

Statement to 16.1.23 B&NES Council CE&S PDS

Professionally my twin passions are creating thriving resilient places, and wellbeing economics. I'm also Chair of the Bath Area Forum. In both capacities, I'm delighted to join your discussion of these two emergency reports.

Whilst there is much I could say about these, I am confining my comments here to the 3 areas I see as most vital to accelerating progress.

1. Better embody the 2019 commitment to “just transition” in emergency actions:

Only 1/6 of the Energy and 1/6 of the Transport Initiatives in the Annex1 Progress report are labelled as addressing Equity, and of 6/9 coommunity and partnerships initiatives that are so labelled, the depth & extent of their 'equity' commitment is variable. For example:

- whilst Bathscape has systematically mapped green space against multiple deprivation data to target its resources, and Liveable Neighbourhoods are exemplary in their holistic community capacity-building approach is, such rigour in ensuring poorer and less well connected citizens are represented in land improvement actions seems to be lacking;
- Why does action on allotments figure whereas Middle Growers, with its more holistic approach to improving our land and the lives of those who steward it, is not?

2. Improve partnership working and collaboration with communities:

- The Council seems to have forged some strong partnerships with regional & wider governmental organisations, with local anchor institutions and some effective collaborations with businesses and special interst citizen groups but less so with poorer and less well connected communities. Might a less top-down approach to setting strategic goals and priorities help?
- Though I'm glad to see the Council together with Bath Uni are exploring Doughnut approaches to operationalising equity as well as ecological goals in its next Corporate strategy, I feat that without including a much wider array of local stakeholdolders in its definition, portrayal and development, it might further entrench the power and wealth disparities.

3. Better attract external investment for B&NES nature recovery at landscape scale:

- Althouh investing in nature's recovery, presents huge opportunity to enrich our locality's wellbeing, prevailing market driven approaches to such investment are more prone to extracting and exploiting nature than regenerating it for all.
- However, our Council could use its convening power and leverage the strength of its well established Green Infrastructure partnerships, to counter this by bidding for sizeable public money in such as DEFRA's Landscape Recovery scheme with bespoke governance structures for our particular but diverse beneficiaries and providers of ecosystem services, as I know many local authorities are.

I would be happy to speak to relevant Council decisonmakers and managers about any of this in more depth. I would also be delighted to chair a wider stakeholder discussion of Doughnut possibilities at our next Bath Area Forum.

Nicolette Boater,

*Creating thriving resilient places, wellbeing economics & governance,
and unfolding potential in the Bristol Avon Bioregion*

