

# **Minutes of the Cross-Party Group on Climate, Nature and Wellbeing**

Date: 3 November 2025

Time: 17:00 – 18:00

Location: Teams

Chair: Delyth Jewell MS

Secretariat: Dafydd Huw, RCPsych Wales

**In attendance:** Bethan Sayed, Climate Cymru; Bethan Workman, RCPsych Wales; Dafydd Huw, RCPsych Wales; Delun Gibby, Pentre Ifan, Urdd Gobaith Cymru; Delyth Jewell MS, Senedd Cymru; Ryland Doyle, Office of Mike Hedges MS; Dr Jennifer Rudd, Swansea University; Dr Tania Bugelli, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board; Eve Powell, Welsh Youth Parliament; Fran Watkin, Keep Wales Tidy; Gwenda Owen, Cycling UK; Ioan Bellin, Office of Delyth Jewell MS; Libby Davies, Natural Resources Wales; Liz Smith, Wales Environment Link; Mari Williams, Save the Children; Matt Sutton, Senedd Research Service; Molly Hucker, Fridays for Future; Niamh Salkeld, Plaid Cymru Senedd Group; Oliver John, RCPsych Wales; Owen Derbyshire, Keep Wales Tidy; Phoebe Nicklin, Cynnal Cymru; Sam Young, Age Cymru; Stan Townsend, Climate Cymru; Zac Jones-Prince, Welsh Youth Parliament.

**Apologies received from:** Dr Gareth Morgan, Climate Psychology Alliance; Haf Elgar, Friends of the Earth Cymru; Mike Hedges MS, Senedd Cymru.

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

- The Chair welcomed attendees, apologised for the absence of a translator but encouraged contributions in Welsh.
- Attendees introduced themselves.

## **2. Approval of Previous Minutes**

- The minutes of the previous meeting (10 February 2025) were approved without objections.

## **3. Secretariat Update**

- Dafydd Huw confirmed that RCPsych Wales continues to provide secretariat support to the CPG. He encouraged attendees to contact him with ideas for future meeting topics and speakers.

#### **4. Presentation by Dr Jennifer Rudd, Director of the Climate Action Research Network and Senior Lecturer, Swansea University: “Can we teach climate change in a way that effects behavioural change?”**

- Dr Rudd explained that she transitioned from working in chemistry to social science to explore how climate education can drive behavioural change. Her research focuses on empowering learners and reducing climate anxiety. She spoke to the group about three specific projects.

##### **Project 1: You and CO2**

- **Objective:** To teach climate change in a way that fosters agency, reduces eco-anxiety, and encourages behavioural change through interdisciplinary methods, combining science, technology, and creativity.
- **Structure:** The project consists of three workshops:
  1. **Carbon Footprint Calculations:** Students calculate their personal carbon footprint using maths and chemistry. They then work in groups to reduce their combined footprint by one-third, which introduces structural barriers (e.g., rural transport limitations) and encourages collaborative problem-solving.
  2. **Interactive Digital Narrative:** A choose-your-own-adventure style story set on a fictional moon colony. Learners personalise characters and make decisions affecting energy use, food waste, and societal stability. Climate themes are embedded subtly to safeguard readers while promoting critical thinking.
  3. **Coding Climate Stories:** Students use the same coding language as the interactive narrative to create their own branching stories e.g., a story starting with a choice about wearing makeup, leading to paths on food carbon footprints or social justice issues. This activity helps learners personalise climate change and connect it to their interests.
- **Project Impact:** Resources downloaded in 15 countries across 4 continents through Open Access and cited in international reports, including by the European Commission and Auckland Council.
- **Measuring Knowledge:** Developed and validated a survey with 600 adolescents (ages 12–15) to assess climate knowledge and behavioural intent. Findings including:
  1. 48% made lifestyle changes to reduce impact.
  2. Many support government action and laws.

3. Only half know trusted sources for climate info.
4. 46.9% feel they know “a lot” about climate change.

### **Project 2: Teachers as Change Agents**

- **Context:** Teachers often feel isolated in their efforts to teach climate change. Many experience climate anxiety, like students, which can hinder effective teaching. Training teachers not only improves their confidence but also equips them to support learners emotionally and practically.
- **Methodology:** Two-day training workshops held in Wales and Nigeria. Sessions included:
  1. Climate science fundamentals.
  2. Pedagogical strategies for integrating climate topics across subjects.
  3. Emotional resilience activities to address eco-anxiety.
- **Emotional Impact:** Before training, teachers reported feelings of anxiety, frustration, helplessness, and despair. After training, there was a shift to hopefulness, empowerment, and confidence. Creative exercises allowed teachers to express emotions visually e.g., drawings changed from a crying earth to a smiling planet after climate anxiety activities.
- **Practical Outcomes:** Teachers developed action plans for classroom activities and climate clubs. Six-month follow-up showed:
  1. Sustained enthusiasm.
  2. Implementation of climate-related projects in schools.
  3. Increased collaboration among teachers.
- **Key Insights:** Teacher training is cost-effective and transformative. Building networks for teachers fosters peer support and reduces isolation. Emotional well-being of educators is critical for successful climate education.

### **Project 3: Climate Education for Learners with ALN**

- Dr Rudd presented findings from a Welsh Government-funded report from Swansea University and Keep Wales Tidy exploring how climate change education can be delivered inclusively in special schools and alternative provision settings. The report was launched on 19 September.

- **Why This Matters:** ALN learners represent nearly 10% of pupils in Wales. Climate crisis disproportionately affects people with disabilities and additional learning needs. Without tailored resources, these learners risk being excluded from green skills pathways and environmental literacy.
- **Key Barriers Identified:**
  1. Critical Resource Gap: No ready-made climate education materials adapted for ALN learners.
  2. Mismatch of Interests and Learning Levels e.g., A 15-year-old learner working at a developmental level equivalent to a 6-year-old needs age-appropriate content that still feels relevant and engaging.
  3. Practical and Sensory Needs: Mainstream resources are often cerebral; ALN learners require hands-on, tactile, and sensory-rich activities.
  4. Absence of Specialised Networks: Teachers lack platforms to share best practice and adapt resources collaboratively.
  5. Challenges with School Trips: Accessibility, safeguarding, and staffing requirements make experiential learning harder to organise.
  6. Insufficient CPD: Mainstream climate CPD leaves ALN teachers without practical tools, increasing frustration.
- **Illustrative Quote:** “I was looking for an activity to do with my learners about coal mines. I just couldn’t do it. It didn’t exist.”
- **Policy Recommendations:**
  1. Develop and maintain an ALN-specific resource bank for climate education.
  2. Fund inclusive teacher training and CPD tailored to ALN contexts.
  3. Create a national network for ALN climate education practitioners.
  4. Embed ALN guidance into the Curriculum for Wales.
  5. Ring-fence budgets for resource development and network sustainability.
- **Why It’s Urgent:** Leaving ALN learners behind worsens inequality and denies them access to future green careers. Teachers are passionate but unsupported; they need tools to adapt mainstream resources effectively.

## 5. Discussion and Q&A

- Dr Tania Bugelli suggested that health professionals could benefit from an adapted version of the teacher training project to help address eco-anxiety in the NHS.

- Phoebe Nicklin advised that Cynnal Cymru is the national partner delivering carbon literacy training and she would be happy to have a conversation about delivering bespoke sessions for the healthcare sector.
- Dafydd Huw asked about the political response to the ALN report since its publication in September.
- Dr Jennifer Rudd said that she'd contacted Adnodd (the body responsible for providing bilingual educational resources to support teaching and learning for the Curriculum for Wales) to invite them to attend the report launch but they didn't engage. The research has been presented to the global eco-schools' group, was well received by Global Action Plan and there's been a reasonable amount of press coverage.
- Owen Derbyshire noted that the upcoming Senedd election provides an opportunity to influence parties' manifestos and secure commitments from the next Welsh Government.
- Stan Townsend raised the importance of enabling young people to engage with democratic processes in the context of climate policy.
- Dr Jennifer Rudd highlighted Carmarthenshire Climate Action Group as an exemplary model. It is youth-led, comprising representatives from eco councils in primary and secondary schools. Young members set agendas, chair meetings, and invite local councillors for accountability sessions. Facilitated by Carmarthenshire Council, the group empowers young people to influence local climate decisions and fosters civic responsibility. Dr Rudd suggested replicating this model across Wales to strengthen youth voices in climate governance.
- Delun Gibby shared insights from Pentre Ifan Residential Centre, which hosts groups with ALN and pupils from Pupil Referral Units. Activities focus on hands-on sustainability education, including habitat restoration and climate action projects. Feedback indicates these immersive experiences reduce climate anxiety and inspire green career aspirations among participants. Delun Gibby offered to share data on learner outcomes for future research collaborations and expressed interest in partnering on projects addressing eco-anxiety in ALN settings.
- Dr Jennifer Rudd said she would be very interested to see that data, ethics and GDPR permitting.

## **6. Updates from Youth Climate Ambassadors**

- Molly Hucker (former YCA) provided a “temperature check” on youth climate activism in Wales. She noted a shift in focus from purely environmental issues to the intersection of climate and social justice. Solidarity with Palestine is an emerging priority, linking environmental justice to global human rights, and climate activism is increasingly framed as part of a broader struggle for equity and justice. Molly also shared her personal journey, now pursuing an MSc at the Centre for Alternative Technology, reinforcing the link between education and activism.

## **7. Next Meeting**

- Date: 9 February 2026
- Agenda: Annual General Meeting and thematic presentation(s) (speakers TBC).

## **8. Actions**

- Secretariat:
  1. Circulate Dr Rudd’s presentation.
  2. Finalise the agenda for next meeting.
- Attendees:
  1. Share ideas with the secretariat ([dafydd.huw@rcpsych.ac.uk](mailto:dafydd.huw@rcpsych.ac.uk)) for future topics and speakers.
  2. Contact Dr Rudd ([j.a.rudd@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:j.a.rudd@swansea.ac.uk)) if interested in any future research collaborations.