



# FLiNT

# Storybook

# Communities and Climate Change in a Future Wales

July 2022

Storybook produced by FLiNT under Partnership Agreement between FLiNT and the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, and in association with Public Health Wales (December 2021 to March 2022)



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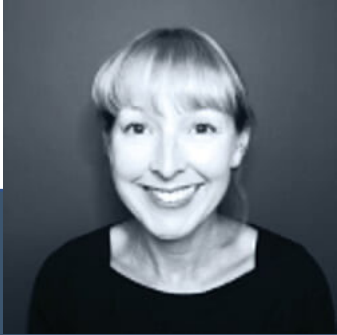




FLINT



# FLiNT - Futures Literacy through Narrative Who Are We?



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This storybook synthesizes, summarizes, and illustrates the project findings in three ways. It includes:

- A selection of key themes, observations, and policy considerations.
- A series of illustrative gifs to accompany the findings.
- A portfolio of fictional 'letters to/from the future' and character sketches co-produced by community stakeholders who were asked to imagine life in a future Wales (taking the year 2045 as the time horizon).

**It is designed to be read as a companion piece to the project's 'Methodologies' slide-deck. Elements of this can be removed and abstracted as required, subject to the Creative Commons license.**



# Background

## The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the five ways of working

The Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 – embeds sustainable development and health in policies across public bodies and policy sectors. Wellbeing Goals include health, equality, resilience, global responsibility; the Five Ways of Working are **long-term thinking, prevention, integration, collaboration, involvement**.

All Public Services Boards must publish a Wellbeing Assessment and Plan every 5 years for their local authority areas.

Welsh Government Programme for Government 2021 aims to: **“Embed response to the climate and nature emergency in everything we do”**

However, in the last set of Wellbeing Assessments (2017) **“there was a lack of interpretation especially of climate impacts and how they might impact on landscape, particular communities, or vulnerable groups”** (Netherwood et al. 2017).

The purpose of this project was therefore to understand how particular communities and vulnerable groups feel about the impacts of climate change, and how these impacts might exacerbate existing inequalities. This **involved** participants, identified through working **collaboratively** with community partners, to prompt discussions informed by **long-term thinking** about climate and inequalities, and considering what problems might need **preventing**, with the findings **integrating** with other studies and projects in the field.

## Inequality in a Future Wales Report

The project was prompted by the findings of the 2021 report for Welsh Government: *Inequality in a Future Wales: Areas for action in work, climate, and demographic change*. The Report found that:

“Understanding existing intersecting socio-economic inequalities provides a platform to avoid the unintended consequences of new climate and work policies.

By ensuring their redistributive intent in the short term, we may avoid entrenching new inequalities in the long term.

This approach also ensures policy changes in work, climate and demographics are viewed as intersecting: that is, shaped by each other”, p. 9

This **Communities and Climate Change in a Future Wales** project set out to use creative futuring methods in a pilot study to find new ways towards a deeper understanding of these issues. The project elected to use the elicitation technique of storytelling in a quest to understand the viewpoints and experiences of people in disadvantaged communities as they face the future effects of climate change. These included the effects of flooding, of pollution, of decarbonisation in local industry, and of wider net zero initiatives in their area. We were especially keen to reach people whose voices aren't usually heard by government and policy makers.

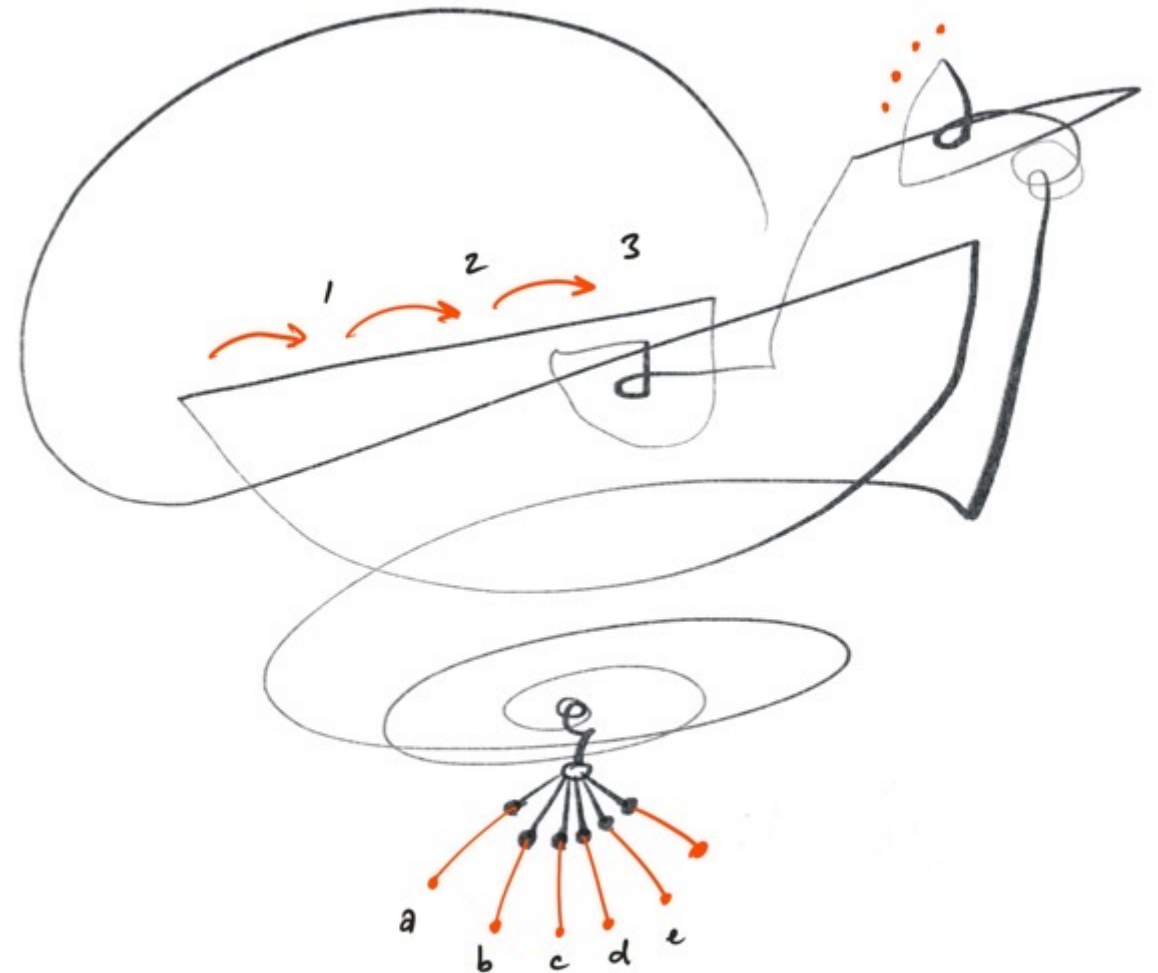
Our use of storytelling helped to mitigate against survey fatigue in affected communities as well as to garner a rich source of qualitative data on this topic.

The aims and objectives of the **Communities and Climate Change in a Future Wales** project were:

To ensure the voices of marginalised and/or under-represented communities are heard in the development of climate change policy in order to avoid future trends carrying existing inequalities into future generations.

To use creative elicitation and innovative futures literacy techniques to empower these communities to imagine their priorities and preferences, hopes and fears, around future climate change in order for their views to shape policy thinking.

To provide resources and learning to public bodies and other decision makers to enable them to use these approaches in their work and so embed community involvement and long-term ways of working in their own activities.







# Project Overview

To achieve these aims, the project team (working in close collaboration with Public Health Wales, the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, and community leaders) co-designed a suite of activities targeted towards accessing specific hard to reach – ‘need to reach’ – communities.

Key community stakeholders (representing groups and areas with current lived experience of inequalities in Wales) were identified by Public Health Wales, the Office of the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales, and community leaders (through two dedicated focus group meetings) and invited to participate in the project.

Using creative character-led storytelling activities run as workshops (lasting up to three hours) and storytelling competitions, participants were asked to share their particular insights into the future impacts of climate change now and into the longer-term.

Activities were conducted using in-person facilitated workshops, or online video conferencing platforms (Zoom). No stories, conversations, or workshops were digitally recorded (in order to encourage participants to speak candidly) but in each case an (anonymized) story or set of story notes was collected from each participant and considered for analysis and illustration.

No participants are identified or identifiable as a named individual (or network of data points) in any output arising from this research.

- **For more information on the Project Methodology, please see the accompanying Methods Report.**

# Key Themes and Observations



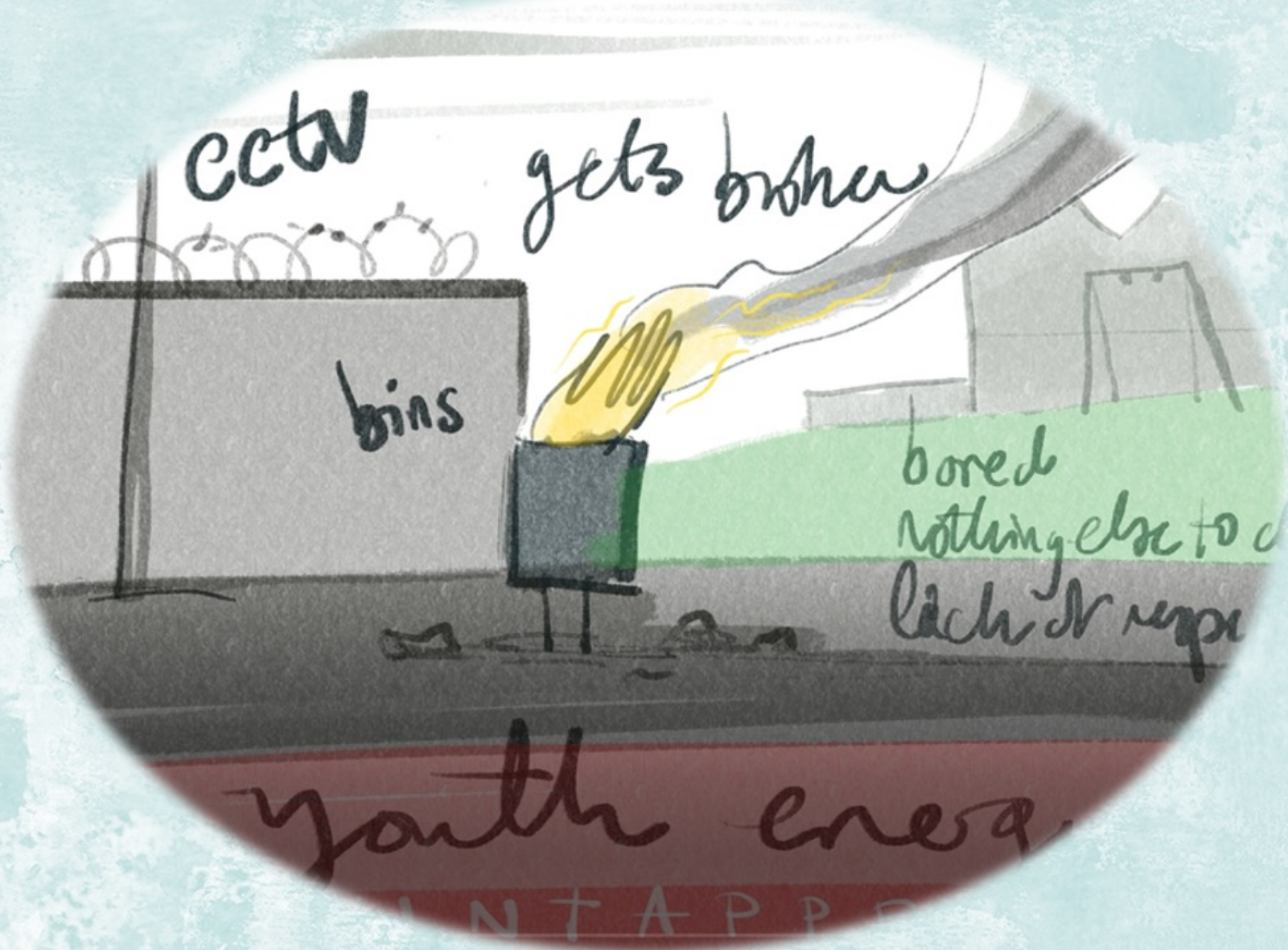
# 1. Climate Means Home

Communities do not think about global climate issues, the environment, and local neighbourhood matters as separate, disconnected things. People are keenly aware of how all of these, while functioning at different scales, relate to how humans respect their 'home' or not.

Bins being set alight on the street by disaffected young people, dog muck, rising energy costs, flooding, heatwaves – they are all viewed as a result of a fundamental disconnect from, or disrespect of, our planetary 'home' and fellow species.

This interconnected thinking should be considered, and can be further enhanced and developed, when approaching any proposed climate-change solutions.





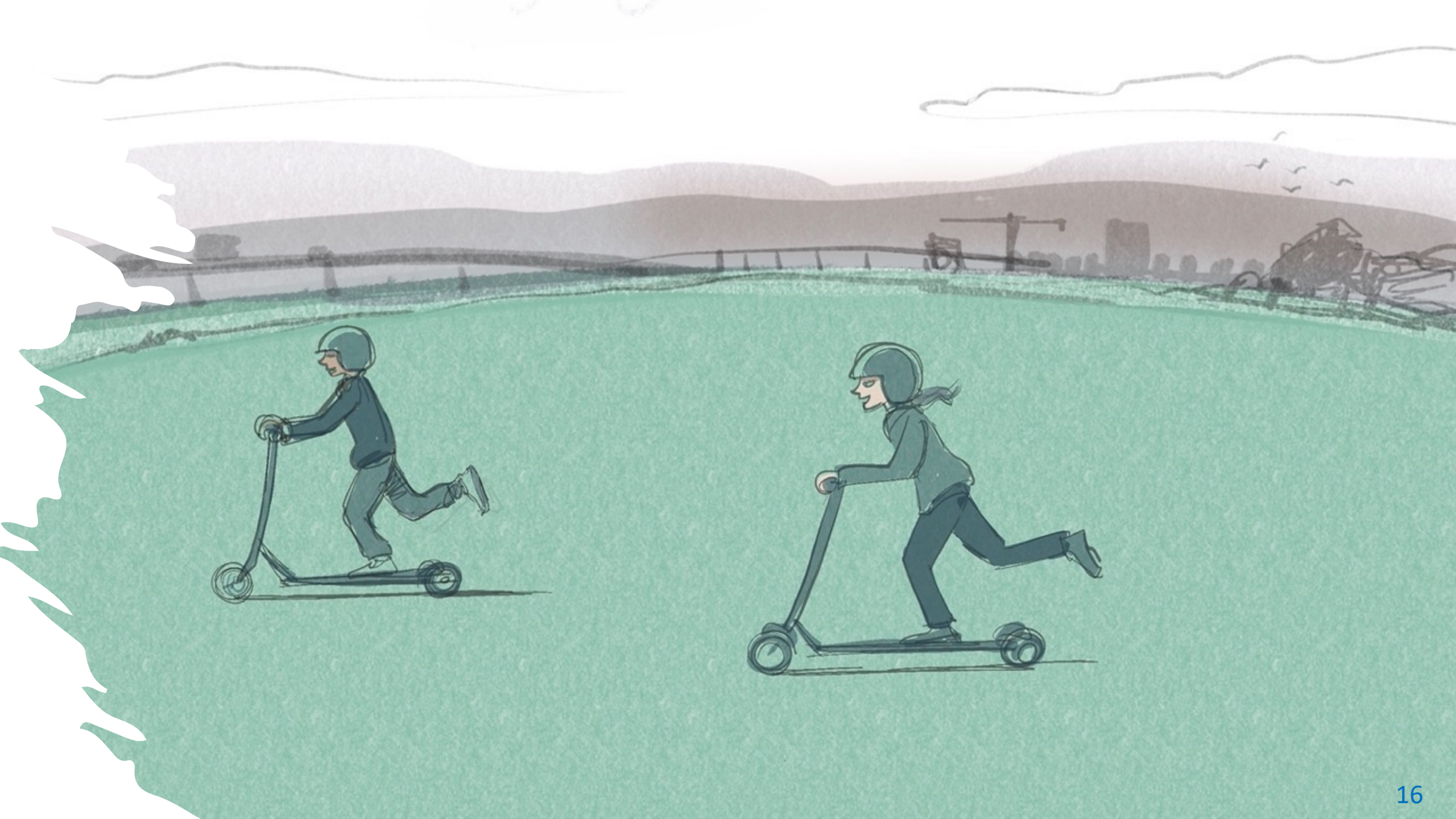
## 2. Green Futures

All communities involved in the project wanted access to more green space. They were particularly concerned about the lack of safe, green spaces for children's outdoor activities.

Many participants had experienced local government reneging on plans for communal green spaces and prioritising new housing builds instead, or feared that such initiatives would be abandoned or developed over in the future.

Participants expressed concern over poor air quality and pollution, reporting the (many) adverse impacts on their health. They were also keenly aware of the value of engaging with the natural world, especially its flora and fauna, for their physical and mental health.





# 3. Hard Learning

Low economic status and education levels among disadvantaged communities do not necessarily correspond with limited understanding of climate-change issues.

Poorer communities have often developed strategies for living that are both 'greener' and more cost-effective. We encourage decision-makers to learn from these communities and encourage them to share their lived experiences and 'life hacks' with others.

For example, members of the community are adept at timing their use of energy intense items such as washing machines to draw energy from their solar panels rather than the mains. They are also adept at monitoring their Smart Energy meters to keep track of spending and modifying their energy usage accordingly, policing their own activities due to cost.





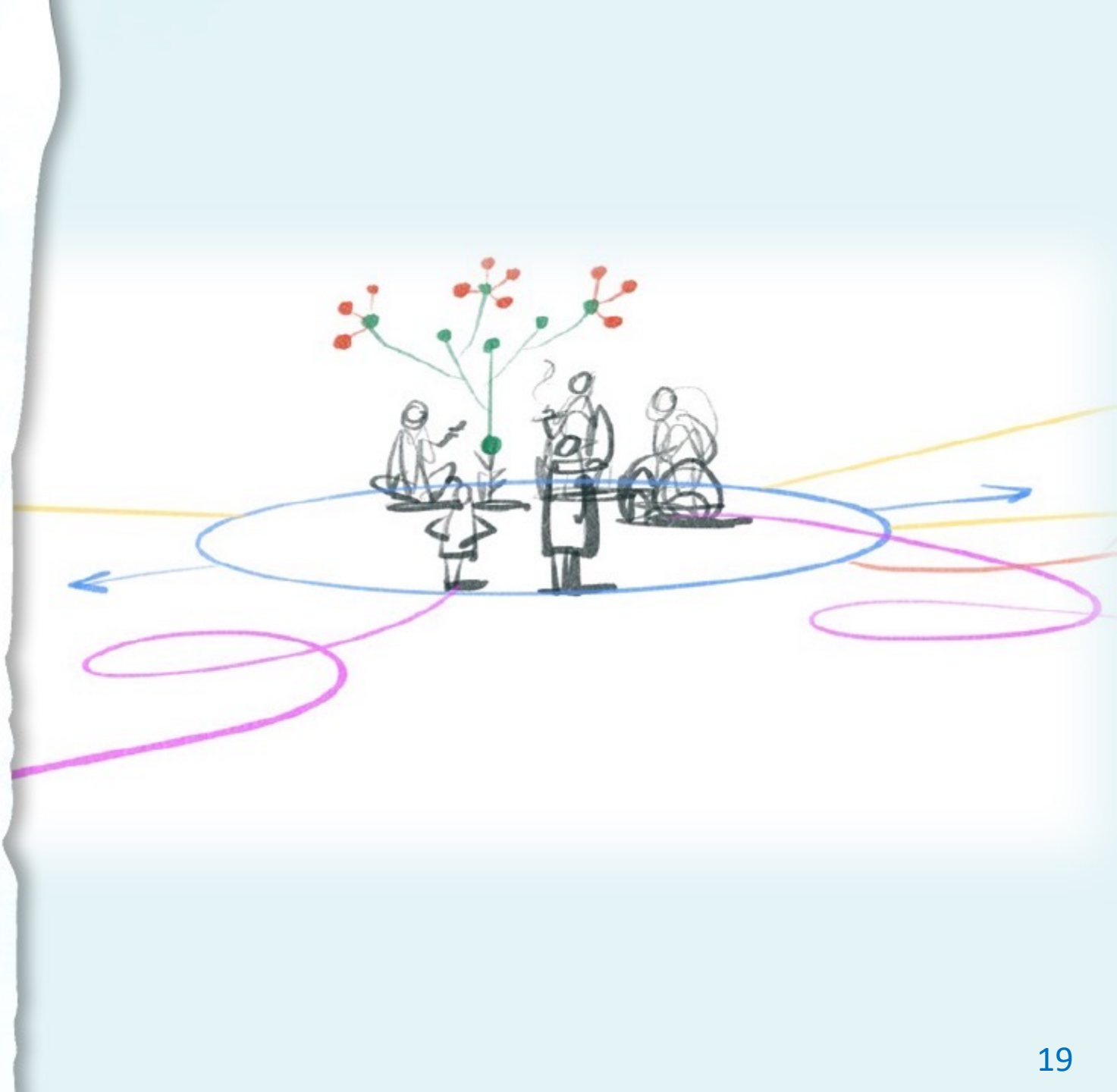


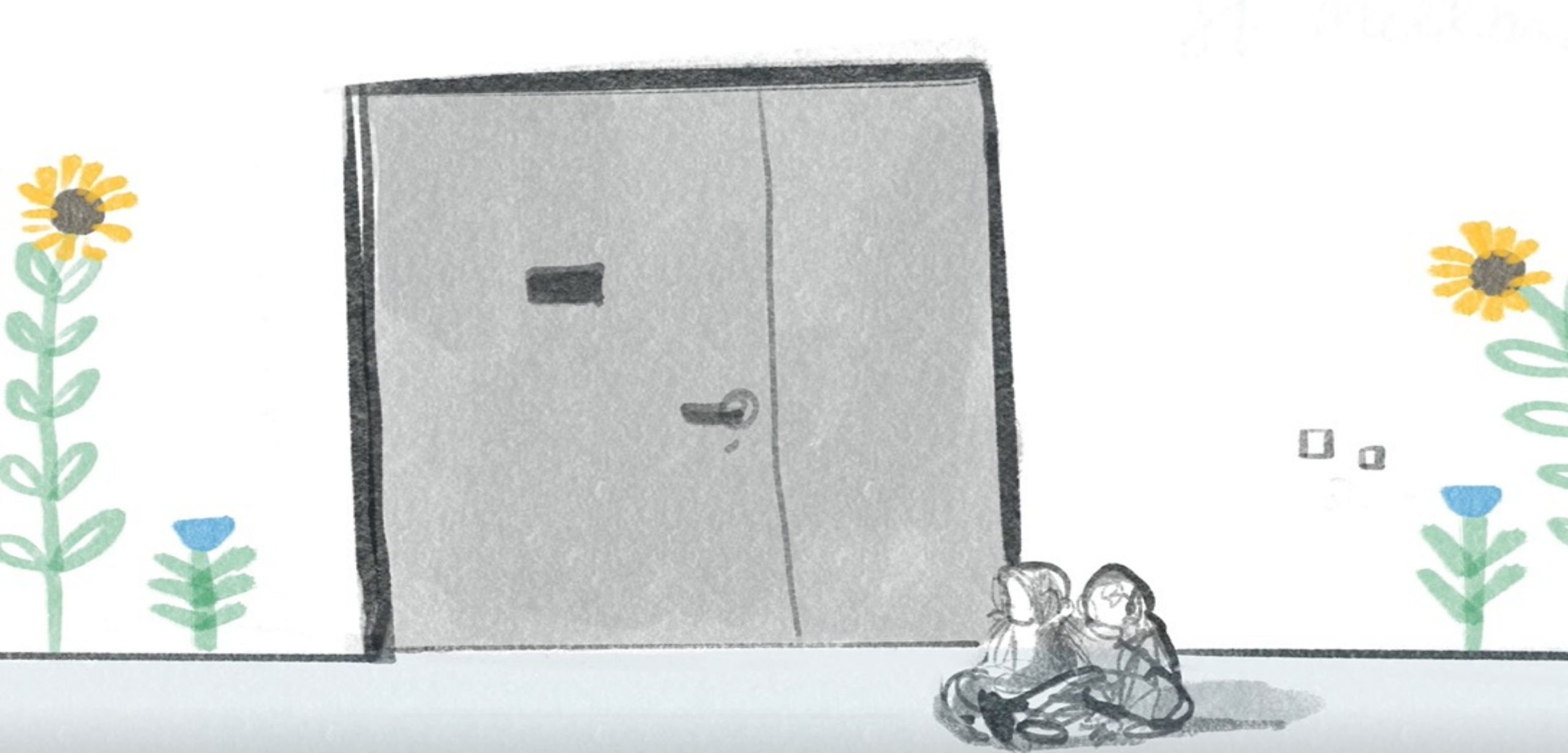
# 4. Community Action

Tackling climate change and achieving net zero 'takes a village', and participants recognized and celebrated the value of their communities. Ground-up collaborations and community-led actions should be key to informing and delivering targets in both climate change and health.

For communities to come together and organise local green initiatives, food-sharing opportunities for reducing food waste, etc., communities need an accessible and welcoming space.

However, for poorer communities, cost is a premium. Such groups are often prevented from coming together in a shared space for communal activities because of the prohibitive costs of renting an appropriate venue, lack of childcare provision, etc.





# 5. Futures Fears

Fears about the future are not just about the direct impacts of climate change. There is a real concern that both climate change and proposed mitigations will hit already marginalised communities hardest. This risk is widely recognised by people with disabilities, social renters, women of colour, and migrant communities in Wales.

People with disabilities, for example, are keenly aware of the potential isolation and exclusion that flooding, food scarcity, and economic migration may mean for them. They are also anxious about the ways in which mitigations against climate change may also adversely affect them (such as net zero transport initiatives).

Participants felt that they lacked agency in determining their own futures, and that policies are something that happens to them, not through them.

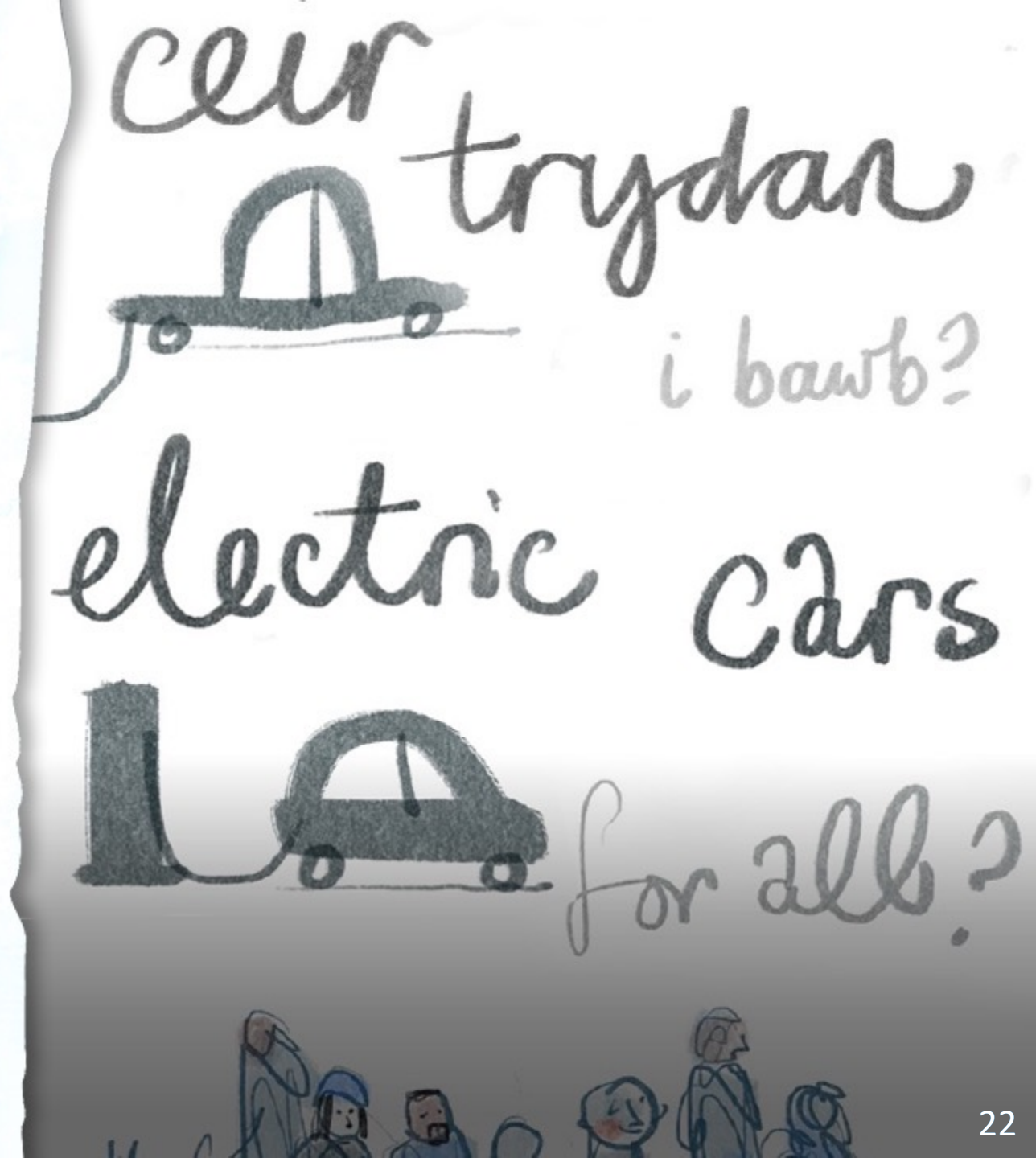


## 6. Left Behind by Transport

Car-less social renters already find transport costs and mobility difficult. For example, cheaper supermarkets are typically located outside of town centres; shopping trips require expensive taxis, which can outweigh any savings made. Relying on public transport also makes buying in bulk difficult, particularly for the mobility-impaired, for older people, and for families with young children.

For those who drive, there is a worry that replacing their cars with electric vehicles will be financially impossible, especially if their car is adapted to accommodate a disability. They see the importance of greener transport, but are unable to see how their needs are being accommodated.

Net-zero transport ambitions are causing anxiety. Plans should consider quality-cost ratios and location of key services, such as shops, schools, and health provision.





# Stories, voices and lived experiences

## Postcards to the Future





People still do  
ordinary things,  
but it's hot.

# Farming Futures

Hi future me.

You might not remember writing this because eighteen years has passed... Did my (our) plan work out?

My plan is (or was!) to go to university, deal with the thought of putting my hand inside someone's mouth and become a dentist - all so I could use my wages to buy a farm. In 2022, if you are just getting started with farming, unless you inherit it all, you have to buy your own stock and machinery, feed and land - and that's expensive. So you need a good job first or some kind of government financial support to start a career in farming.

The costs of farming in 2022 are already sky high. The prices of fertilizer and feed are going through the roof. Electricity prices are going up, so dad is always turning the lights off when we are still in the room and threatens to go in our piggy banks and make us pay the bills if we don't turn the lights off!

I know my plans for the future probably won't work out but I hope we are a step closer to making Wales and the rest of the world a better place.

From present me.



# A Refugee Story

Hi future me.

How are you? Here in Wales things are going well.

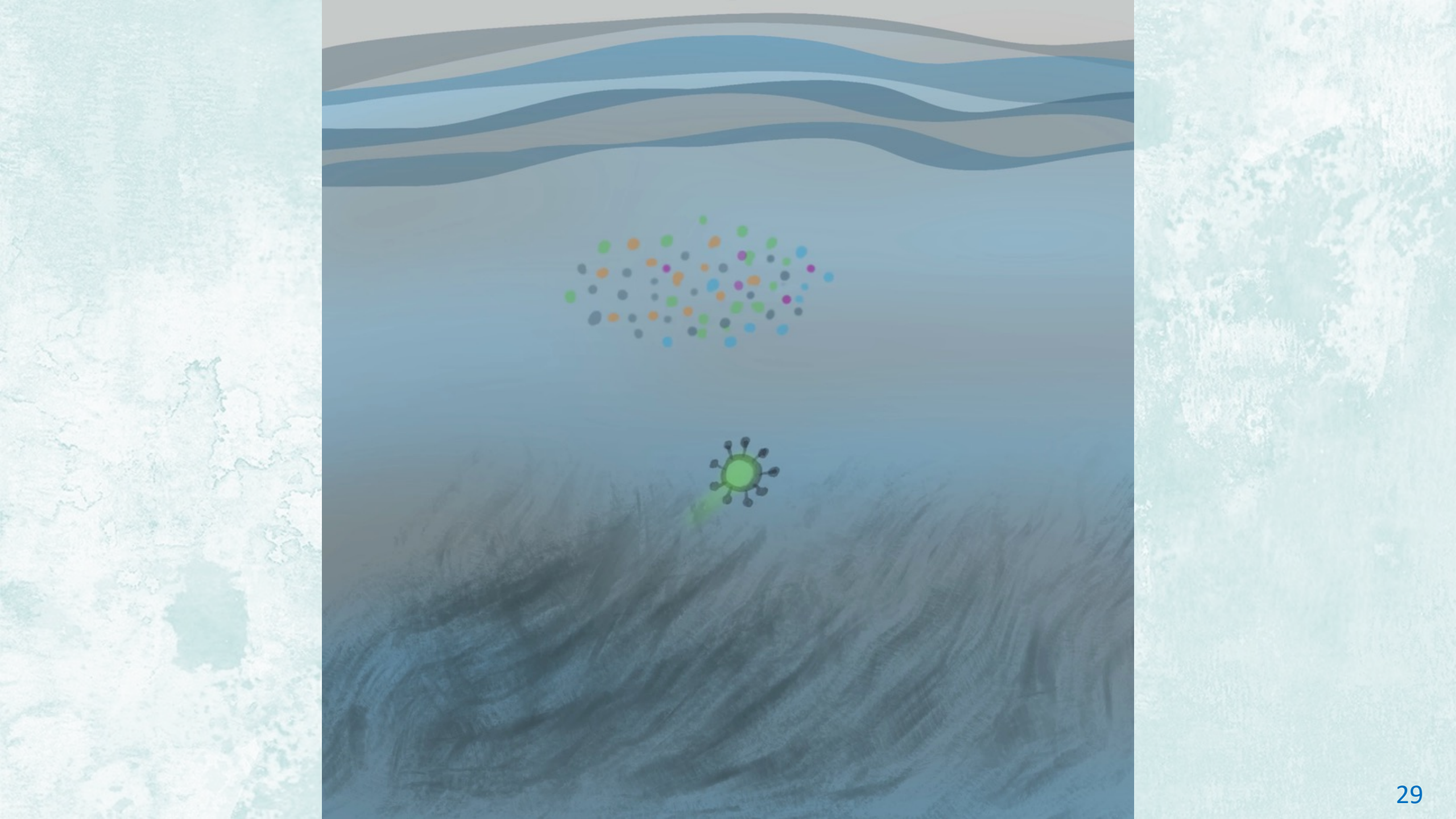
Time has helped me get over my father's death but I am still disoriented.

I came here to continue my studies and I know I will have better opportunities for a better future for my children here too. Here I have friends, people are so kind and help me to integrate.

But it is challenging – especially losing the support of friends and family who are still living in Africa. It is freezing cold and there are such strong winds here – so different from Cameroon.

I still enjoy the beaches and like to swim in the sea here. But I worry that the sea is becoming dangerous for humans: micro-organisms, chemicals, and industrial waste are polluting all kinds of water sources. I wonder if I'll still be able to swim in 2040?

From present me.





# Save the planet, save Porthcawl!

Hi future me.

Most of us today worry about the floods – wondering, what if it gets really bad?

I worry that if climate change carries on it could cause even more floods. People could get wet or even drown – and the sheep out in the fields will die. If the storms keep happening, people will have damaged homes.

Storms will put extra pressure on the emergency services because people will need rescuing.

I am worried about people losing their homes to flooding if climate change continues.

We need to save our planet; we can do this by walking more and using less electricity, using less water, less plastic, less petrol and diesel.

Save the planet, save Porthcawl!

From present me.



## Saving (for) the future

### To my future Granddaughter.

I'm so sorry that I never got to go on holiday with you, my love, but I couldn't afford to. Nanny had to save all her money to keep herself warm when winter comes. It's cold and damp.

I have multi health conditions already and I worry about getting worse. I look tired all the time because I don't get a lot of sleep at night for fear of the next lot of bills coming in. I need to be saving as much as I can for fuel costs so I can get through the winter.

I hope that in the future when you're my age you'll be able to sleep and have much less stress and worry to cope with. Saving is hard already with the cost of living as it is, but I worry it will be even harder in the future. Already there's no local shops and no local doctors, and we're overrun with rats.

Still, I hope the things we worked for back in 2022 have stayed good. Youth clubs for all ages, creches for classes, lots of outdoor things for kids to do, qualification opportunities for parents (like first aid and childcare and cooking), bingo nights, yoga, meditation, and dance in the Beacon centre - Flying Start available for everyone and for all areas.

Most of all, I hope the community gardens are flourishing and that our community is still as friendly as ever and everyone helps to look after the gardens and green spaces.

Love, Nanny xxx



## Lambing season

### Letter to my future self from 2022 to 2040.

It's the end of March, the weather is fine, and lambing is in full swing. We're currently lambing out but waiting for the tables to turn, the weather to change, and then we will have to bring all the ewes in to finish lambing.

It was only four years ago when the Beast from the East was here and we were lambing in three foot of snow.

I wonder what lambing 2040 will be like. Will there even be a lambing 2040?

Russia and Ukraine are at war, red diesel is at 127ppl and white is 179ppl. Feed wheat is currently 296£/t, when last year it was 196£/t. Livestock prices over the last two years have gone up, but where will they be come 2040?

Will we even be farming with the current government pushing for reducing emissions by planting trees, and taking up valuable farm land?

The only thing I can be certain of is that the future is uncertain.

From present me.





# Stories, voices and lived experiences

## Postcards from the Future



# A Time Traveller's Tale

Dear Mum,

This might sound impossible, but I think I have travelled to the future... I'm in 2045 and may even be stuck here.

It's not how I imagined the future would be. People still hang out, children still go to schools and make new friends, and people are closer to their families than I have ever seen. But there are no holograms, we can't control things with our mind, robots haven't taken over all the factories, humans haven't landed on other planets, and we've all just about given up on our planet.

The weather is far warmer than it is at home – it's like a long, long heatwave. I haven't gotten to winter yet, but by the looks of things, it's going to be one wet winter. Rivers regularly overflow, there's no ice left in Antarctica, wildfires occur every other day, getting food is more difficult than it has ever been. And the worst thing ... it's too late to do anything about it.

I'm not sure if this letter will get to you but please, if it does, tell people that if they don't stop now it's going to be too late. Tell people that there's so much they can do to help. Starting with using their voices. They must make their voices heard by those in power who can make a bigger difference. Try to eat less meat and dairy, fly less, drive less, reduce the amount of energy used, respect green spaces such as gardens and parks, cut consumption and waste and talk about the changes that you make. We need to do this in 2022 because by 2045 it will be too late.

Your loving daughter, Me



# Of mermaids and robots

Hi there!

Hi there! Living in 2040 is very different to living in 2022. Lots of things have changed – some for the good and some for the bad.

To start with, travelling is very different now that cars drive by themselves. Nope, there are still no flying cars (hopefully one day though)! Planes don't need a pilot anymore either.

Mermaids have been brought back from extinction and exist in Wales now – though there's still not many of them in the wild at the moment.

Robots are a really big thing right now and there are lots of them, all looking exactly like real humans. I often don't know whether I'm talking to a human or a machine!

Unfortunately, a few animals have become extinct since 2022. Polar bears, orangutans, and more. There's only a little bit of Antarctica left and most of the ice has melted. I suppose that's why the polar bears and some other animals no longer exist but why we have mermaids again.

But as well as all these things changing, lots has stayed the same. Most animals are still far from extinction, kids still have to go to school, and so on. So, in some ways I guess 2040 is actually just an updated version of 2022!





Coffe  
bot



bot  
Coffi

# Future Cardiff

Hey! How are you doing?

Last time I saw you, we were struggling to survive. It's hard to believe how much worse the planet has become since we were kids at school.

I'm doing well and I've moved to a new town. It's incredible. It borders the sea, with thousands of miles of pipes spreading all around getting sea water to the places that need it most. It has very modern and futuristic buildings, all made out of recycled materials, all with a sky garden, and all powered entirely by solar panels and renewables.

The transport systems are wonderfully comfortable and efficient too. We have lots of electric trains, electric cars, and electric buses, and other modern and eco-friendly ways of getting around the city, with electricity to power all transport produced by windmills that catch sea breezes or tidal power as the city is next to the coast.

People stay happy and healthy with top-of-the-line hospitals and health care, as well as modern and safe playgrounds and parks. There are lots of public green spaces, and open courtyards inside public buildings and apartment blocks. The city offers free health care and education.

You should come visit one day. I would love to see you.

Hugs,



## A tree for the future

Dear Nain,

I know you don't know me (you're not a nain yet!), but I'm your granddaughter from 2050. Do you remember that tree you planted when dad (sorry, Rowan) was born, back in 2012? I'm sorry to say that it's just been cut down, when the council decided that they needed that land for more houses, although you told me that was part of a community tree-planting project (trust me, that sounds really silly today). I don't know why they're building more houses, cos we've got loads of empty houses around here most of the year, but they are and they got rid of it...

Anyway, I was really sad about them cutting the tree down, especially as dad's not around anymore; I don't really want to spoil anything for you, but hold him tight from me (I've seen that picture with the daft t-shirt – that's this year's holiday to Aber for you, right?). I miss him so much, and so does mum, and you do too.

So it was you that gave me this idea of writing back in time to you, cos we might not be able to do anything about the flooding, but you wondered if maybe you might try moving? I don't know how you could, so I think you're being hopeful there. I don't really want to ask you to do that – makes it sound like it's your fault and it's not. No, mum and me want you to plant another rowan tree further up the valley, not near the old farm, but in that bit dad used to call 'the jungle'. That's still here and we'd really like to be able to visit there instead.

I love you, then and now!



## Hi Year 10ers in Ysgol Pwllheli in 2022!

I am from the future: I live in 2040, but I am in Year 10 in your school. I've got a puzzle for you. I am writing six things down that have happened between then and now. Which do you think are true and which are false?

1. People will be moving back to Tryweryn soon, because the reservoir is dry. (Apparently, that's a big deal from nearly a hundred years ago, my History teacher says.)
2. We don't read books in Welsh or English anymore – we all have computers we take home with us, and get audiobooks downloaded onto them.
3. There's a new nuclear power plant on Anglesey that powers most of NW Wales, but most of the people working in it come from England.
4. So there's this thing called gentrification we learned about in Geography. Apparently, that's what happened in Bala, so we learn it as a case study now. It means the area got poshed up and the people that did live there couldn't afford to stay – and that's why Bala is so posh today.
5. Another Geography one (sorry, I like Geography) – they built a motorway straight through a mountain in mid-Wales, just to help people move from north to south, but it only really gets used by tourists.
6. A Food & Nutrition one: I had mushroom burgers for dinner yesterday, but we grew them at the village farm. I've never visited a supermarket because the closest one is in Wrexham.

I bet you get them wrong!

# Stories, voices and lived experiences

## Future Wales character sketches



# Madiate

Madiate is 33 years old and came to Wales from Mali following her husband's death from heatstroke.

For the first few days in Wales the family stayed indoors as it was raining so much they could not go anywhere.

The house was so cold that the heater had to stay on all the time – which was hurting Madiate's pockets. She had to make a choice between feeding her children and heating the house.

She wonders whether she made the right decision to bring her family to Wales.



# Moana

My name is Moana, daughter of Mui. I am in my 50s and have three children.

Since settling in Wales I have suffered from hayfever, psoriasis and other skin conditions – which I never had before. I have a lot of friends (BME) who suffer the same since they came to Wales.

For me, hayfever makes life unbearable and I can't function well on the days I have it.

Coupled with that, the heat in the summer here is worse somehow than the heat I am used to in Africa. Is it the pollution in the environment I wonder? Is it going to worse for my children in the future?

We came here to build a better future for the children but I wonder...

# Goke

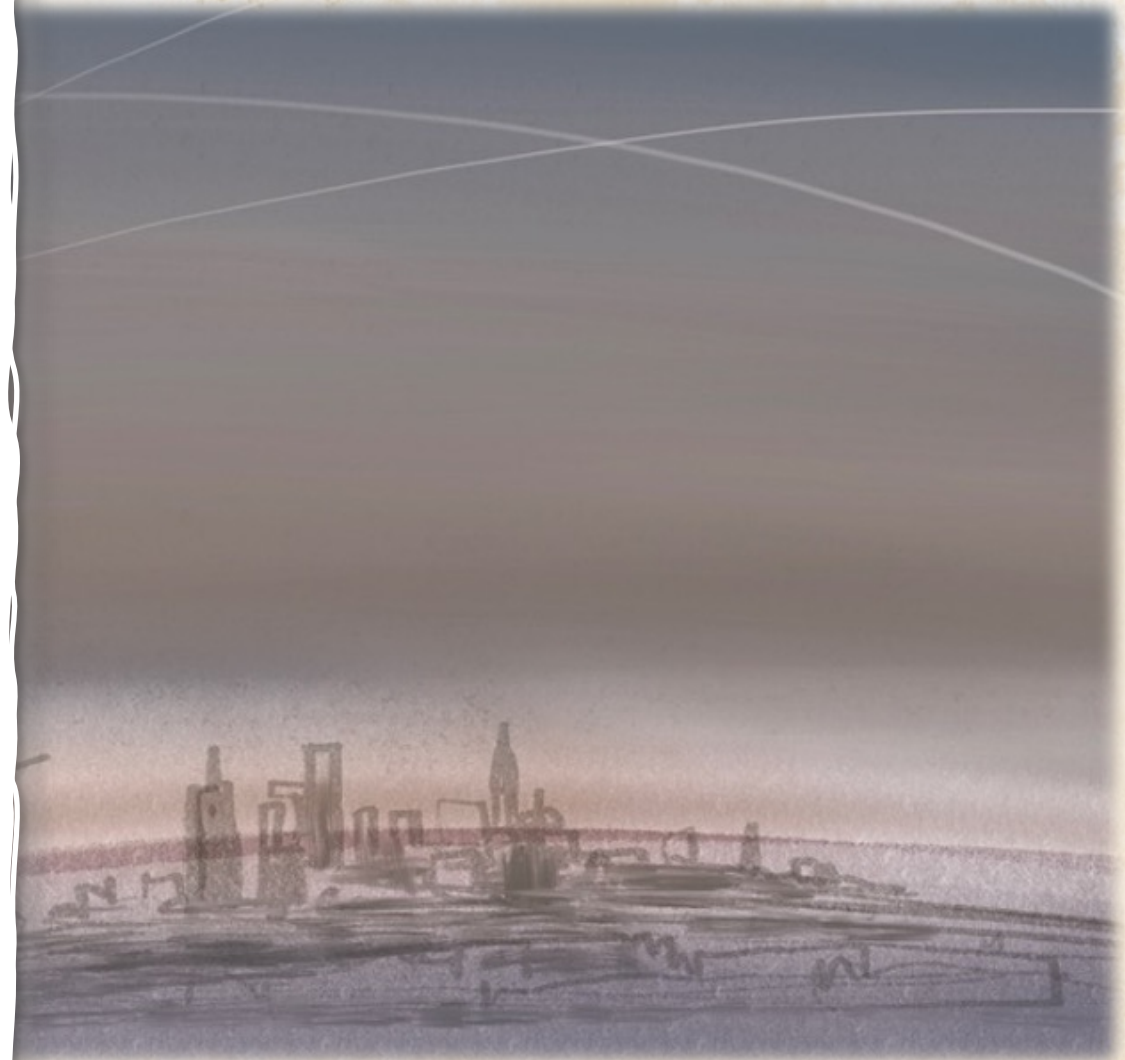
Goke is 25 years old. He lives with his mother and sister in Ebbw Vale.

He has asthma. He works in Cwmbran and commutes to work daily.

During the COVID-19 lockdowns, Goke's asthma condition and attacks reduced greatly because he was working from home and there was less pollution from cars.

Now that lockdown restrictions have been eased, Goke is very concerned that his health will deteriorate again – especially now he has to start commuting again.

What will happen as pollution gets worse?



# Angella

Angella was born and grew up in Uganda.

She migrated to Wales because it was greener and cleaner than so many other places in the UK.

In Uganda she worked in a small farm around her home growing vegetables for her family.

Now she is a construction worker and she worries about climate change – especially about how increasing temperatures will affect outdoor workers such as people in the construction industry and in agriculture.





# Leslie



Leslie Wood has mobility issues and lives in a bungalow which is privately owned. It is flooding more and more regularly, with the result that the value has decreased and she can't get any insurance.

Leslie lives on a very low income. She has no safe retreat and has to spend all her time on an app which will alert her to go to the nearest safe refuge in the village hall if there is a flood alert.

She needs to relocate but her bungalow is worth nothing and she has lost any hope of finding a job. And if she moved she would need to find a new support network. She is very frightened, very lonely, struggling with severe mental health issues. Her future outlook is dark.

# Grannyjan

Grannyjan the storyteller is in her 50s. She is married with two grown up children. She has one grandchild at the moment. She comes from a long line of Welsh people.

At the moment she lives in Llanelli. Last year she finished a Counselling MSc.

She has what is now called 'joint-ail' which makes it difficult to move around – especially with all the mud we are getting now. Her sticks stick in the mud and her wheelchair is hard to push through it. Living in Llanelli, which is mostly below sea level, there is an awful lot of mud!

She has been a Buddhist for many years and always tries to follow the middle way. Grannyjan is an optimist and says the sun will get up tomorrow, and we will see when we have cleared the air.



# Emrys

Emrys Williams is in his 30s and grew up in a working-class, post-industrial valleys community which suffered social and economic collapse.

He attended a tough school with low ambition and aspiration, and suffered mental health issues from a young age.

He cannot access employment locally as he is low-skilled.

He has found being close to the natural world a great benefit, but Emrys is worried about climate change and has no idea how to change anything. He finds the language around it depressing and confusing.



Disability camp — merging  
of centers  
in a shared landscape

# Emily



Emily Parsons is a 19-year-old girl, brought up on a farm which has seen lots of changes over the years.

She had a brother but he died in 2040 when he contracted MRSA, since antibiotic medicines no longer work.

Emily is environmentally-minded and follows the old Greta Thunberg movement.

She is doing a degree in genetics and is worried that the world will try to phase out disabled people.

## James

James is 14 years-old and is in social care. He doesn't like it and misses his father, but he hasn't seen his mother since he was 4.

He's angry a lot of time, particularly about how he doesn't see a future for himself – he thinks no one will want to employ him and he doesn't know what he wants to do anyway. But he's not really angry at all; mostly he's just scared.

In truth, there aren't many jobs around where he lives anyway, unless he wants to work in farming or forestry, and neither appeals to him.

He's just found some friends outside of school, but they're a lot older than him, even if they give him a sense of community that he doesn't get from the other foster kids. One of them, Alex, is known as the local troublemaker, but his best mate, Atiq, plans to go to University next year, which makes James feel sad. Atiq's mother also seems to like him, and is encouraging him to go to University too (plus she makes a mean chocolate brownie).



My name is Izzy.

I love being outdoors, especially during the summer, but in winter it's better to have a shop job. So I have two jobs a year – I work in the local woods from April to August, and then work in the local supermarket from November to March. They don't mind too much, they know that I'm a good worker when I am on the books.

Other times I just pick up what I can, doing odd cash-in-hand carpentry jobs for people.

I like my life. It's not glamorous and where I live isn't really big enough, and has a fair bit of damp, but I get to mostly do what I want, and earn enough to get by.





# Acknowledgements

## With thanks to:

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- [Cwm Taf - People First](#)
- [Women Seeking Sanctuary Advocacy Group Wales](#)
- [Young Farmers Cymru](#)