

# Scottish Climate Justice Movement Assembly

Event report, 28 May 2022



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## Welcome

*The dust is settling after COP26 and the Scottish climate movement is starting to pick up momentum again. We learned from COP26 that we are stronger when we work together, building links between interconnected issues, learning from one another, and using a diversity of tactics.*

*We are currently faced with continued overlapping crises - the COVID-19 pandemic, huge rises in the cost of living and rapidly escalating climate change. In order to make what we do the most effective and powerful it can be in the face of such huge challenges, it's important that we have a solid understanding of strategy and plenty of skills in our collective toolbelt to create effective change.*

*On 28 May, 50+ folks from different groups and backgrounds came together in Glasgow to explore how we build collective power for a stronger and more strategic Scottish climate movement. This event continued some of the conversations on movement strategy we started at our Climate Justice Gathering in December, and online Movement Assembly in February. You can find a report of the day here.*

## The Organising Team

This event was organised in partnership by:

- [Young Friends of the Earth Scotland](#) is a grassroots network of young people (aged 16-30), from across Scotland, working collectively for social and climate justice. [crandall@foe.scot](mailto:crandall@foe.scot)
- [Friends of the Earth Scotland](#) is Scotland's leading environmental campaigning organisation, working for environmental & climate justice and campaigning for the planet and its people. [kwhitaker@foe.scot](mailto:kwhitaker@foe.scot)
- [Tipping Point UK](#) - Tipping Point UK is a movement building organisation which provides behind the scenes support to the grassroots climate justice movement in the UK, specifically on Stop Cambo, Defund Climate Chaos and Care & Repair. [rona@tippingpointuk.org](mailto:rona@tippingpointuk.org)
- [MORE](#) - migrant led grassroots organisation campaigning for the asylum seeking people right to employment education, decent housing and dignity. [migrantempowerment@protonmail.com](mailto:migrantempowerment@protonmail.com)
- [Tripod: Training for Creative Social Action](#) - Tripod is a worker-owned co-operative, as a collective of facilitators and trainers, we empower communities and movements to work in better alignment and more strategically towards their goals. [olga@tripodtraining.org](mailto:olga@tripodtraining.org)

## Movement Assembly Aims

### Continue Movement Mapping and Collective Strategising

- What is already planned this year in terms of action for climate justice?
- Where are the gaps?
- How can we support and complement each other?
- On what campaigns or targets is (more) joint action possible?

### Foster an awareness of movement ecology and feeling of interdependence between different parts of the movement

- In what ways do we rely on other parts of the movement?
- How can thinking with movement ecology in mind help us appreciate groups doing different work to our own?
- How can different tactics and theories of change be used to compliment each other?

### Create space for people to make new connections

- Allow space for individuals to find a group or campaign to get involved in if they're new to the movement
- Build connections between different groups and campaigns, where it would be a mutually beneficial connection
- Participants leave feeling inspired and empowered

Find an outline of the agenda [here](#)



Image description: flipchart with agenda items of the event.

## Movement Ecology & Mapping

Slides [here](#).

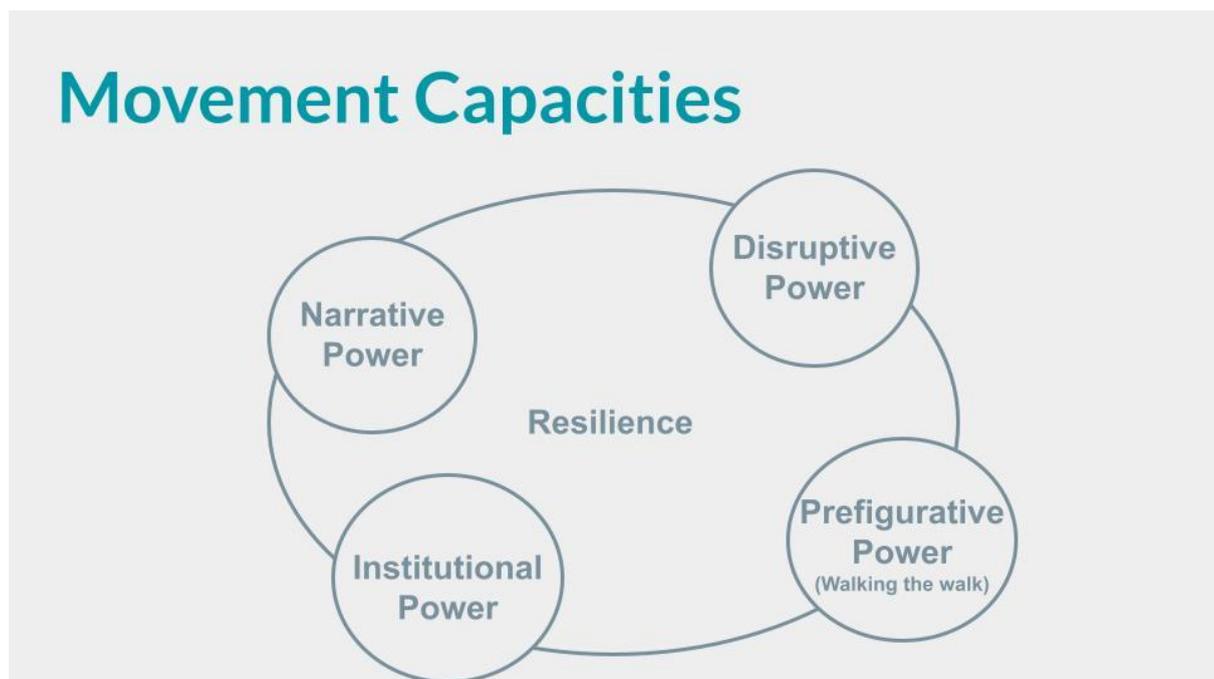
*“An ecosystem isn’t just a list of living things; it’s the set of relationships \*between\* those living things - the squirrel lives \*in\* the tree, the bee \*pollinates\* the flower... a given social movement isn’t a list of organisations, or campaigns, or even individuals; it’s the set of relationships \*between\* organisations, campaigns, individuals etc.” - Farhad Ebrahimi*

Movements can be seen as ecologies, they’re more than the sum of its part. This means we don’t have to do anything on our own, but also that what one group does affects the rest. We don’t need to agree with each other: most movements are composed of groups and individuals with a diversity of approaches/tactics and ideas about how change happens. Ecologies thrive on diversity & mutualism. If we see ourselves as part of an ecology, we can focus on our unique role and contribution to the struggle for climate justice while strategically collaborating with others and building our collective power to effect change.

## Movement capacities

The ‘movement capacities’ framework is one way to map out a movement ecology. It’s based on the book *Twitter and Tear Gas* by Zeynep Tufekci and further adapted by the ULEX training centre.

The strength of a social movement lies in its capacity to make change - that it has, and that it signals it has to those in power. A strong movement needs a range of powers or capacities, all complementing each other. Many organisations are building some of these capacities but no one group will do all of it, so we need each other!



## Small group discussion notes

### Questions

- How do we maximize our X (**narrative, disruptive, institutional, prefigurative**) power in our struggle for climate justice in Scotland? What do we need to do / build for this?
- Specific question for **Resilience group**: How do we make our movement more resilient? How do we strengthen structures for collective care, learning, training and mutual support?

Feedback from small groups: **Key interventions** that could strengthen this movement capacity in Scotland.

## Disruptive power

**Scotland rail strikes:  
Scotland facing biggest rail  
strike in modern history as  
workers balloted over  
industrial action this  
summer**

The National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) says Scotland is facing the biggest rail strike in modern history this summer.

**Disruptive  
Power**

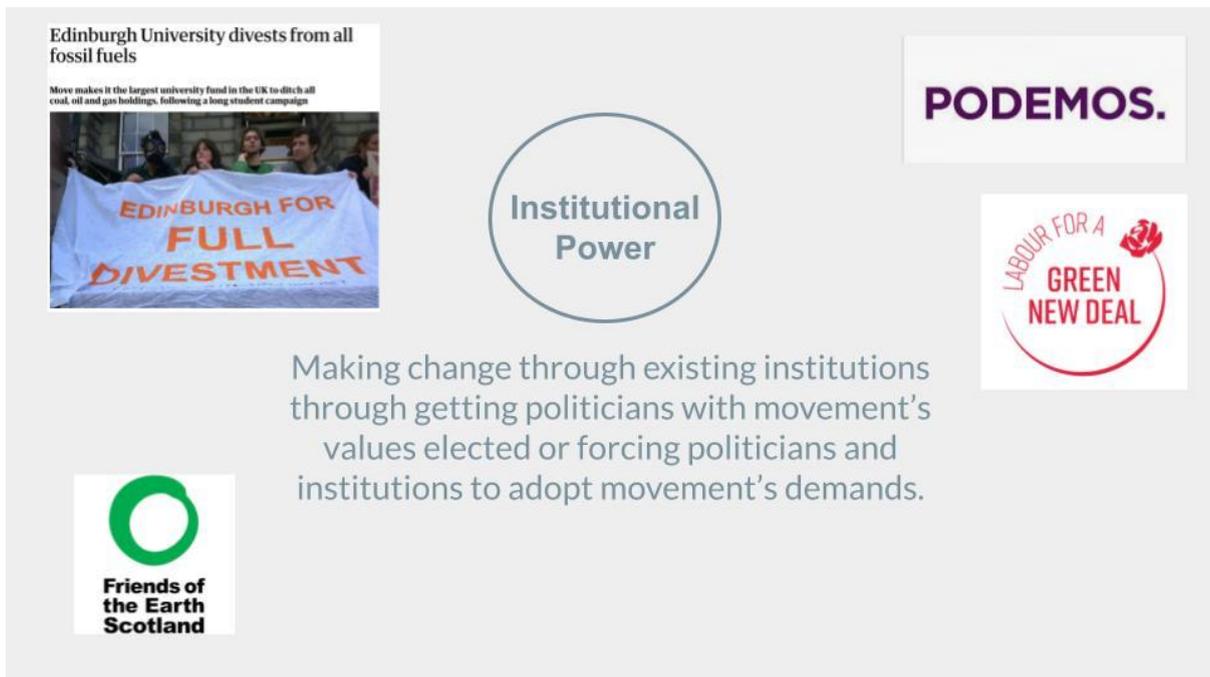


Capacity to disrupt business as usual. A Signal the power we have to existing power holders and leverage that power to force change. Through direct action, boycotts, strikes etc we can create a crises for our opponents.

### Key interventions:

1. Work together to make sure strike actions aren't made illegal, as they are a key power we have.
2. Be very intentional about our actions and be clear about who we're targeting and with what purpose. We also need to build reflection and recuperation in our action planning so that people don't burn out.

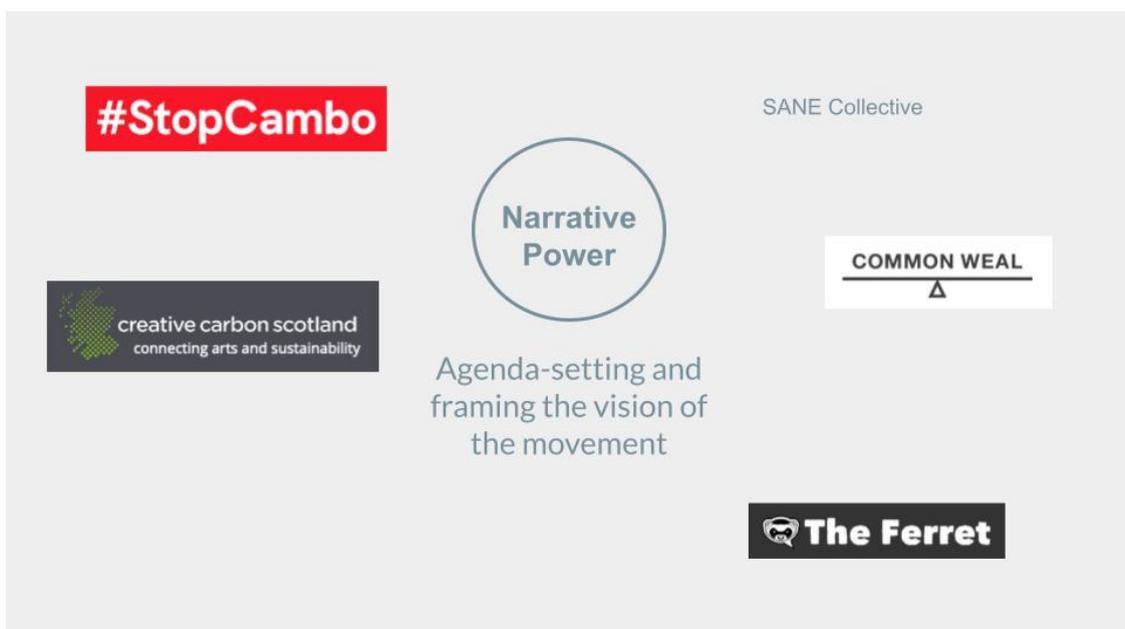
## Institutional power



### Key interventions:

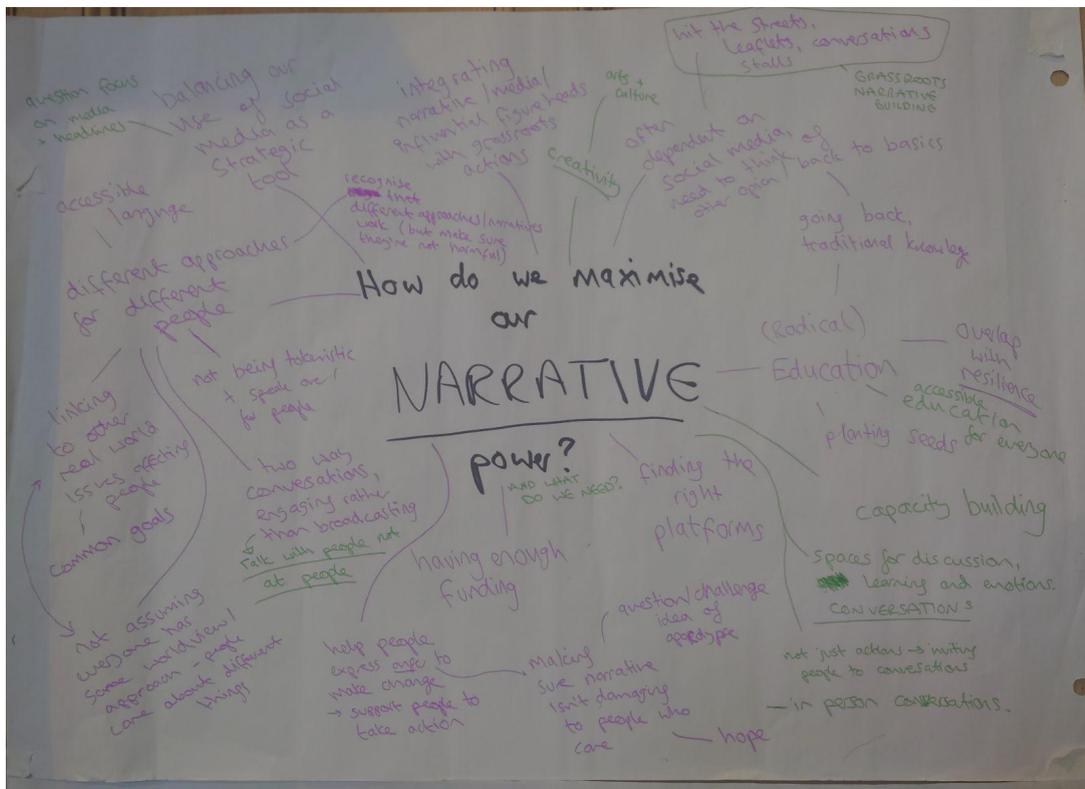
1. Strengthen our unions
2. Hold those councils that declared the climate emergency to account and ensure they take real action
3. Name and shame 'climate criminals'

## Narrative power



## Key intervention:

Talk with people not at people



## Prefigurative power



Community growing projects



Community energy



Doing it ourselves, building alternative economic and social organisations and structures to meet our basic needs in the cracks of or outside of the capitalist system.

Building a sense of confidence that things can be done differently. Often needs institutional power to scale up/actually replace current structures and become more 'mainstream'.

## Key intervention:

Focus on meeting people's material needs while building alternative institutions

## Resilience



**HERBAL**  
unity  
22 180x 31

**Resilience**

Sustaining and nourishing the movement.  
Not a power in itself, but necessary for the movement  
and everyone in it to function well.  
Resisting oppression, collective care, political  
education.

**SCALP**

## Key interventions:

- Promote diversity and intersectionality, build links between the global north and south
- Focus on self-care and strengthening ourselves and our movements.



*Image description: participants of the small group discussion on movement resilience.*

## Collective Timeline

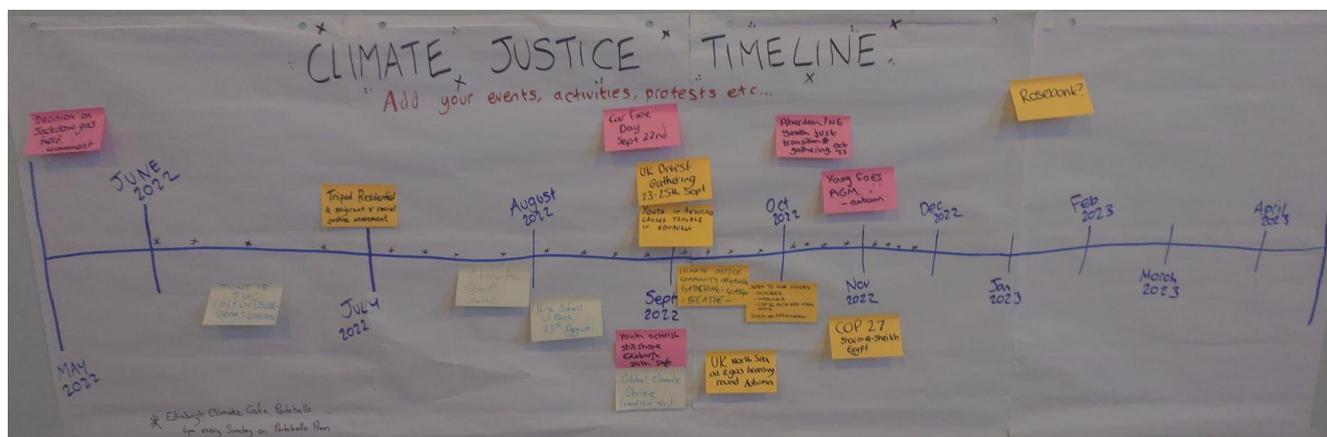


Image description: Collective timeline of actions and events related to climate justice in Scotland for the year ahead, created by participants during the assembly.

For an updated electronic version of this timeline, check out slide 32-34 on [the slides](#) from the February 2022 Movement Assembly.

## Afternoon Strategy Sessions

1. **Linking migrant, racial and climate justice struggles** - Host: MORE
  2. **Tactics: Community organising vs Mobilising** Hosts: Tess & Olly from Breathe
  3. **Networks & Coalitions** - *What organisational 'infrastructure' do we have and need to support the climate justice movement in Scotland?* - Host: Nick from COP26 coalition
  4. **Stopping new fossil fuel infrastructure** - Host: Stop Cambo campaign
  5. **Building & maintaining a volunteer-led group** - Host: Tripod, Olga
  6. **Coalition Campaign to influence the Programme for Gov. 2022** - *immediate mobilisation and action to deliver a set of recommendations for inclusion in the 2022 Programme for Government.* Host: Jennifer Newall
  7. **Collaboration with faith groups** - *How people of faith and people from the civil society movement can work better together to realise (climate) justice in Scotland* - Kleber Machado (Interfaith Glasgow)
  8. **How does change happen? ..and what does that mean for our strategy & tactics** - Gehan Mcleod (Galgael Trust) & Justin Kenrick (Grassroots 2 Global)
  9. **Serve The People project** - Host: Emily Obree
- >> You can find photos of all the flipchart notes [here](#) (Thanks Bryce Goodall!).

## Networks & Coalitions

What organisational 'infrastructure' do we have and need to support the climate justice movement in Scotland? - Host: Nick from [Climate Justice Coalition](#), Gill Davies, [SCCAN](#)

- Important to get clear about what the purpose of each coalition/network is
- Each of us needs to do our community/network mapping in our groups/organisations to avoid duplication of work. This will enable us to find out who we have direct, personal connections with and to build informal networks from that, which can support us with the work we're trying to do. If useful, we can link in with national coalitions like the Climate Justice Coalition, SCCAN or SCCS.

## Linking migrant, racial and climate justice struggles

Host: Yvonne, [MORE](#)

- Difficult to get the message across of how migrant, racial and climate justice are linked, the media has another narrative.
- [Sheku Bayo public inquiry](#) happening now - practical solidarity!
- Next steps: come along to inquiry to show support, take part in rally: 17 June Edinburgh

## Serve the People project

Host: Emily Obree

- [Serve The People project](#)
- Focus on food provision, fuel issues, shelter - inspired by Black Panthers programme
- We need a change of tactics in the climate justice movement, to be more proactive and set the agenda. We need to make our work relevant to those who are suffering because the government is letting us down.
- Contact: [epiphanycakes@protonmail.com](mailto:epiphanycakes@protonmail.com).

## Building & maintaining a volunteer-led group

Host: [Tripod: Training for Creative Social Action](#), Olga

- Important to think about what motivates people to join a group and stay: 'Big 3'. People want to build relationships, make a difference and learn new skills. We often find that people often get involved because they want to make a difference and learn new skills, but it is the relationships that keep them involved over time.
- [Circles of commitment model](#)
- How can we empower people to be more involved and take action?

## How does change happen?

..and what does that mean for our strategy & tactics - Gehan Mcleod ([Galgael Trust](#)) & Justin Kenrick ([Grassroots 2 Global](#))

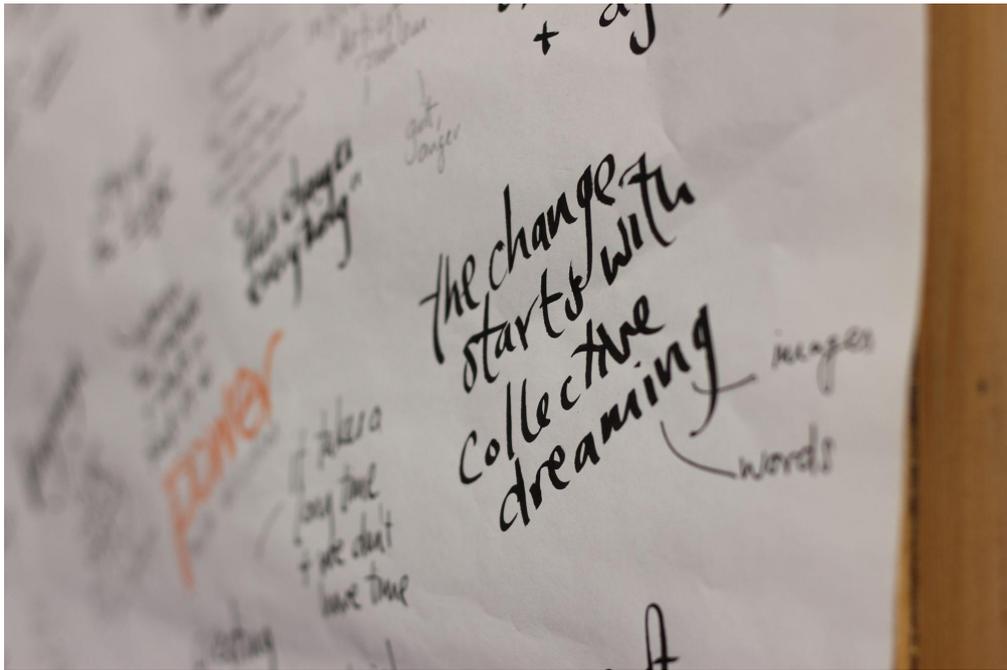


Image description: photo of the flipchart with notes of the 'How does change happen?' session, zoomed in on the sentence 'the change starts with collective dreaming'.

- Build on the learning and legacy from historical movements
- Create space for dreaming/visioning
- Focus on internally 'decolonising' ourselves
- We need to start doing it now!
- Next step: Organise a whole day exploring this question!

### Collaboration with faith groups

How people of faith and people from the civil society movement can work better together to realise (climate) justice in Scotland - Kleber Machado (Interfaith Glasgow)

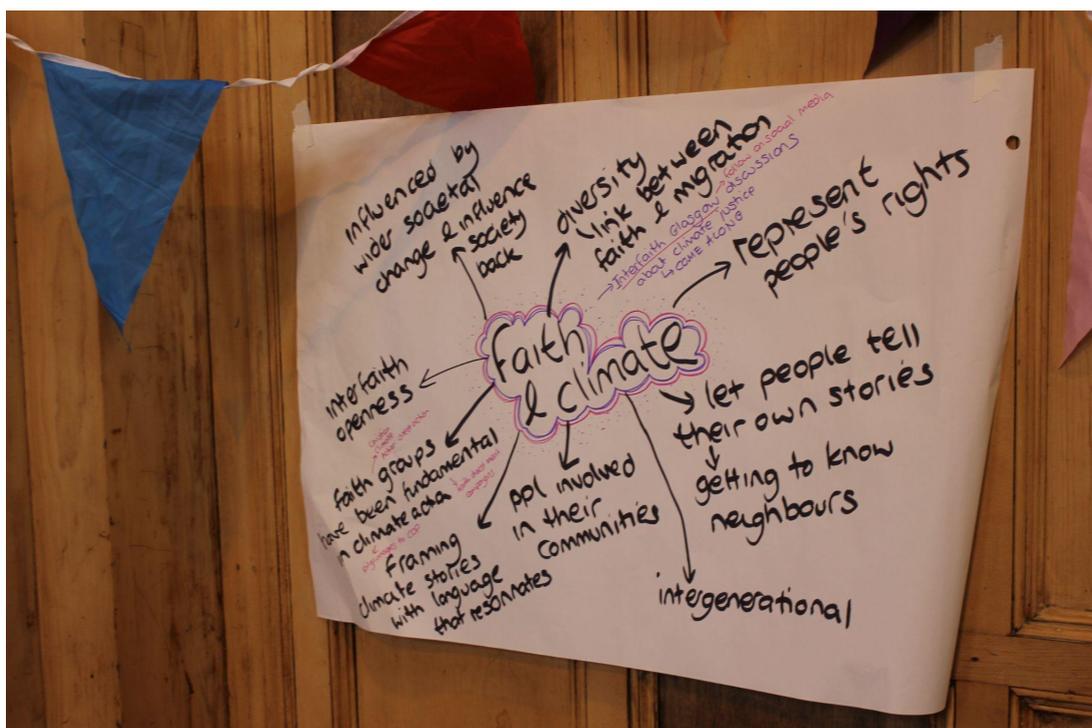


Image description: flipchart with notes of the 'Collaboration with faith groups' session

- Some points highlighted were that Religious communities are not inclined for radical change and tend to maintain the status quo, however, there are religious groups and many people among the different religious communities that are agents of change.
- Regarding climate change, what Interfaith Glasgow tries to do is to empower those who work for climate justice and challenge faith communities to work together to tackle the issue.
- Some points that came out from the discussions are the power of religious language to engage with some people who are not familiarised with the scientific language; the intergenerational communication opportunities among religious communities; and that openness to interfaith dialogue as such helps and enables people to change their perspective about societal issues.
- Next steps: Interfaith Glasgow is hosting online conversations about climate justice - link to follow. In the meantime stay updated with their [newsletter](#).

### Tactics: Community organising & Mobilising

Hosts: Tess & Olly from [Breathe](#)

- Tree model: the relationships we build are our roots, our groups and organisations/movement are the trunk, branches are the campaigns/events/actions, fruits are our wins
- Importance of solidarity: your struggle is our struggle. We need to stand in relationship together, shit is not gonna go away..

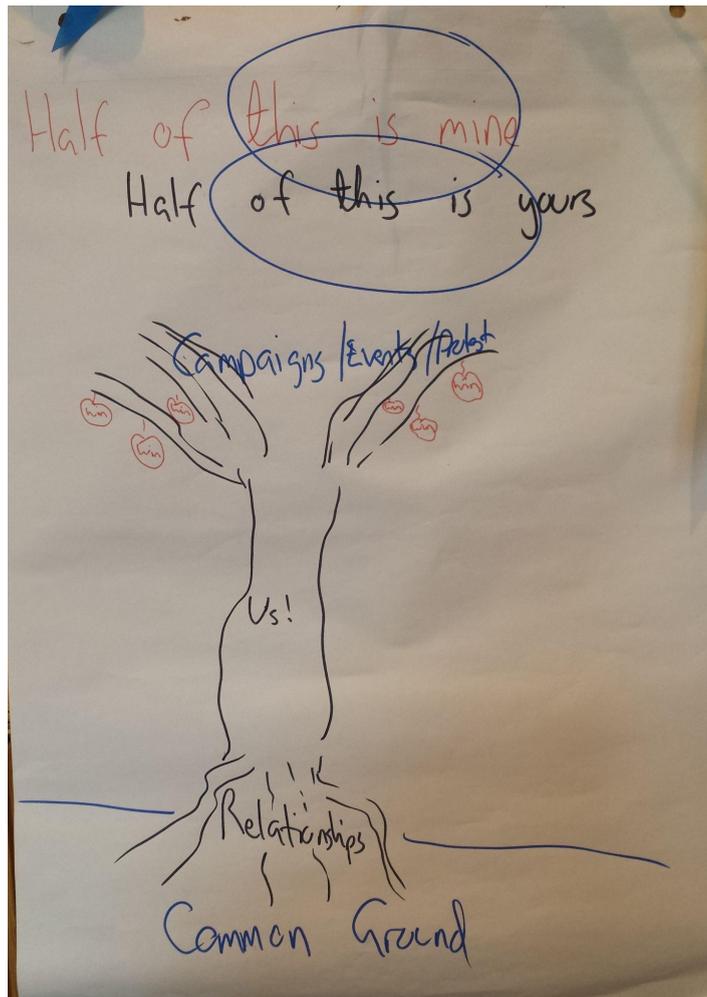


Image description: Tree model used in the session on community organising.

### Stopping new fossil fuel infrastructure

Host: Duncan, [Stop Cambo campaign](#) & Sally, [Divest Strathclyde](#)

- We need to put people who are most affected front and centre of our actions and campaigns. Currently we see mainly performative actions by privileged folks.
- We need to disrupt infrastructure effectively.
- Next steps: get involved with divest strathclyde, divest lothian, #stopjackdaw - join welcome call.

## Groups & organisations represented

### From the RSVP list:

Baile Hoos, STOP HS2, No Evictions Network  
XR Scotland, XRUK, XR Glasgow  
Actions Speak Louder Than Words  
JSO  
Living Rent  
Climate Psychology Alliance  
Serve the people International  
YFOES  
Climate Camp Scotland  
Ethnic Minorities Environment Network  
SCCAN  
Active Inquiry  
Green Party, Greenpeace  
Fridays for future Scotland  
Youth in Resistance  
Red Sunday School  
Shrub Co-op (Edinburgh)  
Common Weal -Our Common Home campaign  
Ecosocialist.scot,  
FoES  
SSP  
Global Justice Now  
Grassroots2Global  
SCCS  
Stop Cambo  
SCALP  
Our Forth Against Unconventional Gas  
FOES Stirling  
Car Free day  
Glasgow Calls Out Polluters  
People's health movement  
Edinburgh Climate Coalition  
Divest Strathclyde  
Get Glasgow Moving  
Antiraid network  
Just stop oil  
SANE Collective  
Divest Parliament  
Breathe  
Common Knowledge Co-op  
Global Shapers

Transition Edinburgh  
Gilded Lili  
BankTrack  
We  
Anti-Racism Education  
Green Dimensions Network (GDN)  
Interfaith Working Group & Interfaith Glasgow  
GalGael, Govan Free State  
Enough Scotland

Many thanks to everyone who came & contributed! See you at the next one!



*Image description: selection of flyers shared by participants of the assembly.*



*Image description: Group photo in solidarity with the Sheku Bayo public inquiry.*



*Image description: Small group discussion during the assembly.*



*Image 1: Small group discussions on movement-building during the assembly.*

*Image 2: Gehan Macleod from Galgael Trust and others at the 'How does change happen' session.*

**Many thanks to our photographers Hannah Ryan (FoES), Bryce Goodall, Pedro Perez & others!**