

# Are the public ready for Net Zero?

*Recommendations for building  
a positive public discourse*



## Climate Outreach

Climate Outreach are a team of social scientists and communication specialists working to widen and deepen public engagement with climate change. Through our research, practical guides and consultancy services, we help organisations communicate about climate change in ways that resonate with the values of their audiences. We have over 14 years experience working with a wide range of international partners including central, regional and local governments, international bodies, charities, business, faith organisations and youth groups.

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# Contents

<b>Executive Summary and Recommendations</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Key themes, narratives, and strategic communications recommendations .....	2
Do's and Don'ts for effective net zero framing .....	4
<b>The evolution of the net zero discourse, and why public engagement is crucial to its success</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Existing net zero frames and language: how is net zero being communicated?</b> .....	<b>8</b>
Current narratives, frames and language examined in more detail. ....	11
<b>Who are the centre-right?</b> .....	<b>16</b>
<b>Analysis and results of Narrative Workshops.</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Values & outlook .....	18
Attitudes to the environment and climate change .....	20
Understanding of net zero .....	22
Trust .....	23
Responses to alternative names .....	25
Which stories work? .....	27
A note on the importance of the 'waste' frame. ....	33
<b>Next steps</b> .....	<b>34</b>
<b>Appendix 1. Methodology</b> .....	<b>35</b>

## Executive Summary and Recommendations

There is currently a lack of research into communicating the concept of net zero and why it is needed, but existing insights on climate change communication suggest the phrase net zero is a technical one that will not resonate well with the public.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this report is to test these assumptions, and make recommendations on the best ways to connect the issue with the public. Insights are based on the results of reviewing relevant literature and undertaking qualitative research with centre-right groups in London and Gloucester. The report includes a set of recommendations and guidance on effectively communicating around the net zero target itself, and what it means for people's lives over the next 30 years. Public buy-in for policy support will be essential in order to minimise push back from opponents. Getting this buy in will mean identifying the right messages, messengers and campaign approaches which speak to values held across the political spectrum.

While few constituencies outside of climate policy specialists are likely to be aware that the UK's decarbonisation goals are shifting from 80% to 100%, the consequences for livelihoods and lifestyles could be significant. It is here – around the 'challenging' topics of travel, diet and home heating – that public apathy or resistance may be encountered if carefully considered communications are not in place. For a centre-right audience (who were chosen as the focus of this research because historically they have been the least supportive of climate change policies), this means constructing public-facing campaigns around net zero 'upwards' from core centre-right values, rather than 'downwards' from the technicalities of the policy target.<sup>2</sup>

This approach – connecting the policy with the more tangible and immediate concerns of people's lives – will build broader and deeper understanding of the changes underway than could be achieved through facts and figures alone. Grounding the communications strategy in the audience's values, showing them what is at stake, and forging a bridge between the science-policy discourse and the everyday things that matter to people, will give people an investment in the strategy. This will make it more difficult for politicians to backtrack on the commitments made for a decarbonised future.

Building on a significant in-house knowledge base on engaging diverse UK audiences on climate change, Climate Outreach analysed the (limited) existing public-facing communication around the net zero concept, and ran two discussion groups ('Narrative Workshops'<sup>3</sup>) with members of the UK public who hold centre-right political values and views. Here are the key takeaways and recommendations from the research:

<sup>1</sup> N.B We will refer to 'net zero' in this report for the sake of continuity and simplicity, though a key recommendation is that for public facing communications alternative language and branding is employed.

<sup>2</sup> Corner, A. and Clarke, J. (2016). Talking Climate – From Research to Practice in Public Engagement. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

<sup>3</sup> Shaw, C and Corner, A (2017). 'Using Narrative Workshops to socialise the climate debate: lessons from two case studies – centre-right audiences and the Scottish public' Energy Research & Social Science Vol. 31

## Key themes, narratives, and strategic communications recommendations

### 1 Highlight the shared agreement on the need to act

Although climate change is not their highest priority, this audience recognises the seriousness of the environmental problems net zero is trying to address (especially reducing waste and pollution), and their position is best characterised as ‘let’s get on with it.’ Climate scepticism is becoming increasingly socially unacceptable, and net zero messaging should reflect this evolving social norm. Use inclusive, collective pronouns (we/us etc): ‘this is something people like us are worried about.’

### 2 Make net zero here and now

The net zero discourse needs a catchy public-facing name, that situates the idea in the ‘here and now’. This means presenting net zero as a domestic challenge about taking steps now to safeguard our future (contrary to existing public discourses which stress the importance of fulfilling our international obligations – of limited interest to this audience). And it means speaking to the present day (not 2050).

### 3 Focus messaging on a small number of tangible actions

Transparency and immediacy (letting people see that we have begun moving towards a net zero future) will give people confidence in the strategy and a sense of momentum, that something is being done. For example, the switch to electric cars or reforestation and conservation programmes can be badged under a net zero approach – net zero should not be something ‘additional’ for people to get their heads around. Create a sense of momentum by highlighting recent wins, intermediary measurable targets (e.g. area of land to be reforested by 2025, or improvements in energy efficiency) and annual progress reports. Co-benefits need to be very clearly connected to existing values and identities or they will be dismissed.

### 4 Connect the dots between net zero, climate change, and centre-right values

Connect the net zero climate change message with the themes that matter for the centre-right: reducing waste, a clean environment, fulfilling our responsibilities to the next generation and protecting our countryside. The abhorrence of waste (a core centre-right issue) was made clear in the workshop discussions. People immediately took the discussion of reducing meat consumption into in-depth discussions about food waste and how difficult retailers made it to avoid waste. Speaking to how net zero will tackle these problems is a sure-fire winner for centre-right audiences. Conversely there was strong resistance to associating reducing meat consumption with net zero objectives and a healthier population. The public (not just the centre-right) do not yet associate a change in diet with environmental goals.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> ‘Eat less meat to fight climate change is definitely not the way to go’ was the conclusion of one recent report into levers for reducing meat consumption. Restorick, T (2018). We Need To Talk About Bacon. Retrieved from <https://www.hubbub.org.uk/Blogs/food-blog/we-need-to-talk-about-bacon>

## **5 Build trust by using familiar faces as trusted messengers**

Use well known 'folk' experts from popular culture as messengers – trusted messengers spontaneously named by workshop participants included Martin Lewis, Bear Grylls, Dr Michael Moseley, and Gareth Southgate. Trusted messengers will communicate in the language of 'common sense' (a key centre-right theme). They will be people the target audience feel a shared sense of identity with. This audience will react negatively if they feel they are being spoken down to, do not identify with the messenger, or do not hear their concerns being addressed in the message.

## **6 Communicate net zero using examples that will be seen as realistic and feasible**

The centre-right is a wary and pragmatic audience. They want to see targets that they believe are achievable, and they want to know that there will be proper oversight. Fairness and balance underpin centre-right attitudes to the world. They expect a level playing field where everyone is playing by the same rules. The centre-right will quickly lose faith in net zero if they perceive they are doing their bit but see others not holding up their end of the bargain and 'getting away with it.'<sup>5</sup> Talk of reducing traffic in cities was a prime example of this need to follow through on the practicalities – participants were dismissive of claims of a better cycle lane network in cities to reduce car traffic because existing cycle lanes were not being policed effectively, and were instead often used as car parking spaces by cars.

## **7 Supplement the results in this report with quantitative and mixed-methods testing**

Findings from this initial research have provided important insights on the net zero language that will be most effective for connecting with centre-right audiences. A more formal, quantitative or mixed-methods testing programme of titles for the policy, narratives and imagery should be carried out to develop the net zero public communications strategy. This testing should also include identifying trusted messengers for net zero communications.

<sup>5</sup> A recent Climate Outreach project on attitudes to environmental regulations with publics in towns where a majority voted for Brexit revealed that negative emotions about regulations were largely reserved for the breaches of regulations, not the regulations themselves. Anger levels were still high following the financial crash of 2008, and the VW diesel scandal. There was also disappointment that the authorities charged with enforcing regulations were not doing the job properly and fairly. Shaw, C., Corner, A., and Clarke, J. (2018). Creating a Higher Standards narrative around regulations in the UK. Climate Outreach: Oxford.

## Do's and Don'ts for effective net zero framing

Do's	Don'ts
<p>Use language which builds on the support and momentum within the centre-right and make the connection between net zero and climate change clear. Use the collective pronouns - 'we/us' etc. Point to positive public opinion (where it exists) on key aspects of net zero policies</p> 	<p>Don't use net zero and '2050' in public communications without tying it into shared centre-right values. Failure to do this is likely to make the policy agenda feel distant and irrelevant</p> 
<p>Develop language and frames that reference centre-right values. A sense of pride about our national identity and love for the countryside and landscape will help ground net zero in what is familiar and close to home<sup>6</sup></p> 	<p>Avoid lengthy and technical descriptions of what net zero policies are and what they are trying to achieve. Don't assume the public will be willing to give a lot of time and attention to finding out about net zero</p> 
<p>Use frames which promote a sense of continuity with the past. Many of the net zero narratives currently being used do this very well, for example relating the new industries and technologies to the UK's history of innovation</p> 	<p>Avoid language which speaks to a new, unknown future of revolutionary change and upheaval. Net zero is a novel and ambitious policy agenda, which in and of itself could raise the suspicions of a centre-right audience. For this reason it will be important to anchor net zero messages in that which is familiar and traditional<sup>7</sup></p> 
<p>Keep a tight rein on the themes and frames being used in net zero communications. Consistency and repetition of the strongest and most relatable topics will be key to building public engagement and understanding around net zero. Waste, plastics and pollution are key areas of concern. Phrases such as 'reducing waste is common sense' resonate with centre-right publics</p> 	<p>Don't overload the net zero messaging with promises of solving all our problems. There is a risk of losing the centre-right audience if they don't believe the claims being made for net zero or do not recognise the co-benefits as relevant to their lives and identity. This was apparent when talking about the health co-benefits of reduced meat consumption - for many people, the link between a low-carbon and 'healthy' diet is not yet understood or established</p> 

<sup>6</sup> For recent work confirming this centre-right pride in both the British and local landscape see Shaw, C. and Corner, A. (2017). Public engagement with climate change post-Brexit: a centre-right perspective. Oxford: Climate Outreach.

<sup>7</sup> As an example, centre-right audiences have told us that family meal times are sacred. Sunday lunch, when everyone comes together, are an anchor for families. It doesn't matter what people have for Sunday lunch - curry, Mexican or roast beef - it is the coming together for that tradition which matters. Shaw, C. and Corner, A. (2017) Public engagement with climate change post-Brexit: a centre-right perspective. Oxford: Climate Outreach

Remain focused on explaining how net zero addresses tangible and relatable issues that are here and now and which matter to this audience – zero waste or zero pollution will be more important than zero emissions



Avoid language which talks about international obligations, or makes unrealistic claims about how easy it will be to fix the country's environmental problems. Previous work has shown messages about energy independence and 'strengthening our energy system' (Great British Energy) were well received by this audience<sup>8</sup>

Explain how policies will avoid penalising those already struggling. For example, concern that rising electricity bills may make life harder for struggling families or the elderly should be addressed. The centre-right care about other people – a cohesive social order is an important centre-right value



There is a belief that environmental policies are a luxury, that renewable electricity is expensive. Don't downplay the difficulties some people have paying their bills, but instead pay attention to what net zero means (in a positive way) for household expenses

Use imagery which communicates net zero futures that are relatable to the centre-right (a healthy countryside, clean air, renewable energy). Follow the same principles in selecting imagery as for selecting language: try to map visual communication to centre-right values (e.g. avoiding waste through saving energy in the home); show 'ordinary people getting on with things'. Use the Climate Visuals<sup>9</sup> website for guidance



Don't use obviously left-wing symbols (e.g. protestors with placards), or images showing geographically distant landscapes or unfamiliar technologies

<sup>8</sup> Whitmarsh, L. and Corner, A. (2017). 'Tools for a new climate conversation: A mixed-methods study of language for public engagement across the political spectrum.' *Global Environmental Change* Vol 42 122-13 <sup>9</sup> [www.climatevisuals.org](http://www.climatevisuals.org)

## The evolution of the net zero discourse, and why public engagement is crucial to its success

As the ten-year anniversary of the UK's Climate Change Act approaches, calls have emerged from civil society, politicians and the Committee on Climate Change to raise the ambition in the Climate Change Act, and aim for 'net zero' decarbonisation targets. This would mean that Britain would no longer be a 'net' contributor to climate change – a powerfully compelling idea for campaigners and policy-makers alike.

But hidden behind this simple notion are a range of potential pitfalls that could derail the net zero discourse before it has had a chance to take root. Decarbonising the economy of an entire country means significant lifestyle changes, on a range of totemic issues (like diet, personal travel and home heating), and in a relatively short period of time. While campaigners and policy-specialists will be familiar and comfortable with the language of national targets and percentage-based decarbonisation goals, non-specialist audiences are unlikely to instinctively grasp what 'net zero' means. Is the UK public ready for net zero?

There seems little possibility of stopping all emission of greenhouse gases in the next 20 years. Net zero describes a scenario in which those emissions that can't be stopped are balanced out, using processes which remove carbon dioxide. The result would be that the UK is no longer adding greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

We don't currently know what the pathway to 1.5C looks like. But a huge amount is riding on attempting to achieve it, and this makes communicating net zero to the public a daunting challenge. Sam Hall and Philip Box at Bright Blue stress that,

So, in the absence of having the technological solutions in place and ready to deploy, that extra 20% needed to get from 80% cuts to net zero will likely involve significant lifestyle changes, on a range of key issues and in a relatively short period of time. Assuming that net zero targets can be achieved in the next twenty years, profound climate change impacts will still need to be coped with. Whichever way the challenge is viewed, aiming for net zero decarbonisation targets means putting all our climate mitigation cards on the table, and the right messages, messengers and campaign approaches taken on this sensitive issue (and in particular for harder-to-reach audiences such as the centre-right constituency).

The next section presents the results of a rapid review of the language being used in campaigns, reports and news stories on net zero.

'Importantly...there is not yet a clear technological pathway to completely decarbonise every economic sector, and some technologies that do exist require further development and improvement before they can be deployed at scale'

(Hall and Box, 2018: 8)

(See Appendix 1 for further details of the sources used and the workshop planning methodology).

## Existing net zero frames and language: how is net zero being communicated?

As one would expect with such a new concept, there is not a vast body of public-facing literature on net zero to draw on. Though the literature is limited, it is possible to detect repeating themes in the use of frames and language. Table 1 summarises the themes with our reflections. More detailed discussion and examples are provided below the table.

Table 1. Current narratives, frames and language - summary of strengths and weaknesses

Theme	Summary
UK leading the way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme: The UK continuing in its role as a global leader on climate change, and meeting its commitments as a signatory to the UNFCCC Paris Agreement</li> <li>• Reflection: Though this was a common narrative, the results of the two discussion groups reported here suggest that a domestic frame may be more useful for engaging centre-right audiences than Britain's obligations under international agreements. This fits with our previous research with this audience, demonstrating that a patriotic pride in the 'Great British Energy' system is a positive frame</li> </ul>
Co-benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme: The primary focus was on the economic benefits of a net zero policy, including the certainty a target gives to businesses. Campaigners focused on more immediate benefits such as warmer homes and better public transport. The parliamentary letter sent to the Prime Minister also mentioned cleaner air and the restoration of natural habitats.</li> <li>• Reflection: Centre-right audiences will respond well to an economic frame as long as it is realistic, specific, they trust in the messenger and it has a strong domestic focus e.g. energy prices. Clean air and the restoration of natural habitats, as well as avoiding waste, are all strong, established co-benefits for engaging the centre-right on climate change</li> </ul>
Definitions of net zero	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme: A variety of analogies and frames are currently used to describe what net zero means</li> <li>• Reflection: Net zero doesn't work as a label for centre-right audiences. It will be difficult to communicate net zero effectively without agreeing a shared description which is applied consistently, and using a small set of practical examples to illustrate it</li> </ul>

<p>Avoiding dangerous climate impacts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme: Net zero was frequently described in terms of climate change agreements, but little mention was made of the climate impacts that would result from failing to hit net zero</li> <li>• Reflection: Polling results indicate extreme weather (such as the recent heat waves) increases public awareness of, and concern about, climate change.<sup>10</sup> Avoiding discussing climate impacts will risk confusion about what the net zero policy is intended to achieve. A major gap in climate communication is the lack of initiatives that 'join the dots' between extreme weather and climate impacts and the policies designed to deal with them</li> </ul>
<p>Fairness/justice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme: The discussion is on what is right and fair action for the UK to take in order to do its bit for averting dangerous climate change</li> <li>• Reflection: Though the concept of 'doing the right thing' is a core value for centre-right audiences, in this context the idea of fairness may be rejected on the basis that other nations can't be trusted to play fair (and there may in any case be little interest in Britain's obligations under international frameworks). Fairness for the centre-right is more about balance; that one shouldn't take out of the system more than one has contributed. People who have worked hard all their lives shouldn't have to spend their old age living in draughty and cold housing.<sup>11</sup> There is, however, less support amongst the centre-right for the frame of justice<sup>12</sup></li> </ul>
<p>Public support for decarbonisation policies/positive social norms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme: Reference is made, particularly in campaign materials, to existing levels of UK public support for net zero related activities, mostly renewables.</li> <li>• Reflection: This is a productive approach for centre-right audiences, especially when combined with actual numbers showing the level of support. We saw a strong consensus on the need to tackle climate change in the workshops</li> </ul>
<p>Descriptions of a net zero society</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme: Individual behaviour change was much less of a focus than abstract statements about transformations in transport, energy and agriculture. Technology (either existing or yet to be developed) was invoked as doing a lot of the heavy lifting for net zero</li> <li>• Reflection: Public and promotional narratives are not giving much attention to what net zero will mean for people's day-to-day lives. Centre-right audiences are often willing to 'do their bit' given the appropriate justification by a trusted messenger</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> Borick, C. et al. (2018) 'As Americans Experienced the Warmest May on Record Their Acceptance of Global Warming Reaches a New High.' Retrieved from <http://closup.umich.edu/issues-in-energy-and-environmental-policy/37/as-americans-experienced-the-warmest-may-on-record-their-acceptance-of-global-warming-reaches-a-new-high/>

<sup>11</sup> Corner, A., Marshall, G. and Clarke, J. (2016). Communicating effectively with the centre-right about household energy-efficiency and renewable energy technologies. Oxford: Climate Outreach.

<sup>12</sup> Whitmarsh, L. and Corner, A. (2017). 'Tools for a new climate conversation: A mixed-methods study of language for public engagement across the political spectrum.' *Global Environmental Change* Vol 42 122-13

## Criticisms

- Theme: We only identified one story criticising net zero ambitions, from the Scottish Daily Mail, which was reframing passages from the SNP's report as showing net zero would mean food shortages and damage the economy. There were some commentaries criticising the inadequacy of the government's policies, for example around transport
- Reflection: This anomalous story misrepresented the report to make its case. It shows that communicators won't own the net zero story and care must be taken about how the agenda may be attacked by certain sections of the media. Employing an effective messaging strategy for the centre-right will be a key element of building sustained public support for net zero policies



Intergenerational gardeners pick and crop leeks Photo: [Climate Visuals](#)

## Current narratives, frames and language examined in more detail

Adopting net zero as a strategy for the UK to retain its position as the global leader on climate change was a popular theme. This vision of the country's future is presented as a continuation of what the UK has always done well - winning competitive advantage in emerging markets through innovation.

“The UK's climate laws forged a path for others to follow. Ten years ago, the UK brought in the first law in the world that set a legally binding target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.”  
(The Guardian, 17th April, 2018)

“Britain has a proud history of leadership on climate change, from the Rio Agreement which Sir John Major and I signed in 1992, to the recent Paris Agreement where the UK played a vital role.”  
(Sir Michael Howard, 1st June, 2018)

“British ingenuity, from Isambard Kingdom Brunel to Dorothy Hodgkin, has kept the UK at the forefront of science and engineering for more than two hundred years. Setting ourselves the goal of net zero emissions will put us at the forefront of the race for investment in clean industries, creating jobs all around the UK and inspiring the next generation.”  
(Climate Coalition, June, 2018)

The economic benefits of adopting a net zero target were a prominent feature of the 'global leader' narratives.

“Strong UK policies have closed coal plants and supported remarkable increases in renewable generation, accompanied by dramatic reductions in costs, far beyond the level the naysayers said was possible.”  
(Climate Change Committee, 2018)

“People need to get a sense of urgency, not just because climate change won't wait, but because the less urgent you are the more expensive it will be to do the things we are going to have to do anyway.”  
(Lord Deben, June, 2018)

The Bright Blue 'Hotting Up' report identified some stories that demonstrated how the Climate Change Act had benefited individuals economically. For example:

“Since 2008, household energy bills have fallen, with renewables’ levies more than mitigated by reduced energy use as a result of higher energy efficiency. Household bills in 2016 were about £115 lower in real terms than when the Act was introduced.”

(Hall and Box, 2018: 20)

And:

“More fuel-efficient car engines, developed in line with EU-derived emissions regulations, mean a new car bought in 2015 will save car owners approximately £200 on their annual fuel bill, relative to a new car bought in 2000.”

(Hall and Box, 2018: 21)

One of the overarching benefits identified in more than one commentary was the economic benefits provided by the certainty of having an agreed target.

“Climate laws deliver something that in a healthy democracy is invaluable for businesses and citizens: certainty. Certainty helps citizens, companies, investors and the government itself to make better decisions. For example, it is clearly good sense that all new houses are built so as to waste very little energy, so eliminating the need for more expensive retro-fitting in a decade’s time.”

(Guardian, April, 2018)

However, there was an absence of discussion about the challenges presented by the net zero target reports, and the few mentions identified were short on detail.

“There is growing optimism that the central goal of the Paris Agreement to maintain global warming under 2C can be met, but the societal changes required will be bigger than anything we’ve seen in our lifetime.”

(Sunday Telegraph, 3rd June, 2018)

“But to achieve net zero will take profound change. It will require a tripling of energy efficiency, an end to deforestation and substantial technological advances to solve challenges like large-scale battery storage, the company says. And it will include a massive expansion of renewables, with wind turbines peppering the landscape for miles and rooftops carpeted with solar panels.”

(Sunday Telegraph, 8th July, 2018)

“Surface transport now holds the dubious crown of being the sector that emits the most greenhouse gas emissions in the UK. Of these emissions, cars, vans and HGVs account for almost 90%. Cars alone account for over 50%. In a zero emission world, most of these cars would not be allowed.”

(ECIU, July, 2018)

The Independent, in a report that echoed criticism of the inadequacy of the government's policies that emerged from the latest Committee on Climate Change report, described the goal of a ban on diesel and petrol cars by 2030 as 'severe measures'.<sup>13</sup> Other than that, the news coverage was positive. This will possibly change if the government adopts the net zero target and as the policies start to bite.

Research in the UK has shown that fairness is an important element of any energy transition strategy for the public. However, we did not identify narratives showing how net zero can ensure fairness in the domestic energy markets and address issues such as fuel poverty. Instead it was about the UK doing its fair share for international agreements.

"Once again, the UK has a unique opportunity to lead developed economies with new world-leading climate targets."

(Box and Hall, May 2018: 4)

In one report from Scotland – where the current government has a strong commitment to ideas of justice – the net zero target was presented as an obligation to future generations.

"These statistics are hugely encouraging and show we have almost halved the greenhouse gases emitted in Scotland – underlining our role as an international leader in the fight against climate change. But we must go further and faster if we are to meet our responsibilities to our children, grandchildren, and future generations."

(BBC Scotland, June, 2018)

Descriptions of what net zero is is often used in the language that speaks to core centre-right values, such as 'waste' and 'balance'.

"The Paris Agreement includes a target for the world to 'achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century'."

(Business Green, May, 2018)

"Adopting a new legal net-zero emissions target sets the ambition of effectively ending the UK's contribution to climate change."

(The Telegraph, 25th May, 2018)

"We'd like to see energy waste cut from our buildings, carbon pollution taken out of our transport, our land use helping to absorb emissions, and generation of energy from renewable sources accelerated."

(Climate Coalition, June, 2018)

<sup>13</sup> The Independent June 28th 2018. Car and housing companies 'should be ashamed of themselves' as UK on track to miss emissions targets.

Discussions of why a net zero target is needed – alongside (as noted above) economic benefits and global leadership – referenced the need to avoid dangerous climate change impacts. The quotes below illustrate how an emotional appeal differs from the more abstract scientific plea for action. It is the language of responsibility that will have greater appeal to the centre-right public, if it can be combined with clear descriptions of the actions needed to fulfil those responsibilities.

“For a safe climate we need all governments to aim for cutting pollution to net zero levels by 2050. Claiming that net zero is impossible would mean giving up on the imperative of halting climate change; accepting that we will never hold back the tide of rising sea levels, failing food supplies, species extinctions and an acidifying ocean. That is not a world that I can bequeath to my children and grandchildren; nor, I believe, can any responsible leader.”

(Guardian, April, 2018)

“Models show that to avert dangerous levels of climate change, global carbon dioxide emissions must fall to zero later this century.”

(Science, June, 2018)

“Ultimately, the report finds that the scientific, technological, and legal case for adopting a new, legal net zero emissions target in the UK is strong.”

(Bright Blue, May, 2018)

Positive public attitudes and supportive social norms were referenced in two different ways. News reports were more likely to invoke social norms at an international scale, arguing the UK should be adopting net zero targets because other countries already have. This framing is likely going to be of limited appeal to centre-right publics.

“Countries such as Sweden and New Zealand have already set net zero targets.”

(Business Green, June, 2018)

“The UK’s climate laws forged a path for others to follow. But as progressive nations commit to zero emissions, it must reclaim its leading role.”

(The Guardian, April, 2018)

Campaign literature chose to focus on public opinion, no doubt because the reports concerned were aimed at thought-leaders and decision-makers, who would feel encouraged to act if they have the backing of the public.

“There is clear public support for deeper decarbonisation in the decades ahead, including through the adoption of a new, legal net zero emissions target.”

(Bright Blue, May, 2018)

“Onshore wind public support is at an all-time high of 76%, according to government polling in April 2018. Brits are fifteen times more likely to strongly support onshore wind than to strongly oppose it. Solar public support also hit a record high in 2018, at 87%. Brits are 42 times more likely to strongly support solar than strongly oppose it.”

(Climate Coalition, June, 2018)



Child clearing away snow from solar panels in Balcombe. Photo: [1010 Climate Action](#)

## Who are the centre-right?

Climate Outreach have built up a detailed understanding of engaging centre-right audiences on climate change. We have tested frames and narratives for engaging this audience in discussion groups and surveys, and through this work have established a list of core centre-right values that should be the foundation of engaging centre-right audiences on any climate change campaign. Table 2 lists core principles of the centre-right and how they map onto the research design and analysis in this report.

Table 2. Mapping centre-right principles onto net zero messaging

Core centre-right principles addressed by the concept	How net zero messaging can do this
<p><b>Maintaining the status quo</b> - wariness of novelty and change</p> <p><b>Respect for authority and tradition</b> - favourable towards heritage and existing cultural institutions</p> <p><b>Conscientiousness</b> - being thorough, careful, vigilant, disciplined and polite</p>	<p>Net zero messaging should anchor descriptions of policy and scenarios in terms which are familiar to centre-right audiences. Net zero becomes a continuation of the present, a way of creating stability and providing certainty. For example, balance speaks to double entry book-keeping, the country as a nation of shopkeepers. We have always been a frugal and savvy nation, not prone to wasteful excess</p>
<p><b>Control and closure</b> - comfortable with a structured, consistent and straightforward framework for interpreting the world</p>	<p>Net zero language should avoid drawing on academic and abstract language and ideas, and avoid focusing on 'unknowns' (such as the phrase net zero itself). Explain what will be done and what will happen as a result. Explain where we will end up, provide the answers, show the steps to a net zero future</p>
<p><b>The good life</b> - an aspiration to happiness, good health, and wellbeing</p> <p><b>Aesthetics</b> - sensitivity to negativity, ugliness and breaches of purity; appreciation of natural beauty</p>	<p>Centre-right values are about more than just self-focused material values. There is a strong attachment to the sense of cleanliness, a countryside free from litter and pollution, a healthy and green landscape. References to woodland restoration and other natural sinks have the potential to resonate with the centre-right</p>

<p><b>Integrity and authenticity</b> – defence of honesty and purity against corruption/ pollution/health/vested interests</p> <p><b>Scepticism of centralisation</b> – including ‘<i>big government</i>’. A preference for pragmatism, rather than grand theories and ideologies</p>	<p>Winning and keeping the trust of the centre-right will be a key challenge in net zero messaging. This will be especially true where the public is being asked to put its faith in processes that are happening out of sight. This audience feels a great sense of betrayal that their recycling efforts may have been for nothing, and the waste has gone straight to landfill</p>
<p><b>‘Intergenerational duty’</b> – the ‘<i>Burkean contract</i>’ and a sense of responsibility</p> <p><b>Security, sacrifice and loyalty</b> – to the in-group (family, community, country)</p>	<p>Centre-right audiences express a deep felt sense of responsibility to those they identify with. Any sense of threat to the places and people they hold dear are responded to strongly. The need to protect what they value is a powerful emotive level for net zero messaging</p>
<p><b>Fairness</b> – success is rewarded. Transgressions are punished</p>	<p>The centre-right sense of fairness is a theme which connects all the above – policies, targets, limits, taxes, incentives, all the incentives and deterrents for delivering net zero have to be enforced properly and fairly, and be seen to be enforced properly and fairly</p>
<p><b>Balance</b> – keeping things in balance is important</p>	<p>Centre-right publics value balance in energy technologies, keeping humans/ nature in balance, a balanced economy as a universally acknowledged ‘<i>good thing</i>’</p>

# Analysis and results of Narrative Workshops

## Values & outlook

Net zero messages should clearly articulate values around a responsibility to avoid wasting resources (food, packaging, energy) and a sense of responsibility to the next generation. Net zero should be represented as a part of a more frugal, measured and considered (in sum, 'balanced') way of life, that reflects the sensible housekeeping principles that are a core part of the British character. Using the net zero objective to ensure everyone takes on their responsibilities and works together to tackle pollution and keep the environment clean speaks to important centre-right values about social order.

In terms of their own self-identity, both sets of workshop participants were strongly centre-right in their outlook (judged against Table 2 above). When they were asked about the values that mattered to them, a concern for and respect towards others, reliability and trustworthiness emerged as strong themes. Responsibility was an important value which featured prominently throughout the two workshops. The role of parents in setting the right example was a recurrent issue which echoed feelings of intergenerational responsibility that arose frequently.

“And I think also, people leave the responsibility of the children to the government. You look after my children. No. It's the family itself who needs to look after the children, not the government.”

London, female

“You're 100% correct, you're 100% right. It's not the government's responsibility.”

London, male

“But I think there's too much expectation at the moment by parents who are bringing up their children expecting schools to do it, or somebody else to do it.”

Gloucester, male

When asked how they would communicate net zero, one respondent in London picked up this theme of responsibility to generations, prior to any prompts on this issue from the test narratives. People also talked about the pressure young people were under at school, a lack of good role models, and the mental health issues arising from use of social media. Participants expressed a sense of a collective responsibility towards the well-being of future generations. For the middle-aged and older people in the groups there was a shared sense that they had had the best of it, but now we were entering a period of rapid decline.

“But again, this to me then comes back to short term-ism, because you’re then going, yes, things may be worse in perhaps our lifetimes. But if we don’t do it now, how’s it going to be in a generation, in our children’s lifetimes, grandchildren’s lifetimes.”

Gloucester, male

“I think we should be setting a trend. It’s our future as well, it’s our kids’ futures as well. I don’t think that people are going to keep polluting the world, we can already see what’s going on.”

London, female

“Protecting the lives of future generations, your children, your grandchildren, your great grandchildren. Medical research has shown that children in built-up areas suffer a lot more with asthma than they do where they’re not built up.”

London, female

“I liked the whole thing. But the main one is, we must go further and faster in order to meet our responsibilities to our children.”

Gloucester, female

When asked who is responsible for delivering a net zero target, there was a general consensus that it should be a partnership between people and the government. This conversation quickly moved into talk of the 5p bag charge and recycling as examples of agency – people doing their bit. There was, however, not a great deal of confidence that the government could be trusted to uphold their end of the bargain.

“I’m a real cyclist, and I just think... they say they’re going to do the cycle lanes, and they do cycle lanes, but there’s cars parked in the cycle lanes. So, I would tend to disagree with that. No, I don’t trust it at all. Why can’t it be like Denmark?”

Gloucester, male

“Just saying about a zero carbon target, which is geared towards people reducing their consumption and everything. So, I do think it will cut energy bills and it will improve the efficiency of everyone’s homes. If everyone’s a bit more conscious about this, it will get rid of the exhaust pipe emissions as well. All of this stuff that we can do.”

Gloucester, male

“You can’t trust the government itself to make those decisions and invest wisely for the long term.”

London, male

## Attitudes to the environment and climate change

Environmental issues only arose towards the end of the open discussions about immediate and longer term issues facing the country, the focus instead being pressures on young people, declining social order, education, the NHS and Brexit.

Participants generally welcomed the objectives of the net zero policy agenda. They viewed it as a shared responsibility between people and government, articulating a concern for the wellbeing of younger generations, and expressing a desire to 'get on with it' now (rather than in the future). The single sceptical voice in each workshop was challenged repeatedly by the others, who were sincere in their efforts to ensure the facilitator left the workshop with an accurate sense of the consensus in the room. There is a strong social norm within centre-right audiences around the idea or the sense that things can't go on as they are, and the need for effective, ambitious, but sensible action on climate change and climate change related issues. That this attitude exists as part of the centre-right identity, appears currently to generally be taken for granted. Our findings offer important insights for net zero messaging and centre-right engagement more generally - suggesting it is now possible to talk about the kind of future we want, and the actions we want taken to achieve this goal, when communicating with this audience.

"But why should we, a country of 63 million that rains probably every other week throughout the year, this is the first year for what, six years that we've had a decent summer. Why suddenly should we have no water? Do you not think that's a bit strange?"

London, male

"Because it's so dry because it hasn't rained, we've got a shortage in the North West ...if you let me finish, the natural land is actually setting fire. It's having bush fires, which is unheard of and it's all linked, in my opinion, to global warming. This is unprecedented weather, you see the hills and they're on fire. That's not normal."

London, female

Plastics were the first issue raised when participants were asked to think about environmental issues in 2050. Individual greed and selfishness was highlighted as a barrier to change and then - inevitably - the conversations moved on to recycling. The following conversation represents the themes that emerged in discussions of the environment and recycling, opening up the questions of responsibility that repeated throughout the workshops.

As the exchange shows, there is agreement on the need to get to grips with waste, but less agreement on whether the government can be trusted to manage something like a programme for reducing plastic pollution. The government is seen to be an enabler of individual action, but there is not much trust in businesses and governments to follow through. This poses some difficult questions about how to communicate the need for the much more complex and inconvenient changes demanded by net zero, and to whom.

“It’s just a throwaway society.”

Gloucester, female

“Somebody suggested that the government should just ban plastics outright. What I would say is, we actually need to not have that much government intervention, and maybe we can just step back, wait for a business to come up with a solution for it. Because when the government gets involved, it doesn’t always pan out.”

Gloucester, male

“Well, to me, it’s like responsibility. Everything that’s come up is: someone else, or this can’t happen because of this, this can’t happen because of this. Whose responsibility is it? And same like companies coming up with ways of solving those problems, not the government, but then everyone passes the buck don’t they. Whose responsibility is it to solve that?”

Gloucester, female

“I think it’s more than just individuals, personally.”

Gloucester, female

“I keep going back to making things easier for people. Like the plastic bag thing, that was out of my hands. Great, it made me do it, it would have been something I would like to have done, and I did try to remember your own bags and things like that. But just little changes that can be easily made.”

Gloucester, female

## Understanding of net zero

Though net zero was not a term the participants necessarily liked, there was an intuitive grasp of the metaphor of balance that underpins net zero. The image of balancing between negative and positive flows, primarily in financial terms, was one that arose naturally, and was easily mapped on to discussions of emissions targets. This then mapped onto other discussions of balance, for example balancing the needs of the present day against those of future generations.

“Is it you have to balance out your emissions, whatever you make you’ve got to balance back again, and if you go over you have to pay. Is that what they’re going to bring in?”

London, male

“What you’ve got to do is factor the carbon emissions or whatever that went into the manufacturing of those goods, when they were shipped into the country. And they have got to be taken into account as your country’s carbon emissions as well.”

Gloucester, male

An interesting, and perhaps significant, first question raised in London, after providing the explanation of net zero was: “How are people going to travel?”

Discussions to balance quickly, and without prompting, turned to questions about why the UK should be doing it when other countries weren’t. These exchanges demonstrated a nuanced understanding of the issues.



Installing insulation. Photo: [Nick Nguyen](#)

“If you’re going to developing nations where people are extremely poor, and they get themselves a car that pollutes, who’s going to give them the money to give them an electric car? And give them the money in a country where electricity is scarce.”

London, female

“That’s the thing, it’s easy to say Western countries are developed on cheap energy, so through coal and oil, then now you’re telling developing countries no don’t use the cheap energy because it’s causing pollution. But, use this new technology which is very expensive to develop. There’s no way these developing countries can use it because it’s far too expensive.”

London, male

“But then, I don’t know where you start, do you give up though? Is that what the solution is, that we just don’t try?”

London, male

“It’s almost like you need a sliding scale where you look at their emission output compared to their GDP, and then work it out from there. So, you are giving the poorer nations a chance to get themselves out of poverty. And, the richer nations reducing it but it’s all seemed fair.”

London, female

## Trust

The discussion of recycling opened into distrust; people’s anguish about feeling they were being deceived about what happens to their recycling was palpable. It highlights the need for transparency throughout any process for reaching net zero. People feel that once it is out of their sight they cannot trust what is going to happen. This feeling of betrayal, wanting something to be done but not being able to trust anyone to do it is important.

“Yes, I kept quiet then because I thought this conversation, I feel so disillusioned about it, I can’t tell you. Two years ago, they brought a new dustbin around, for the recycling. I’ve already got a dustbin, so I said to the guy, very lovely guy, he worked for the council. I said what are you going to do with it, because I’m interested I want to know, I like to know these things. So, I said, what are you going to do with it? He said, we do nothing with it.”

London, male

It was in the face of discussions about what exactly is happening to the waste that people put into the recycling, and whether it is being dumped into landfill, that people discussed upstream changes to the way resources are used.

“I think it’s all started before you even create the waste.  
So, you have to be... You don’t buy loads of food in plastic, packaged food.  
So, if I buy fruit, I buy singles, fresh. You’re buying... Don’t buy pre-cut vegetables because they come in plastic packaging. So, if you’re getting carrots for instance, you get the ones out so you minimise... If you look at it from there, where you create the waste in the first place.”

London, male

“I don’t know what country it is but if you come into the shop,  
I saw it a few days ago, you come in with your own packaging, your own Tupperware and they can... Yes, it’s meat, it was for meat, so you know how the deli are, you can come in with your own glass container and you tell them to put it in your...  
So, you don’t have to have the packaging.”

London, female

These kinds of comments highlight the importance of ensuring the whole net zero process is transparent, making it possible to actually see that things are changing. Participants brought their own pre-existing stock of knowledge and perceptions to these discussions. Public consciousness on net zero is not a tabula rasa, as this exchange on offsetting demonstrates.

“Toilet paper companies have got it. Loads of the big stationery companies have got it, but I’m still very dubious behind it. In terms of carbon emissions I’m dubious about it. Okay, if you’re going to use one tree and you plant three more, okay, that’s probably a good thing, as long as you’re managing it properly.”

Gloucester, male

“This is it, this is it. The predominant trees they’re actually planting is fir trees, because they can cut them down, they’re fast growing. The timber is absolutely useless in the construction industry. But that’s what they do, because they’re fast growing. They’re not planting broad leaf trees that will actually absorb the oxygen.”

Gloucester, male

There were no trusted messengers to speak of – one participant went so far as to say that her doctors were not trusted for information on health. When groups were prompted for examples of who they trusted, some people replied “no one”. Science was viewed as an educated guess:

“I didn’t like when it said listen to the experts. Because the experts are saying that now but who knows what they’ll be saying in a few years’ time?”

London, female

“A couple of weeks’ time.”

London, male

## Responses to alternative names

Net zero succinctly describes the ultimate goal of a process involving action across sectors as diverse as energy, transport, land use, infrastructure and waste (to name but a few). For those not working on climate change, or not already interested in the subject – exactly the audience addressed in this report – the term net zero will be unfamiliar. An important element of the strategy for building understanding of, and support for, the net zero objectives, will be finding language which speaks to values held in common across the political spectrum, whilst communicating what is distinctive about net zero.

We informally trialled seven alternative names, made up of permutations of language already in circulation (net zero, 2050) with language which speaks to centre-right principles (balance, clean, pollution, Britain, waste).

| Pollution Free Britain

| Clean and Green by 2050

| Zero waste, zero pollution: Britain 2050

| A balanced future: zero carbon by 2050

| Zero pollution Britain 2050

| Carbon free Britain

| A clean and green Britain

Participants were asked to read through the list and discuss any titles they particularly liked and why, and then asked if there were any they disliked, and why. Across both groups participants in the main preferred the values-led language (balance, clean, green) over the numbers-led frames (zero, and 2050), whilst expressing a desire for net zero language to communicate something tangible about the policy.

Participants expressed a preference for ‘A clean and green Britain’ and ‘A balanced future’, which speak to the values of national pride, nostalgia, continuity with the past and protecting the things we love. The indications from existing work with centre-right audiences that ‘green’ can be a problematic framing, so we would recommend further testing to identify the most appropriate meta-frames.

“A clean and green Britain’ because there’s that song In England’s Green and Pleasant Land, I think it plays off history and what we are known for. We’re known for our beautiful countryside, our green and beautiful land, and I think that almost hits home a lot more than this zero, or whatever it is.”

London, male

“It’s not technical, it’s nothing technical. You don’t have to be a rocket scientist to work it out.”

London, female

“I like the, ‘a balanced future’. That speaks to me. Because that makes it clear that it’s not just getting rid of all waste and carbon.

Gloucester, female

“I prefer it over the ‘clean, green by 2050’ because putting a time frame on is distant. It’s always oh, it’ll be later, it’ll be later.”

London, female

“Long time, 2050.”

London, male

“Whereas making it a now thing, let’s do it now, it’s current.”

London, female

“You could put that into advertisements as well, this is what our countryside used to be like, and if we don’t sort it out, this is what it’s going to be like.”

London, male

“It sounds quite, it would almost be as an additional. So you might have, balanced future, hashtag clean and green. But it just feels a bit throwaway.”

Gloucester, female

“It’s catchy though.”

Gloucester, female

“It’s just, as you’re saying, two of them put together, like, a balanced future, zero carbon by 2050, for a clean and green Britain.”

Gloucester, male

## Which stories work?

The three narratives tested (see Appendix 1) were amalgamations of passages of text gleaned from various sources, collated into themed narratives of approximately 250 words each. The language used was chosen because it communicated strong positions or values. No one text is, in its entirety, a text in public circulation. And in putting together pieces of text from various sources there were – purposefully – a range of ideas packed into short pieces. The responses to this format were very revealing of the problems that will result from trying to communicate multiple benefits under the banner of a complex, novel and far-reaching policy agenda.

### Narrative 1

## Co-benefits

### Summary

This narrative focused less on averting dangerous climate change and instead spoke to other rationales for setting a net zero target: cleaner air, fulfilling our responsibility to future generations, providing certainty to business and planners, not being left behind in the race to profit from green innovation. It was clear that the connection between net zero and co-benefits must be made with care, with a focus on waste, pollution and restoration of the countryside.

The responses to this narrative illustrated the challenges of communicating co-benefits, and the risk of confusion arising when narratives seek to bundle up what might, to the public, appear to be unrelated issues. Recognising the difficulties of communicating novel ideas when the audience is likely only going to be paying fleeting attention was made clear in how people responded to how the benefits of reduced air pollution were described.

“[Our towns and cities will be safe for the people who live there]. I don’t think that’s got anything... That sounds more like a police and crime things, rather than... I don’t see how cleaner air is going to make criminals... Oh, the air’s nice and clean today, I’m not going to commit any crimes today.”

London, female

“But also, safer doesn’t, that doesn’t jump out at me when I think about zero carbon, that’s not a word that comes to mind.”

Gloucester, female

“It’s safer from the health side of things, but not necessarily safer as what most people would take safer to be.”

Gloucester, male

The centre-right desire for hard facts, and clearly described, realistic plans was very evident in people's opinions. In the absence of those facts people's suspicions were raised:

"I mean I get your point about the health benefits but it's just so airy fairy. By saying safer it's so ambiguous, it doesn't actually give you anything."

London, male

"For me, the reference and the linking with many health benefits, and cities will be safer for the people that live there. It felt a little bit sensationalist."

Gloucester, female

"In fact, it kind of felt like that is a bit like propaganda. It's more like you're saying, citizens and we must do this. And it's a bit like, I've heard this so many times and not listened to it."

Gloucester, male

Workshop participants expressed doubts about the technical feasibility and ability of politicians to deliver on all these promises, which is again a typical response from centre-right audiences.

"It feels like you are pulling on a lot of strings. You're pulling on very weak stats to prove it."

Gloucester, male

"We should move quickly to meet our net zero target. But nobody has said how they're going to do this. What it says here, the Swedes, they have planned for it, the Norwegians and Swedes, they are planning for it. They're talking about here, well it's going to be great, it's going to be terrific. That's all fantasy world, Mickey Mouse".

London, male

"The words themselves, I mean, in terms of the message, the message is good and it's right, you just don't believe they'll achieve it, the actual kind of drawing them all together."

Gloucester, male

"I think it needs to be more specific."

London, female

Descriptions of the UK as a wealthy country brought up discussions of inclusivity and fairness which recurred in later conversations about the costs of eating healthily.

“I would say it comes at a cost, like it’s getting more expensive to achieve this and so for some people, yes, they’re maybe healthier in the air they’re breathing, but it’s going to be detrimental to their actual position in society. Because they’re paying more to actually achieve that, and so they won’t actually be better off.”

London, female



Dog walking in the countryside in North Wales. Photo: [Adam Foster](#)

## Narrative 2

### Restoring and protecting the countryside

#### Summary

This narrative used concepts aligned with the importance the centre-right attaches to purity, cleanliness and a pristine environment. In this narrative net zero was presented as a strategy that would restore the health of the countryside. A healthy countryside and reforestation would help balance out our carbon emissions. Whilst the idea of a ‘clean and green Britain’ was attractive, participants struggled to accept that this would be achieved through a net zero strategy. Participants wanted facts, not sentimentality. So the negativity expressed may as much be a result of the way the narrative is constructed, or the vagueness of the picture painted. Rather than telling people what to think and feel, the language should provide specific plans for what is going to be done.

“[The British public cares deeply for the people, places and natural beauty that could be lost to climate change].” I don’t think that’s true.”

London, female

“It lost me in the first few sentences, I was like.  
[The British public cares deeply for the people, places and natural beauty].  
Yes, I think it’s true, but it’s a bit, we are being told it, and I think it’s a bit fluffy.  
I think the entire thing, it’s really cringey.”

Gloucester, female

“To me this reads like a government speech. It’s like someone standing at a podium.”

Gloucester, male

“I think I would prefer it if it would say, and climate change is doing x, y and z rather than using emotive language. If you have the hard facts in front of you, for me personally you would bet more of a reaction than being like, climate change has put the world at risk. Well, what’s it putting at risk? Tell me what it’s putting at risk.  
I would prefer that sort of hard facts personally.”

London, female

The call to action in this narrative – which spoke to the issue of responsibility – elicited a more positive response, as exemplified in this exchange from the Gloucester workshop.

“I liked a lot about the whole thing. But the main one is,  
we must go further and faster in order to meet  
our responsibilities to our children.”

Female

“You could take the rest of it away, put that there and that’s it.”

Male

“It’s got a bit of action behind it, doesn’t it?”

Male

“I highlighted that bit about meeting our responsibilities to our children, grandchildren and future generations. There was something about that in the previous one that I highlighted green, because I thought, that’s one that rings true for a lot of people.”

Female

## Narrative 3

### Net zero and a healthy diet

#### Summary

This narrative used diet as an example of a behaviour change required for a net zero world. There was – as noted previously – a resistance to the idea of using environmental legislation to lever change in other areas of people’s lives. Whilst those who had already chosen to reduce meat consumption for health reasons liked the narrative, this felt like it was a like born of an affirmation of the decision already made, and there was no real connection with the actual message. The strongest connection with the narrative was made through the frame of waste.

There were widely divergent views on what sins could be attributed to meat-eating, both in terms of health and the environment. The following exchange shows the first reactions to the narrative in the London group. One person was quite evangelical about reducing meat for health reasons, whereas the following comments were equally heartfelt in their rejection of narratives that demonised the meat industry and meat-eaters.

“I love it. Big time. We’ve changed our life around this.”

London, female

“And, what about the ozone load that the cows produce?  
I won’t go into that because you’ll...”

London, male

“We’ve had cows on this earth for millions of years and I don’t think that suddenly...”

London, female

“We can’t blame fat people for ruining the country, ruining the environment.”

London, male

Making a positive link between the meat industry and environmental damage did not come naturally to either of these groups.

“I think where this is successful is that it makes that link between food and disposables, or the environment. And I think, certainly myself, I purchase food for health reasons, or diet is all about health. And I have never made that link, if I’m being completely honest, about what impact it has on the environment.”

London, male

Though the connection between meat-eating and health was more familiar to the participants, this was a relationship they were keen to challenge.

“Do you know though, I disagree that the meat is what makes kids obese.”

London, female

“However, I still think this is a load of gumph.

Like, for me, it goes back to the stuff that it had last time, in terms of, it's too big of a stretch. This whole thing about, if you eat red meat you're costing the NHS obesity. I think it takes away from the whole point about, a lot of the obesity problem is to do with processed food.”

London, female

“I agree. I'd say the worry is, when they jump and say, it's costing the NHS this much, therefore people need to... The assumption is, therefore we need to eat less meat.”

Gloucester, male

## A note on the importance of the ‘waste’ frame

Tackling waste appears to offer a productive frame for communicating net zero, as the following exchange shows:

“I don’t know who throws away all this food, because I never throw food away.”

Gloucester, male

“It’s amazing how much food is just chucked. There’s like the smallest amount of mould, or it’s slightly browner than it should be, it just goes straight in the bin.”

Gloucester, male

“Some supermarkets give it to food banks. So it sort of goes back into the community. And again, that feeds – you know, going back to the free market, thinking of it – some shops now have actually opened up that pay supermarkets for food, as you say, a day before the sell by, which could be anything from a few days to a week, actually the food is okay to eat.”

Gloucester, male

“There’s a lot more, actually, we’re in this together sort of approach. And also, it’s that link between waste, and I sort of factored out the food waste and just went, waste generally. And we are a very wasteful society in the Western world.”

Gloucester, male

The discussions of waste pointed towards a desire for the government to make it easier for people to do the right thing, rather than simply pointing the finger of blame when society is structured to encourage people to make bad choices.

“But the thing is, they want everyone to eat healthier and healthier but the thing is the healthier things are a lot more expensive than the cheap food. Cheap food is what a lot of people can eat.”

London, female

“The chicken shops for example, there are so many of them and they’re like two pounds for two chicken burgers and a load of chips. It’s cheaper for them to go there than it probably is it eat a healthier lunch at school.”

London, female

“Why’s the government letting them open those shops?  
Those are the people who give license to these shops to open,  
it’s the government.”

London, female

## Next steps

**F**indings from this initial research have provided important insights on the net zero language that will be most effective for connecting with centre-right audiences.

A more formal, quantitative or mixed-methods testing programme of titles for the policy, narratives and imagery should be carried out to create the net zero public communications strategy. On the basis of this report and our existing knowledge of the centre-right audience, Climate Outreach suggests that combinations of ‘net zero’ or other policy descriptions should be combined with more value-laden language.

## Appendix 1. Methodology

The recommendations provided in this report are generated from the following process

- a rapid review of current language being used in connection with net zero by campaigners, journalists and policy actors
- drawing on these results to create a script and test narratives for two Narrative Workshops with centre-right publics
- analysis of transcripts and narrative-testing from the two Narrative Workshops with centre-right publics
- combining this evidence with existing research from Climate Outreach and others on communicating to centre-right audiences
- review of existing UK public discourses on net zero

The articles and reports listed below were identified either by project partners or a search of online news media via the Nexis database using the term 'net zero' (the majority of the stories retrieved using that term were related to building regulations).

This is not intended to be a systematic review. It is, however, a reliable snapshot of the kind of language in circulation on net zero.

Table 3. Sources analysed for net zero language

### News Media

Title	Source	Notes
17/04/2018. UK to review climate target raising hopes of a zero emissions pledge	<p><a href="https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/apr/17/uk-to-review-climate-target-raising-hopes-of-a-zero-emissions-pledge">https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/apr/17/uk-to-review-climate-target-raising-hopes-of-a-zero-emissions-pledge</a></p> <p>See also commentary piece same day from Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden. To lead on climate, countries must commit to zero emissions  <a href="https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/apr/17/to-lead-on-climate-countries-must-commit-to-zero-emissions">https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/apr/17/to-lead-on-climate-countries-must-commit-to-zero-emissions</a></p> <p>See also same day Climate Home report. <a href="http://www.climatechangenews.com/2018/04/17/uk-calls-advisory-body-test-net-zero-carbon-target/">http://www.climatechangenews.com/2018/04/17/uk-calls-advisory-body-test-net-zero-carbon-target/</a></p>	Announcement made by Clean growth minister Claire Perry during the Commonwealth heads of government meeting

<p><b>09/02/2018.</b> Ten years on, it's time to celebrate the Climate Change Act</p>	<p><a href="https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/ten-years-on-it-s-time-to-celebrate-the-climate-change-act-856qzzprb">https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/ten-years-on-it-s-time-to-celebrate-the-climate-change-act-856qzzprb</a></p>	<p>Michael Howard, Senior Tory figure, celebrating Climate Change Act</p>
<p><b>12/06/2018.</b> Scottish greenhouse gas emission rates 'halved since 1990'</p>	<p><a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-44453764">https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-44453764</a></p>	<p>Features contributions from campaign organisations arguing for the Scottish Government to push for new net zero targets</p>
<p><b>25/05/2018.</b> SNP's zero emissions target 'would damage the country'</p>	<p><a href="https://www.pressreader.com/uk/scottish-daily-">https://www.pressreader.com/uk/scottish-daily-</a></p>	<p>Negative spin on report that to move from a 90% emissions target to net zero would lead to food shortages and cut the country off from the rest of the world</p>
<p><b>01/06/2018.</b> Former Tory and Labour leaders urge PM to enshrine emissions target in law</p>	<p><a href="https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/uk-news/2018/06/01/former-tory-and-labour-leaders-urge-pm-to-enshrine-emissions-target-in-law/">https://www.shropshirestar.com/news/uk-news/2018/06/01/former-tory-and-labour-leaders-urge-pm-to-enshrine-emissions-target-in-law/</a></p>	<p>Provides an example of how net zero is being explained in the press</p>
<p><b>13/06/2018.</b> Climate One: Net Zero Living</p>	<p><a href="https://www.mprnews.org/story/2018/06/13/net_zero_living">https://www.mprnews.org/story/2018/06/13/net_zero_living</a></p>	<p>Podcast, a focus on net zero waste</p>
<p><b>20/06/2018.</b> Theresa May ducks question on UK net zero target</p>	<p><a href="https://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/3034516/theresa-may-ducks-question-on-uk-net-zero-target">https://www.businessgreen.com/bg/news/3034516/theresa-may-ducks-question-on-uk-net-zero-target</a></p>	<p>Reporting on Theresa May's failure to make public commitment to net zero targets</p>
<p><b>08/07/2018.</b> Shell must be bold to keep pace in brave new world</p>	<p>Sunday Telegraph</p>	<p>A positive take on Shell's efforts to thrive in a zero carbon future</p>

**28/07/2018.** Car and housing companies 'should be ashamed of themselves' as UK on track to miss emissions targets

The Independent

A round up of voices echoing CCC criticisms of government inaction on climate change

## Campaigns

**30/05/2018.** Climate coalition Speak Up Week'

<https://theclimatecoalition.us7.list-manage.com/track/>

Includes policy recommendations and set of actions that could be taken to deliver net zero.

The briefing includes some talking points for conversations with MPs, and a copy of the letter MPs will be asked to sign up to

## Reports and journal papers

**24/11/2015.** Changing Climate, Changing Diets: Pathways to Lower Meat Consumption

<https://www.chathamhouse.org/publication/changing-climate-changing-diets>

Forwarded to us as providing insights into discussion of diets in the workshops

**17/04/2018.** Sam Hall: Public attitudes to UK climate leadership – Ten years since the Climate Change Act

<http://brightblue.org.uk/sam-hall-public-attitudes-to-uk-climate-leadership/>

Polling on attitudes to climate change 10 years after the Climate Change Act

**2018.** Hotting Up. Strengthening the Climate Change Act 10 Years On

<http://brightblue.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Hotting-up.pdf>

10 years on from Climate Change Act, following Paris 2015, now is the time for UK to ramp up its ambition on climate change

**29/06/2018.** Net-zero emissions energy systems

<http://science.sciencemag.org/content/360/6396/eaas9793.full>

A review of what it would take to achieve a zero carbon energy system

**10/07/2018.** The pot holed road to zero

<https://eciu.net/blog/2018/the-pot-holed-road-to-zero>

Analysis of government's transport policy for net zero

**06/2018.** Committee on Climate Change Reducing UK emissions 2018. Progress Report to Parliament

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/CCC-2018-Progress-Report-to-Parliament.pdf>

One of the regular CCC reports to government, this time reflecting on 10 years of Climate Change Act

Policy

**21/06/2018.** Declaration for Ambition

<https://www.docdroid.net/DmkO5kd/180621-declaration-for-ambition-rmi-press-release-declaration-final-combined.pdf>

22 nations commit to exploring options for stepping up ambition and hitting net zero

The articles were analysed in order to identify the ‘performative’ language being used. The language was defined as ‘performative’ where it was not merely describing technologies, targets and schedules but was actually communicating values in support of the net zero agenda. Table 4 provides examples of the categories of performative language identified.

Table 4. Sources analysed for net zero language

Category: Global leadership/National identity

Media

*The* UK’s climate laws forged a path for others to follow. But as progressive nations commit to zero emissions, it must reclaim its leading role. I cannot help but feel huge pride that my government was the first in the western world to step up and deliver on the Paris agreement. Ten years ago, the UK brought in the first law in the world that set a legally binding target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

*The* [targets] we all promised to make in the Paris agreement should be setting high standards for the rest of the world to follow.

*Former* Conservative Party leader Michael Howard, now Lord Howard of Lympne, said: “Britain has a proud history of leadership on climate change, from the Rio Agreement which Sir John Major and I signed in 1992, to the recent Paris Agreement where the UK played a vital role.”

The Government should move quickly to set a net zero target to make sure that the UK doesn’t fall behind the curve when it comes to green technology, finance and innovation.

<p>Campaigners</p>	<p><i>British</i> ingenuity, from Isambard Kingdom Brunel to Dorothy Hodgkin, has kept the UK at the forefront of science and engineering for more than two hundred years. Setting ourselves the goal of net zero emissions will put us at the forefront of the race for investment in clean industries, creating jobs all around the UK and inspiring the next generation.</p> <p>We'll be sending a signal to our friends and allies around the world that Britain is shouldering our responsibility and leading the fight against climate change.</p>
<p>Policy</p>	<p><i>We</i> hope the UK can be an inspirational example of what is possible.</p> <p><i>These</i> statistics are hugely encouraging and show we have almost halved the greenhouse gases emitted in Scotland - underlining our role as an international leader in the fight against climate change. But we must go further and faster if we are to meet our responsibilities to our children, grandchildren, and future generations.</p>
<p>Reports</p>	<p><i>Once</i> again, the UK has a unique opportunity to lead developed economies with new world-leading climate targets. Other countries such as Norway and Sweden have already formally adopted net zero emission targets for 2050 or earlier. Setting a similarly ambitious target date is essential if the UK is going to maintain its historic global leadership on tackling climate change. It would also demonstrate this country is serious about being 'Global Britain' after Brexit</p>
<p>Category: Fairness</p>	
<p>Media</p>	<p><i>A</i> firm plan in place to deliver your nation's fair share of the Paris agreement. A number of other countries have stepped up since the Paris summit by committing to net zero emissions targets by 2040 or 2050. They include France, Iceland and New Zealand - but also some developing nations such as Costa Rica and Bhutan.</p> <p>Other nations have already set net-zero targets in line with the Paris Accord, and the UK should logically adopt one too.</p> <p><i>Countries</i> such as Sweden and New Zealand have already set net zero targets.</p>
<p>Campaigners</p>	<p><i>Now</i> it's time for the UK to begin a new phase of leadership that would make a fair contribution to the Paris Agreement's 1.5 degree goal.</p> <p><i>We</i> need a fair transition to zero emissions farming with fair policies.</p>

Policy

*Other* countries have set net zero targets with dates between 2030 and 2050, including France, Norway, Sweden, Iceland and New Zealand

Reports

*The* 80% target was adopted so that the UK would contribute an equitable share to global efforts to keeping the increase in global mean temperatures to within 2°C above the pre-industrial levels

Category: Co-benefits

Media

*Climate* laws deliver something that in a healthy democracy is invaluable for businesses and citizens: certainty. Certainty helps citizens, companies, investors and the government itself to make better decisions. For example, it is clearly good sense that all new houses are built so as to waste very little energy, so eliminating the need for more expensive retro-fitting in a decade's time.

*Setting* ourselves the goal of net zero emissions will spur innovation, building on existing British know-how to get us all the way to net zero, creating new industries and jobs across the UK in clean technologies like carbon capture and storage.

Campaigners

*A* zero carbon target will drive the innovation we need in our economy to create new jobs, build warm homes and improve public transport. In particular, we need to see action from government to reverse the worrying trend of rising numbers of cars on our roads driving an increase in transport emissions. Government needs to give up on building more roads and trying to give airlines tax breaks. Instead it needs to listen to the public and fix the roads we already have, and invest in up-to-date buses, trains and cycle lanes to help people get on with their daily lives.

*The* UK Government's Clean Growth Strategy has embraced the benefits to be gained in cutting carbon across the economy and the massive global markets that have opened up in cleaner energy and vehicles.

*Leave* a better environment for the next generation, provide a boost to our vibrant clean economy, and show international leadership and political commitment to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement.

*A* clean and secure economy.

Policy

*The* UK will need to legislate for a net-zero emissions target at an appropriate point in the future to provide legal certainty on where the UK is heading.

*A* net zero emissions target will cut energy bills by improving the efficiency of our homes and businesses, it will get rid of the exhaust pipe emissions that pollute the air we breathe, and it will help to bring about the restoration of our natural habitats so they become stores of carbon, from forests to peatlands. We can have a greener Britain with cleaner air – and by making a clean break from harmful emissions.

Reports

*Since* the passing of the [Climate Change] Act, the UK has seen several domestic and international benefits: accelerated emission reduction; decoupled economic growth; lower consumer bills; new industries; and international leadership.

*In* offshore wind, the UK has 40% of the total global installed capacity, more than any other country, while one in five battery powered electric cars driven in Europe was built in the UK.

*In* industrialized countries, the average person is already eating twice as much meat as is deemed healthy by experts. Overconsumption is already contributing to the rise of obesity and non-communicable diseases like cancer and type-2 diabetes, and it is a growing problem: global meat consumption is set to rise by over 75 per cent by 2050.

Category: Definitions/policies

Media

*Ways* of meeting the net-zero target could include investing in projects to grow trees and restore soils, to take up greater carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, as well as more controversial measures such as investing in emissions reduction projects overseas. Even with such methods, the UK is likely to have to bring forward targets on phasing out diesel and petrol engines, and expand renewable energy generation and, potentially, nuclear power.

*An* SNP pledge to make Scotland a ‘zero emissions’ nation will lead to food shortages and cut the country off from the rest of the world. But documents released alongside the legislation warn that meeting ‘net-zero’ could mean taking steps which would have ‘a substantial detrimental impact on people’s wellbeing and the economic growth of Scotland’.

The report warns: ‘Requiring reductions in emissions from farming beyond what can be achieved through efficiency and technology would mean reducing the amount of food produced in Scotland’.

	<p><i>Net</i> zero means reducing carbon emissions close to zero and then balancing out any remainder by, for example, planting trees or restoring peatlands which soak up carbon from the atmosphere.</p> <p><i>The</i> Paris Agreement includes a target for the world to “achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century”.</p> <p><i>Adopting</i> a new legal net-zero emissions target sets the ambition of effectively ending the UK’s contribution to climate change.</p>
Campaigners	<p><i>Today’s</i> results show that setting stretching targets works by driving innovation and strong policy delivery. This success, along with support from the public, leading scientists and farming groups, should give the Scottish government the confidence to aim high once again and set a net zero emissions target, by 2050 at the latest, in the new Climate Change Bill.</p> <p><i>We’d</i> like to see energy waste cut from our buildings, carbon pollution taken out of our transport, our land use helping to absorb emissions, and generation of energy from renewable sources accelerated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Upgrade existing homes we can ensure affordable, comfortable and healthy spaces while avoiding costly future upgrades</li><li>● We need a transition to clean cars as soon as possible: petrol and diesel cars account for the majority of transport carbon emissions and are polluting the air we breathe. This can be accelerated by fully electrifying public sector fleets and phasing out petrol and diesel from city centres by 2030</li><li>● UK renewables are a now a clear success story. They deliver truly sustainable wildlife-friendly solutions to the climate crisis</li><li>● We need a countryside that works for people, wildlife and the climate. We need new policies and targets to reduce greenhouse gases from the land and countryside, and promote long-term carbon storage in soils</li><li>● The UK can use its aid funding and trade deals to help other nations shift to cleaner economies</li></ul>
Policy	<p><i>Cleaner</i> air, a better environment, zero emission vehicles, a strong clean economy – those are our goals</p>

## Reports

*Net* zero is defined as achieving “a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases”.

*Models* show that to avert dangerous levels of climate change, global carbon dioxide emissions must fall to zero later this century. Most of these emissions arise from energy use. An energy system that does not add any CO<sub>2</sub> to the atmosphere (a net-zero emissions energy system). A successful transition to a future net-zero emissions energy system is likely to depend on vast amounts of inexpensive, emissions-free electricity. To achieve a robust, reliable, and affordable net-zero emissions energy system later this century, efforts to research, develop, demonstrate, and deploy those candidate technologies must start now.

*Surface* transport now holds the dubious crown of being the sector that emits the most greenhouse gas emissions in the UK. Of these emissions, cars, vans and HGVs account for almost 90%. Cars alone account for over 50%. In a zero emission world, most of these cars would not be allowed.

*Overall*, the strength of the objective varies across countries. This is due, amongst others, to the lack of a common definition of net-zero, and to the fact that countries differ in the amount of international offset credits that can be used to meet these targets.

## Category: The use of numbers and technical language

## Media

*195* governments freely and willingly committed not only to keep global warming well below 2C, but to aim for the safer level of 1.5C. And they committed to bring net greenhouse gas emissions down to zero.

*The* committee recently suggested the UK would have to meet the net-zero target by 2045-50 in order to do its bit to ensure global temperature rises do not exceed 1.5C.

## Campaigners

*Fossil-fuel* dependent cars and vans need to be removed from sale by 2030, a step-change in energy efficiency standards in our construction industry should be prioritised, and the government must accept that no new runway at Heathrow will fit inside our carbon budget.

*Research* shows that the ‘Zero Carbon 2016’ standard would have added just 1.4% to the cost of a standard home, whilst lowering energy bills to 80% below the national standard.

*Phasing* out diesel and petrol cars could boost jobs, with an EV workforce of 100,000 producing up to 1 million EVs per year, and attract new investment in the UK auto industry.

Reports

*Ultimately*, the report finds that the scientific, technological, and legal case for adopting a new, legal net zero emissions target in the UK is strong.

*For* the UK to be compatible with the 1.5°C goal, the CCC has estimated that it would need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 86%–96% by 2050 below 1990 levels.

*Shifting* to healthier patterns of meat eating will be critical to keeping global warming below the ‘danger level’ of two degrees Celsius, the main goal of the climate negotiations in Paris.

Category: Reference to Climate Change

Media

*Keep* climate change within safe boundaries. Claiming that net zero is impossible would mean giving up on the imperative of halting climate change; accepting that we will never hold back the tide of rising sea levels, failing food supplies, species extinctions and an acidifying ocean. That is not a world that I can bequeath to my children and grandchildren; nor, I believe, can any responsible leader

Campaigners

*For* a safe climate we need all governments to aim for cutting pollution to net zero levels by 2050.

*A* UK net zero emissions target before 2050...means that by mid century the UK will no longer be contributing to climate change.

*The* British public cares deeply for the people, places and natural beauty that could be lost to climate change.

*We* need new policies and targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the land and countryside. These need to set us on a pathway towards climate-neutral forms of farming, promote long-term carbon storage in soils and grow our carbon sinks through restoring valuable woodlands, peatlands and permanent grasslands.

Reports

*Act* now, climate change will not pause while we consider our options

## Category: Social Norms

<p>Campaigners</p>	<p><i>The</i> British public cares deeply for the people, places and natural beauty that could be lost to climate change.</p> <p><i>More</i> than 50 business leaders from across the construction and property industry wrote to ministers calling for all new buildings to be built to ‘net zero carbon’ standards by 2030.</p> <p><i>Onshore</i> wind public support is at an all-time high of 76%, according to Government polling in April 2018. Brits are fifteen times more likely to strongly support onshore wind than to strongly oppose it.</p> <p><i>Solar</i> public support also hit a record high in 2018, at 87%. Brits are 42 times more likely to strongly support solar than strongly oppose it.</p> <p><i>Recent</i> polling found that 65% of the public would be happy to live within five miles of a wind project, rising to 69% when the project is community-owned. Community ownership reduces opposition to local wind energy – from 24% to just 17%.</p>
<p>Policy</p>	<p><i>A</i> recent poll by Opinium shows that 64% of UK adults agree the UK should aim to cut its emissions to zero over the next few decades</p>
<p>Reports</p>	<p><i>There</i> is clear public support for deeper decarbonisation in the decades ahead, including through the adoption of a new, legal net zero emissions target.</p> <p><i>A</i> large majority of UK adults (90%) believe the UK should cut its emissions at least as quickly as other countries.</p>

## Category: Behaviour Change

<p>Media</p>	<p><i>Almost</i> one-third of the earth’s land is used for raising livestock and, as requirements increase, vast swathes of habitats are being destroyed in order to grow crops for animal consumption... Studies have already shown a decline in the amount being purchased, which suggests that these concerns are already having an impact on buying trends.</p> <p><i>A vegan</i> diet is probably the single biggest way to reduce your impact on planet Earth, not just greenhouse gases, but global acidification, eutrophication, land use and water use, said Joseph Poore, at the University of Oxford, UK, who led the research. It is far bigger than cutting down on your flights or buying an electric car, he said, as these only cut greenhouse gas emissions.</p>
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<p>Campaigners</p>	<p><i>Commonsense</i> Climate Action focuses on the #OneBigChange every person can make to contribute to giving our children the future they deserve on this pale blue dot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Drive less</li> <li>- Fly less</li> <li>- Eat less meat</li> <li>- Buy less fast fashion</li> </ul> <p>Which #OneBigChange will YOU commit to?</p>
<p>Policy</p>	<p><i>If policy-makers</i> are to cover the true cost of human epidemics like obesity, diabetes and cancer, and livestock epidemics like avian flu, while also tackling the twin challenges of climate change and antibiotic resistance, then a shift from subsidisation to taxation of the meat industry looks inevitable,” said Jeremy Coller, the founder of Fairr and the chief investment officer at the private equity firm Coller Capital. “Far-sighted investors should plan ahead for this day</p>
<p>Reports</p>	<p><i>The</i> proportion of respondents who agree that air travel harms the environment has fallen from 70% 2006 to 59% in 2014. (see link for many more stats)</p> <p><i>Three</i> in ten people in Britain (29%) say they have reduced the amount of meat they eat in the past 12 months. Researchers also asked people who had given up meat, reduced their intake or were thinking about doing so, what had influenced their decision. Over half (58%) of people in this group cited health reasons as a reason for consuming less meat. Other reasons for reducing meat consumption included: saving money (mentioned by 21% of people), concerns over animal welfare ( mentioned by 20% of people), concerns around food safety in relation to meat (mentioned by 19% of people). One in 10 (11%) people in this group mentioned environmental concerns as a reason for reducing their meat intake.</p> <p><i>Animal</i> factory farming is exposed to at least 28 environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues that could significantly damage financial value over the short or long-term. Many of these risks are currently hidden from investors.</p>

*Notes from conversations and email exchanges with external partners were used alongside of these materials, in combination with the aims of the project, to create a script for the workshops and three narratives to test with workshop participants.*

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## Narrative workshop design

We ran two narrative workshops, one in central London on 17th July 2018, and the other in Gloucester on 19th July 2018. Recruitment was managed through a professional recruitment agency, and there were 11 participants in each workshop. Participants were selected on the basis of their values (screened through a set of 'centre-right' questions Climate Outreach have refined through a number of centre-right workshops).

Narrative Workshops employ a discussion group methodology developed by Climate Outreach over a number of years.<sup>14</sup> There are three elements to the Narrative Workshop design. The first section is an exploration of values held in common by the participants. This identification of common ground (and centre-right audiences typically coalesce here around values of respect, responsibility, and integrity) provides a productive basis for subsequent discussions. In the second part of the workshop the discussion then moved on to carefully tailored prompts, allowing participants to engage with the themes of the workshop (in this case climate change and net zero). We used this time to discuss opinions on alternative names for net zero.

The final section of the workshop involves participants working on their own reading three narratives created for the project, marking any statements they disagree with in red and any they agree with in green. Each narrative marking session is followed with a plenary discussion of the choices made and the reasons for those choices. The process is therefore a funnelling of attention, from a broad consideration of values, through open deliberation on net zero and climate change, finishing with a focused exploration of responses to the language being used in the public sphere.

<sup>14</sup> Shaw, C. and Corner, A. (2017) 'Using Narrative Workshops to socialise the climate debate: lessons from two case studies - centre right audiences and the Scottish public.' Energy Research and Social Science. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2017.06.029>