

Cross-Party Group on the Circular Economy

19th April 2023 – 6pm

The Scottish Parliament

Present

MSPs

- Maurice Golden MSP
- Brian Whittle MSP
- Maggie Chapman MSP
- Lorna Slater MSP

Invited Guests

- Dr Lynn Wilson – Adam Smith Business School
- Dr Kat Duffy – Adam Smith Business School
- Prof. Deirdre Shaw – Adam Smith Business School

Non-MSP Group Members and Guests

- Phoebe Cochrane – ScotLINK
- Catherine Gemmell – MCS
- Catherine Gee - KSB
- Paul Smith – Office of Maurice Golden MSP
- Anthony Burns – ACS Clothing Ltd
- Michael Cook – Circular Communities
- Stephen Cameron – Enva
- Michell Scott - Enva
- Sophie Brett – KSB
- Mary Michel – Ostero
- Lewis Ryder-Jones – Oxfam
- Clare Campbell – Prickly Thistle
- Ian Matheson – Blysthwood
- Toni Freitas – Edinburgh University
- Katie Reid – Resources Future
- Steven Kiakowski – The Verdancy Group
- Connall Howard – The Verdancy Group
- Iain Gulland – ZWS

- Cecelia Parker Arhana - CMA
- Katy Dimmock
- Kathryn Gill – Consumer Scotland
- Andy Williams – 56 Degrees North
- Jack Sinclair – 56 Degrees North
- Daniel Stunnell – Eunomia
- Stephen Freeland – Scottish Environmental Services Association
- Catherine Gunby - Fidra
- Dr Clare Cavers – Fidra
- Michale Cook – Circular Communities
- Martha Wood
- Elaine Brown
- Mary Beth Graham
- Laura Russell
- Wendy Pring
- Peter Page
- Ray Georgeson - ZWS
- Alan Wheeler
- Victoria McQuillan
- William McRaith
- Andrea Reid
- Ashleigh Douglas
- Fraser Stewart
- Jeremy Grant
- Sheena Boyd
- Sasha McFarlane
- Conor Blessing
- Yutong Shi
- Anne Weir
- Kim Cameron
- Samantha Moir
- Kitty Bruce-Gardyne
- Cori Critchlow-Watton
- Nayantara Sudhakar
- Ros Studd
- John Ennis
- Chris Hunt
- Ewelina Maka
- Mary Morton
- Emma Duncan
- Lorna Russell
- Mairi Low

- Colin Green
- Colin Howard
- Bill McGraith
- Duncan Robertson
- Ken Cameron
- Alan Fraser
- Mette Baillie (virtual)
- Natasha Bridget (virtual)
- Niki Taylor (virtual)
- Nikoleta Atanasova (virtual)
- Christina Petrou (virtual)
- Rob Harrison (virtual)
- Sarah Letsinger - Resources Future (virtual)
- Susan Anderson (virtual)
- Barbara Hamilton (virtual)
- Liu Fanxi – Herriot Watt (virtual)
- Gigi Jiang (virtual)
- Mary Wilson (virtual)
- Mary Graham (virtual)
- Fleur Ruckley (virtual)
- Callum (virtual)
- Anna Sellars – SAC Consulting (virtual)
- Meg Pirie – Fashion Roundtable (virtual)
- Dr Ifeyinwa Kanu – IntelliDigest (virtual)
- Stacey Ann Burge (virtual)

Apologies

- Mercedes Villalba MSP
- Monica Lennon MSP
- Finlay Carson MSP
- Alistair Dutton – SCIAF
- Nicki Souter – Nicki Souter Associates
- John Ferguson – Nicki Souter Associates
- Susan Evans
- Jack Barrie – Chatham House
- Susanne Cameron-Nielsen – SWA
- Alistair Trail – SAC Consulting
- Rob Snaith – Ricardo

Agenda Item 1: Welcome

- Maurice Golden MSP opened the meeting and welcomed attendees, noting this was the first in-person meeting of the group.
- The following new members of the group were adopted: Clare Campbell (Prickly Thistle), Mary Michel (Ostero), Stephen Cameron (Enva), Dr Lynn Wilson (Adam Smith Business School).
- The minutes of the previous meeting were proposed by Maurice Golden MSP and seconded by Paul Smith.
- It was noted the next meeting of the group would take place virtually on 6th June where the topic would be marine pollution. Before the meeting a beach clean and litter survey would be held at Cramond in Edinburgh run by members of the joint secretariats. Those looking for further information were advised to contact Catherine Gemmell at catherine.gemmell@mcsuk.org.
- It was further noted that ACS Clothing Ltd had offered to arrange a tour of their North Lanarkshire facility for group members.
- Maurice Golden introduced textiles as the theme for the evening noting they were the “forgotten material stream”.

Agenda Item 2: Introduction by The Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity

- Lorna Slater MSP spoke about the role textiles play in people’s everyday lives and how they are a personal passion for her.
- The minister highlighted the challenges from design, supply chain, fair work, re-use and end of life and spoke about the Circular Textiles Fund and the significant economic opportunity in re-use.
- The work of charity shops was recognised, and it was noted that whilst being very established they were perhaps overlooked.
- Mention was made of the efforts of Zero Waste Scotland to use social media to promote textile re-use.
- The minister spoke about the wellbeing economy and how the circular economy helps address wellbeing, the cost-of-living and climate change.
- The minister also spoke of the need to shift values on clothing to move away from single use and the forthcoming Circular Economy Bill and co-designing recycling services, including for textiles, with local authorities.

Agenda Item 3: Presentation of a new report from the Adam Smith Business School: Evidencing the Need for a National Citizens Clothing Circularity Strategy (NCCCS)

Maurice Golden MSP introduced the guest speakers for the evening: Prof. Deirdre Shaw, Dr Lynn Wilson and Dr Kat Duffy from the Adam Smith Business School at the University of Glasgow.

The report can be accessed at <https://eprints.gla.ac.uk/296826/1/296826.pdf>

Dr Lynn Wilson, Dr Kat Duffy and Prof. Deirdre Shaw presented their new report along with an accompanying short film. The report was informed by research covering both consumer and industry groups and looked at how consumer acquire, use and dispose of clothing along with related industry practices.

A key element of the presentation was highlighting the complexity of consumer behaviour as well as the gulf between current behaviours and the availability of services. The report's recommendations centered on increased access, such as affordability, infrastructure investment and greater educational and information provision on maintenance and repair.

After the presentation a short film was shown which can be accessed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KEtYAOBtums&feature=youtu.be>.

Agenda Item 4: Roundtable Discussion

Jeremy Grant asked if there was a role for an economy lever to nudge behaviour - learning from plastic bag charge.

The minister replied saying that the EU was looking at extended producer responsibility (EPR) on textiles and that work was happening across the UK on EPR for packaging where a fee would enter a central pot. That fee would be graded on recyclability thus incentivising design and funds would go to local authorities to deal with the material.

Dr Lynn Wilson said that consumers need choice and access and raised the question of how to accelerate business models that used renting over buying.

Prof. Deidre Shaw said that it was not enough to just raise awareness, that everyone was looking for different pathway and that there was a need for something there to do positively.

Brian Whittle MSP asked how we change consumer behaviour.

Toni Freitas made the point that textiles were wider than just clothing, e.g. towels and sheets and asked whether we need an incentive like a deposit return scheme.

Prof. Deirdre Shaw responded to Brian Whittle's question saying that the key was to make things convenient, accessible and affordable and that this applied to everything and provided routes to action.

Dr Lynn Wilson addressed the point on incentives saying that one such incentive was to reduce VAT on repairs. Dr Wilson explained that the report's focus on clothing was a result of the everyday aspect of clothing as opposed to other kinds of textiles.

Jenny Hallway asked about environmental social governance (ESG) for garments.

John Ennis asked how to secure cultural change beyond producers.

Dr Lynn Wilson addressed the point on ESG saying that there was work ongoing with BSI to develop standards for textiles.

The minister replied to the question on culture change saying that there was a gap between improving recycling to solving capitalism. The minister spoke about shifting the value to quality of time and quality of goods and said that social media and young people brought hope and that there was a need to support grass roots efforts to make reuse 'cool'.

Bill McGraith asked about working with other groups internationally to see progress made amongst the large clothing brands.

Alan Wheeler asked what would happen further down the line if we were to collect more textiles and that doing so would mean there was a need for more investment in recycling.

Dr Kat Duffy responded to the question on alignment saying that we needed to harness the people in the room that evening, connecting the conversations being had and starting that process here and now to move forward.

Prof. Deirdre Shaw pointed out that we needed to start somewhere and that that was with the frustration of people in their homes and then scale up from there.

The minister said the Scottish Government was seeking to continue to align with the EU but that many areas of policy were a matter for the UK Government. The minister said that investment came when you have known quantities and qualities of materials and that would become clearer with upgrades from disposal at supermarket bins to kerbside collection and other measures.

Maurice Golden MSP thanked the speakers and attending guests for their contributions.

There then followed a round of introductions before the meeting was called to a close.