU KNOW
ANY RESOURCES
THAT HELP YOUNG
PEOPLE TO COPE
WITH THE
CLIMATE CRISIS?



ADULTS SAID YES



YOUNG PEOPLE SAID YES

WHAT DO THEY THINK AND FEEL ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE?



Our respondents described climate change as a serious, big issue that impacted their future and their children's future. Some were frustrated that governments were not doing enough. They were worried that it will affect everyone but that climate actions don't seem to be taken seriously by adults. Only one respondent, after listing negative feelings, mentioned a positive feeling of being happy that some people are taking action. But all young people mentioned negative feelings about climate change.

Overwhelmed sometimes because there is so much that needs to be done. Sad, because of the destruction that's already been caused. But my final one would be optimistic because we finally now understand how big of a problem it is and that we need to do something about it."
(Scott Butterfield, Blackpool Council)

"I FEEL LET DOWN BY THE GOVERNMENT AND SAD ABOUT LOSS OF HABITAT. ACTION IS NEEDED"
(RESPONDENT, 17)

"IT IS VERY SCARY TO ME. I WORRY THAT IT WILL DRY OUT THE WATER, THEN IF IT DOES, WE NEED TO FIGHT OVER WATER"
(RESPONDENT, 12)

"I feel horror at the gathering pace of the impact of climate change. Intense frustration with the lack of action by governments, organisations and individuals. Hope that there can be a new way of living which puts the environment first in all aspects of life."
(Jon McLeod, teacher)

Summary

Both adults and young people told us that they associate negative feelings with climate change. All were aware of climate change but little was known about resources that could help them when they worried about the issue. More adults than young people knew about resources that could help young people cope with climate change. Resources seem to become more available as you get older.

It also seems that young people have gone out to find out more about climate change and solutions through individual research rather than through a specific group or school.

We are making the following recommendations to our peers:

- Join a local or online youth climate group; we have more power and support when we work together!
- If there is nothing in your area, think of setting up a group yourself.
- Check out the list of resources we have gathered but also ask around to find local ones that are relevant to where you live.
- Get a group of like-minded friends together at school and put pressure on the school head teacher to facilitate a climate group or start a version for your home-ed group.
- Engage with your peers about climate change! Don't underestimate the power of grassroots movements.
- Pressure adults to find and share resources.

If you're intending to conduct a similar sort of project:

- Use your social networks to personally engage with people. Focus on this rather than emails to organisations etc. It works better for recruitment and engagement.
- Beware of digital exclusion if you need to conduct your project remotely. If you can do it in-person, then you could bring your own device to make sure that people have digital access whilst reducing paper waste.

We are making the following recommendations to adults in power:

- Resources: adults need to be aware and share.
- Action: adults need to engage with young people and be transparent about their actions.
- Action: schools should facilitate climate groups as standard, like school sports clubs, and link up with other schools.

Further research needed:

We wonder if there is a hesitancy or specific barriers to keep young people from being involved in systemic climate actions.

List of resources:

National/international:

Story of Stuff www.storyofstuff.org

BTO

Earthwatch

The Mammal Society

The Wildlife Trust

Marine Conservation Society

RSPB

WWF www.wwf.org.uk/thingsyoucando

Green Leaders – National Youth Agency

Blackpool:

Blackpool Youth Climate Group

Junior Park Rangers

Grow Blackpool by Groundwork

<https://www.groundwork.org.uk/projects/grow-blackpool/>

Check with your school/college if they have an eco-group!

<https://www.eco-schools.org.uk>

