

Climate Engagement Report July - December 2025

Contents

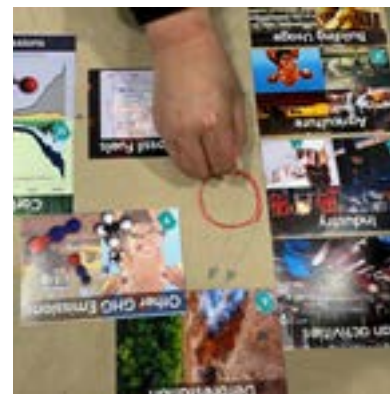
1. Brief.....	1
2. Approach.....	2
3. Budget.....	3
4. Activity and Numbers Engaged.....	3
5. Features and Findings.....	4
6. Participant Journeys and Feedback.....	6
7. Learning and Reflections.....	8
8. Recommendations.....	9



Communiity Climate Fresk in Althams, Nelson

Brief

In Spring 2024, In-Situ was invited by Pendle Borough Council to develop and deliver a community engagement programme around climate change that linked into Pendle at 50. Emphasis on events and informal engagement across Pendle, with a focus on Bradley Ward and on engaging schools and young people, with a steer around single use plastics, recycling and green transport. Additional to this was a climate film project, to support the roll out of the Council's carbon literacy programme. This report focuses on the outcomes from the Climate engagement programme, the climate film project is still underway.



Climate Fresks at In-Situ for peers and partners

Approach

In-Situ opted for an approach that centred listening to where people in Pendle were at in relation to the climate crisis, as opposed to campaigning on a particular issue. In-Situ's way of working prioritises transformational depth engagement with diverse community representatives who, over time, will cascade and embed the learning out to the wider community, supported by existing frameworks within our partnership programmes. We recognised early on that we need to work slowly and responsively with community and partners for meaningful change. This can seem counter-intuitive when faced with the urgency of the issue but is proven to be more sustainable than short bursts of activity. We brought in facilitator Tom Deacon, working with Climate Fresk, Active Hope, Theory-U and who has a wealth of climate education and change facilitation experience with young people, corporations and councils, to co-design and collaborate on the work. We wanted scalability of conversations built into the work, and planned to do this through training people in the community as facilitators and building over 6 months to a mass engagement event, starting by targeting our team, partners and peers, then radiating out. We identified audience groups to work with, including Partners and Peers, Young People, Councillors and Business Leaders and Community (incl. schools and colleges) and designed the programme around reaching them separately but also bringing them together in dialogue.

The Climate Fresk, a tried and tested climate engagement tool being used all around the world, formed the core framework for our approach. This we then built on drawing on other bodies of work to support the dialogue around mental health and community resilience in relation to the climate crisis. Later in the process we invited The People Speak to collaborate on the mass event, bringing their participatory and engaging approach centred on Talkaoke, and building on our collaboration for the interactive community engagement event, Pendle 2050.



Inside Out Pendle, Colne Municipal Hall

Budget

£10,000 Total From Pendle Borough Council (detail of expenditure available on request)

5.4K Tom collaborator fees (Planning and delivery)

2.1K The People Speak collaborator fees -3 people (planning and delivery, Inside Out Pendle)

0.3K (Inside Out Facilitator coach, fee and travel)

1.2K Venue hire

1K Catering

This agreed budget formed the basis of our approach, and was supplemented by the following in kind support (estimated figures)

8.5K In kind from In-Situ, Arts Council England

4K (est 40 days @126 (org day rate) June – December)

2K 16 days @126 Delivery time (Events hosting, event roles and Fresk and Talkaokes)

1K 8 days @ 126 engagement with schools and community groups

1.5K additional costs (collaborator fees and materials)

2K Volunteer hours - facilitators (10 x 7hrs for the event, plus 7 x 6hrs for the training).

1K In-kind contributions for time and travel from Let's Go Zero, Climate Fresk Association, Silent Night and Super Slow Way).

What we did

4x Climate Fresk events in Brierfield and Nelson (Jun/Sep/Oct) for young people, community, culture and youth workers, Councillors and business leaders;

2x Climate Fresk Facilitator training events (Oct/Nov);

3x Street based Climate Fresk quizzes and conversations in Nelson and Barnoldswick town centres (Jul/Aug);

4x Talkaoke conversations on themes: Food, Housing, Transport and Consumption (Oct);

1x team development session for partners to inform policy (Aug);

1x Mass engagement event at Colne Municipal Hall - Inside-Out Pendle (November);

Updated EWG and online audiences with 1 x short film outlining our approach (Aug);

Film and photography documentation of Inside-Out Pendle (Nov/Dec).

Numbers engaged

- Total number of individuals engaged: 129
- Number of Bradley residents engaged: 72
- Total young people engaged (age 14-25): 77 / 60% of total
- Total number of event participants (shows repeat participation of individuals)
- Estimated direct engagements as part of street based work: 100
- Schools and Colleges engaged: Park High, Nelson & Colne College, Marsden Heights, Pendle Vale
- Total in Pendle now qualified as Climate Fresk facilitators: 10
- Total attendees at Inside Out Pendle: 102
- Proportion who live and work in Nelson at Inside-Out Pendle: 76%

A note on numbers: In-Situ's proven engagement process is accumulative over time and initially engages relatively low numbers for deep impact. In this first stage of the work, the emphasis was on creating 'hubs' within the local community through public education sessions, facilitator training and targeted Talkaoke conversations revealing how best to reach specific community groups. As we develop the work in 2025, with more action research and more public realm and online sharing, we expect to see these figures grow exponentially and will be seeking ways to monitor this.

Features of this approach

Frameworks

- Seeing this work as the first step in a longer process that recognises the need for slow, meaningful, transformational engagement over targeting large numbers through communications campaigns;
- Depth engagement with initially small numbers that, through training, conversation and identifying opportunities accumulates over time – the longitudinal results of which can be shown further into the process;
- Using the globally recognised Climate Fresk tool, with its key strength in communicating the climate science, as the foundational framework for climate engagement;
- Adapting this tool to the needs of the community and to reflect the shared values and ideas of collaborators, overlaying thinking and frameworks from 'Active Hope';
- Underpinning the scientific message of the Climate Fresk with an enhanced look at intersecting issues of social justice at a global and local level. Using the carbon map research, Oxfam carbon inequality research, and Index of Multiple Deprivation mapping from Gov.uk as tools/frameworks to do this;
- Exploring giving emphasis to climate emotions in climate engagement, drawing on a 'Climate Emotions Wheel' framework from the Climate Mental Health Network;
- Informing our work through the wider thinking of the Climate Psychology Alliance and Theory U;
- Valuing open dialogue across difference as a key part of the process, using the Talkaoke methodology.

Dialogue

- Creating spaces for intergenerational dialogue about the climate crisis; the emotions it evokes, and how this can lead to sustained collective action;
- Creating space for intercultural dialogue and sharing around the climate crisis;
- Inviting people to connect and share how they feel enabling deeper engagement with the issue, and linking it to wellbeing and mental health.



Inside Out Pendle,
Colne Municipal Hall

Efficacy

- Enabling people to see and explore their agency, through framing a collective response that recognises the intersectionality of the many issues we face;
- Emphasis on ways to contribute to systemic change over individual action;
- Engaging people who have local decision-making power as well as 'the community'.
- Open and progressive process
- Time to build, test, plan, reflect and adapt;
- Interdisciplinary collaboration with shared values, across arts, science, governance, psychology, community and industry;
- Finding local allies representing the spectrum of local participants;
- Building momentum through multiple events and trainings leading to a culmination event that invites involvement from all.
- Dovetailing with existing activity and groups and building on existing community relationships (i.e. Building Bridges, This is Nelson, Nelson Food Strategy, Eco Barnoldswick, Lets Go Zero)



Street based Climate Fresk and flag activity at 'Barlick Beach', Barnoldswick

Findings

Views mapped through activities at the start of each Fresk reflect national trends: a spread with the majority pattern of "this is a catastrophic problem" and "not enough is being done about it by leaders" and a more even spread of knowledge of climate science;

- We encountered very few climate skeptics in this process but those we did encounter, and were willing to engage, benefited from being heard and welcomed and subsequently evolved their thinking;
- Young people voiced feeling frustrated with those in positions of power not fully recognising or using their leverage;
- Those in positions of power spoke a lot of wanting to target young people through education, with a subtext of 'because they are the generation to deal with this challenge';
- More education as community is wanted and there is an audience for this;
- Not making assumptions about where young people are at in relation to climate change, or generalising about them as a uniform group;
- Inequality is felt strongly and widely by many of the people we engaged, making it a powerful intersectional point to connect with climate change;
- Questions raised about how people can make better choices if these aren't available to them where they live? And about who has the most leverage locally to make a difference;
- People initially responded more to a local rather than a global angle but could then join the dots.

Key journeys

As this approach is based in giving space to the critical emotional response of the community to the climate crisis, the 'measurable outcomes' remain to be seen. This is a deeper and slower approach to climate action, paying attention to building connection and resilience that will enable sustained, considered, and collective action in the long term.

Below are some examples of how this slow and deep approach to climate action has played out so far for some of those that have engaged with the Climate Lab Pendle work.

X works in the Pendle community. They understood little about climate change and climate science. They attended 2 Fresks and trained as a facilitator. They have worked with the Climate Fresk resource pack and facilitated a Fresk at Inside-Out Pendle. They now plan to role the Fresk out on their community-based projects with immediate effect.

X is a Councillor and works in industry. They shared that they were strongly skeptical about climate change, but that attending a Climate Fresk had opened their eyes to the complexity of the problem and shifted their thinking.

X is a climate activist who has been working on climate for a long time. They are involved with the Council and local business. Having attended multiple events they have learnt more of the complexity and now feel they are connecting into something bigger and have connected with others as well as training as a Fresk facilitator.

X is a young person with barriers to employment, concerned about climate change and inequality. Through attending Fresks and participating in the filmed conversations, they have found a place to voice their concerns and share ideas and feel that these will be heard by people in decision-making roles.

X is a teacher. They have attended a Fresk event and then brought a group of Y9 students to Inside-Out Pendle. They would like to see more of these kind of events taking place, their students really benefitted from coming along and they feel encouraged by this work taking place in Pendle.



Exploring using Talkaoke as part of the Climate Fresk, Althams, Nelson

Feedback

"A great event. Very useful in helping people think out environment issues in the future"

"A brilliant multi-cultural, multi-generational event. Hard topics. Fun and engaging. Positive ending."

"Lovely event, gained insight into issues you wouldn't normally talk about. Interesting to hear other people's communities opinions and interests."

"I was buzzing for days afterwards, stepping into a new fresh space."

"Absolutely amazing session. Presented in a beautiful way. Loved the unique way of how conversations flowed, made us think and put us in different situations. Creativity is beyond words."

"Thank you for the invitation, the young people really enjoyed their day. We got some great feedback from the children, they learnt a lot and had a lot to discuss. If you are looking to deliver this on a larger scale, we would love to be part of it again whether this is in school or out of school, either way we would really appreciate the opportunity to do it again."

"Really good to see local Councillors and businesses coming together to think about collective action around both decarbonisation and energy reduction"

"Thank you for running the event which showed just how complex the climate crisis is"

"I did an evening Fresk with my colleagues and I learnt a great deal about the interconnectedness of the various processes and cumulatively they are working together to accelerate climate change. Even a complete sceptic ended the evening a changed man at the session I attended."

"This is what it feels like to emerge something collectively"

Reflections and Learning

In-Situ opted to take an experimental and collaborative approach, based on education, listening and dialogue and combining proven tools and methods. We found that this really paid off in engaging people over a long period, building relationships, deepening knowledge, getting representative buy-in and moving people from scepticism or not being engaged with climate change to feeling heard. Our approach helped us explore and better understand how to reframe 'negative' climate emotions in a way that brings forward empowerment to take action and knowledgeably share the urgency of the climate crisis with others. We also saw the benefit of bringing different generations and cultures together to engage with the complexity of the issues.

Below are some of our reflections and learnings

- When people feel 'heard' they are more likely to listen and be open to other perspectives;
- Climate psychology approach, (giving space for climate emotions) was well received by all groups we worked with;
- Collaborating in this way, to build trusting relationships, take time. The pay-off for this time is the innovative and experimental new ways of doing and seeing things relating to this complex and multifaceted issue;
- Having Althams as an accessible and visible Nelson town centre base has offered huge value to this work. It provided both a versatile setting for workshops, training and filming, while simultaneously acting as a highly visible showcasing space for this work;
- Diversity of leadership in Climate engagement spaces is essential to engage the whole community. This work was part of trying to address the current imbalance of voices on Climate;
- Talkaoke enhanced and extended the discussion and reflection part of the Climate Fresk workshops and Inside-Out Pendle event;
- The use of participatory tools such as Talkaoke offer an inclusive space for the community to be and feel heard on important topics and to learn from others – we see this as an important part of any informed decision making at a Borough level, e.g. citizens assemblies;
- The contribution of The People Speak at Inside-Out Pendle helped make the science and more serious aspects of the Climate Fresk feel fun and engaging and opened up more space for young people's voices to be heard in the room;
- Building momentum over 6 months built buy-in and commitment to the process so that we now have an identified network of Pendle people to take the work forward. The potential scalability of the Climate Fresk model has been enabled through this commitment of people;
- People valued space to talk, learn, share, listen and be heard as a community through intergenerational dialogue;
- A lot of people volunteered time to do this in the community context;
- To deliver on this scale involved recruiting people to support from outside of Pendle. This brought in valuable skill sets and experience to share from other settings across the North and beyond.
- The funding allocated to the work covered about 50% of the costs to do the programme at this scale and with this impact (not including community volunteer hours).



Climate Fresks in Nelson

Recommendations

Given the non-recurrent nature of the funding, the engagement programme was limited to a short period. It's been a valuable exercise to pilot different engagement techniques and the CEWG now needs to consider if and how it would like to take forward next steps for this project.

This programme has provided a platform for community engagement on climate change. In-Situ now propose the following to the CEWG.

Continue building an informed base of Pendle residents that can feed knowledgeably into the Council's Climate Action Planning process, with a wider lens of social justice and climate psychology based in a critical awareness of the complexity of causes and effects of climate change:

- Do this through building on the foundations laid in this initial 2024 phase of Climate Lab Pendle;
- Further developing the Climate Fresk community locally, upskilling in climate conversation frameworks (like Britain Talks Climate);
- Continued exploration of key climate psychology methods to support healthy and sustained engagement.
- Participate in continued conversations with a core group through:
 - TIN People's Assemblies
 - Thinking Out Loud
- Offer opportunities for Pendle residents to critically engage in methodologies of change and resilience
- Prioritise and enable collectivism and collaboration to respond to the complexity of the climate issue
- Develop skills within the community for holding the range of difficult conversations that are integral to addressing the climate challenge
- Continue the collaboration with Tom Deacon as a critical friend, developing thinking and action around climate engagement and action in Pendle.



Getting Pendle Climate Ready



TIN young people's Climate Fresk, 3B Systems, Nelson

For this to happen we need Pendle Borough Council to:

Be open to dialogue

- Acknowledging that deeper, more focused climate engagement has a higher time and resource cost per person reached, but deeper and more sustained longitudinal impact;
- Recognising the need for ongoing dialogue as a basis for impactful climate engagement across diverse communities in Pendle;
- Commitment to ongoing regular dialogue with In-Situ to embed this work in Nelson and across Pendle, starting with Victor and Gill meeting in January;
- Recognition of social justice as a key route into climate engagement for communities in Pendle;
- Reframing of Pendle Borough Council climate change messaging that centres inequality and social justice;
- Ensuring that workforce engagement and training is built around messaging that addresses inequality at the heart of climate action;
- Prioritising work that enables collective action over individual action.

Provide funding

- Commit to ongoing funding for community engagement to work with this scalable model within existing frameworks such as This is Nelson and educational settings
- This would include the ongoing delivery of Climate Fresk training and facilitation to support the roll-out of climate education across the Borough

Take visible leadership

- Working group and Councillors to all commit to attending Climate Fresks to build informed and systemic thinking as a foundation for informed climate action;
- CEWG to commit to involving the voice of the community in decision making through participatory methods;
- Ensuring diversity of Climate leadership reflecting the diversity of the community and building these checks into all future climate work;
- Build a working relationship with Let's Go Zero, enabling opportunities for schools - In-Situ to initiate;
- Commitment to explore and recognise barriers to climate action, directing funding toward enabling collective participation through organisations with existing frameworks (such as the This is Nelson People's Assembly and other engagement programmes by In-Situ and Building Bridges for example) for community engagement and change.



Getting Pendle Climate Ready



Community Climate Fresk in Althams, Nelson



Climate Fresk cards showing human activities and carbon impacts

Written by Anna Taylor (Co-Director and Critical Engagement at In-Situ)
and Tom Deacon (Climate Educator and Facilitator)
December 2024

Inside Out Pendle images: Graham Kay
All other images: Anna Taylor

In-Situ is a not for profit organisation working at the intersection of art and community engagement. In-Situ was established in 2012 and since 2018 has been supported through Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO). We are a small, part time team working in a community embedded context in Brierfield and Nelson, working in partnership with local organisations, education providers and agencies in Pendle. We are the lead partner on This is Nelson, the community and culture strand of the Nelson Town Deal programme.

in-situ.org.uk

Further resources

Climate Fresk: climatefresk.org/world

Talkaoke and The People Speak: thepeoplespeak.org.uk

Climate Resources (collated by Tom Deacon): <https://padlet.com/climatecourage/resources-for-climate-action-5fgzzfafvtf5g3ho>