

# Biodiversity Parliament 2025

Is Nature for All? Exploring Environmental Justice

03-04 November 2025 | Online (Zoom, GMT)



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# About RENEW

[RENEW](#) is a five-year partnership programme to develop solutions to one of the major environmental challenges for humankind: the renewal of biodiversity.

Our focus is on a 'people-in-nature' approach, reflecting the two-way, dynamic relations between people and nature and the need to develop a relational approach to renew our life-support systems.

Funded by the UKRI Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and part of the [Changing the Environment Programme](#), RENEW is co-led by the [University of Exeter](#) and the [National Trust](#). The programme has been co-designed and developed with over 30 [partners](#) and many other collaborators from a diverse range of sectors.

# Event Overview

**Is environmental justice something you often consider, are working towards, or would like to find out more about?**

Join us for the RENEW Biodiversity Parliament 2025 – to connect, reflect, and drive change towards a fairer and greener future. This year we're creating an interactive online space to collectively explore what environmental justice means in theory and in practice, to inspire our thinking and steps towards positive action.

Environmental injustice is a serious barrier to nature renewal. There is growing awareness of this in the UK related to, for example, inequalities in access to quality green and blue spaces, differences in opportunities to engage in outdoor or nature-based occupations or recreational activity, or the uneven impacts of climate change. And there is increasing acceptance that environmental injustice is one face of power inequalities rooted in history and dominant political and economic systems.

In this Parliament we will explore the meanings and impacts of environmental injustice and what we can do to tackle it. We will take a bottom-up, inclusive, and intersectional approach in discussions to ensure active listening and respect for all perspectives and experiences.

Our programme includes an exciting and interactive set of provocations, panel talks, facilitated discussions, case studies and creative, exploratory workshops. We will be fostering a safe and inclusive online space to welcome your input, views, and collective aspirations.

## Guiding Principles

Please take a moment to read our [Guiding Principles](#) for the event, which will inform our collective approach to making the event a space where everyone feels welcome and safe to listen, participate and share. They include a reminder of the **Chatham House Rule** we will be following, details of how to access our **Care Room** should you need some support during the event, and other **prompts** to guide you through our sessions.

# Useful Information

## Guiding Principles

Our [Guiding Principles](#) will inform our collective approach to making the event a space where everyone feels welcome and safe to listen, participate and share. They include a reminder of the [Chatham House Rule](#) we will be following, which you were notified about during Eventbrite registration, and other prompts to guide you through our sessions.

## Care Room

Please note there will be a Care Room available to anyone who needs space to raise concerns, process emotions, or take a breather with a team member present. Team members present in the Care Room are [Dr Ria Poole](#) (she/her, Black British), [Professor Catriona McKinnon](#) (she/her, White British) and [Professor Alice Moseley](#) (she/her, White British) and you can talk with them on a one-to-one basis. If you would like to use the Care Room, please leave the session you are in and access it from the main lobby.

## Event Navigation

The Zoom event link will take you to a lobby where you can join different sessions. Our event Chairs will help you navigate between sessions on the day. Some sessions will be in parallel, so the summaries below will help you pick which to join. Breakout discussions will be led by our facilitators from [Iris & Birch](#) – you will automatically be assigned a group. If you find yourself struggling in your group, feel free to use the Care Room or ask to change group.

We encourage you to interact via the moderated chat and Q&A. Please post questions for speakers in the Q&A and general comments in the Chat. There will be an option to ask questions anonymously.

## Accessibility

If you indicated during Eventbrite registration that you have access requirements, we will already have been in touch with you by email. If you have requirements that we aren't already aware of, please email us as soon as possible ([renew@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:renew@exeter.ac.uk)).

## Recording & Screen Capture

We may take photographs (screen capture) and will be recording some presentations to share publicly. Discussions under Chatham House Rule will not be recorded. If your consent preferences have changed since you completed Eventbrite registration, please email us ([renew@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:renew@exeter.ac.uk)).

## Social Media

If you post about the event on social media, please be mindful of our [Guiding Principles](#) and ensure you are adhering to Chatham House Rule where necessary. Follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Bluesky](#) #BioParliament25

# Programme Day One

## Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November

- 10:00 – 10:30**    **Welcome & Introduction – Catriona McKinnon (University of Exeter)**  
With a poetic provocation by Ashanti Kunene (Learn 2 Unlearn)
- 10:30 – 11:15**    **Domains of Environmental Justice**  
Chair: Alice Moseley (University of Exeter)
- Catriona McKinnon (University of Exeter), 'Theories of Environmental Justice'
  - Charles Masquelier (University of Exeter), 'Environmental Land Management as an Environmental Justice Issue'
  - Ben Groom (University of Exeter), 'Distribution Over Time and Distribution in Space: A Welfarist View of Decision-making in Nature and Climate'
- 11:15 – 11:25**    **Comfort Break**
- 11:25 – 12:30**    **Provocations & Q&A**  
Chair: Charles Masquelier (University of Exeter)
- Nadia Shaikh (Right to Roam & Raven Network), 'Recommoning and Class'
  - Sherilyn McGregor (University of Manchester), 'Against Rewilding: A (Careful) Critique'
  - Rupert Read (Climate Majority Project), 'The Limits of Justice: Why Non-Human Life, the Future, and Our Task of Climate Adaptation All Point Away from Overly Centring 'Justice''
- 12:30 – 13:15**    **Lunch**
- 13:15 – 13:45**    **Breakout Discussions (parallel sessions)**  
An opportunity to reflect on the conversation so far and discuss the morning's provocations – led by Mona Ebdrup & Rachel Karasik (Iris & Birch)
- 13:45 – 13:50**    **Comfort Break**
- 13:50 – 14:20**    **Guided Reflection Activity**  
Take a pause and connect with nature – led by Vanessa Miles (Well Image CIC)
- 14:20 – 15:05**    **In Conversation: Politics and Power**  
Chair: Ria Poole (University of Exeter)
- With Gillian Burke (Biologist, Presenter, Writer) & Dr Bothwell Kabayira (Doctor & Health Innovator)
- 15:05 – 15:15**    **Close – Catriona McKinnon (University of Exeter)**

# Programme Day Two

Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November

**10:00 – 10:10**      **Welcome back & Introduction – Catriona McKinnon (University of Exeter)**

**10:10 – 10:55**      **In Conversation: Activism and Changemaking**

Chair: Ria Poole (University of Exeter)

- With Manu Maunganidze (SOS-UK) & Naftal Zinyemba (The Wildlife Trusts)

**10:55 – 11:00**      **Comfort Break**

**11:00 – 12:30**      **Practitioner Case Studies (parallel sessions)**

## **Panel One**

Chair: Charles Masquelier (University of Exeter)

- Victoria Bradford-Keegan (National Trust) & Emily Martey (Natural England), 'Advancing Environmental Justice through Nature Towns and Cities'
- Ly Chu & Sofia Cairns (BookTrust), 'Exploring How BookTrust's Theory of Change Shapes the Bookstart Programme, and How Strong Local Connections Help Tailor Delivery to Increase Family Access and Engagement'
- Karen Devine (British Ecological Society), 'Towards Research Equity – Doing Our Bit'
- Clive Mitchell (NatureScot), 'The politics and Politics of Transformative Change'

**Followed by breakout discussions**, led by Rachel Karasik (Iris & Birch)

## **Panel Two**

Chair: Catriona McKinnon (University of Exeter)

- Natasha Ryan, Cia Mangat & Anisha Jaya Minocha (The Poetry Society & Young Poets Network), 'Do Not Be Afraid of Reading This Poem – Using Creative Programming to Face the Climate Crisis'
- Rory Crawford (National Trust), 'Environmental Justice Starts in the Community – Learnings From the Nature Neighbourhoods Project'
- Jo Smith & Flavia Ojok (Derbyshire Wildlife Trusts), 'In the Age of Polarisation, How Can We Remain Firm in Delivering Anti-Racist Environmental Action?'

**Followed by breakout discussions**, led by Mona Ebdrup (Iris & Birch)

**12:30 – 13:15**      **Lunch**

- 13:15 – 14:15**     **Visioning Workshops (parallel sessions)**
- Workshop 1: Collective Poem-Making as Manifesto** – led by Caleb Parkin (Poet & Practice-based RENEW PhD student)
- Workshop 2: Envisioning Environmental Justice: Guided Reflection & Visualisation** – led by Anna Herber (Alignment Guide, Facilitator, Speaker, Poet)
- Workshop 3: Narratives of Regeneration: Storytelling Futures for Environmental Justice** – led by Alicia Richins (The Climateverse)
- 14:15 – 14:25**     **Comfort Break**
- 14:25 – 14:35**     **Parliament Close – Catriona McKinnon (University of Exeter)**  
With poetry by Caleb Parkin (RENEW) and Maggie Wang & Sylvie Jane Lewis (Young Poets Network), compered by Natasha Ryan (The Poetry Society)
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## Our Chairs



**Professor Catriona McKinnon** (University of Exeter) is a political philosopher working on environmental and climate justice. She is a Director of RENEW and leads [Theme 2 \(Community Action\)](#).



**Professor Charles Masquelier** (University of Exeter) is a social theorist and environmental sociologist working on issues of social empowerment. He is a Co-Investigator and social science lead on [RENEW Theme 3 \(Land Managers\)](#).

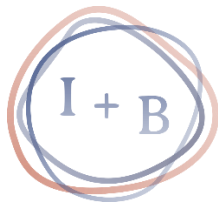


**Dr Ria Poole** (University of Exeter) is a psychologist and social scientist specialising in innovation, intersectionality in practice, behaviour change and the development and evaluation of complex interventions in public health, the environment, and the creative arts. Ria works to address various social and environmental challenges and create meaningful and sustainable impact. She is a Postdoctoral Impact Fellow for Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) on [RENEW Theme 2 \(Community Action\)](#).



**Professor Alice Moseley** (University of Exeter) is a political scientist specialising in citizen and stakeholder engagement in policy processes including environmental policy. She is a Co-Investigator on [RENEW Theme 2 \(Community Action\)](#).

## Our Facilitators



[Iris & Birch](#) are a collective of practitioners focused on exploring complexity and emergence. They design, develop and produce learning and research programmes. Collectively they bring decades of experience working with a variety of organisations, communities and networks to imagine and build more equitable, regenerative and just futures.

**Mona Ebdrup** is a trained Kaospilot with 10+ years of experience within project management and process facilitation. She is working visually in her facilitation and project leadership, supporting groups to see their work more systemically. She is trained and experienced within systems and generative scribing, having worked with clients from many corners of the world.

She is doing work within new economics (with a focus on the concept of Doughnut Economics) and with a regenerative farming association in Denmark, that is collectively buying up farmland in community by each member paying 20 EUR/monthly. The collective efforts by more than 3000 people have enabled the association to buy three farms that are now stewarded by regenerative practices.

Recently she has brought the problematic use of BMI in insurance companies in Denmark to the highest political levels, which has led to systemic changes across the entire insurance industry.

**Rachel Karasik** is a producer, project manager and writer with an MA in Anthropology of Food and an interdisciplinary background across food, tech, art, social innovation and civil society. She has worked across sectors, often in collaboration with those outside her field to create meaningful opportunities to learn from different perspectives and experiences.

Rachel is an intuitive connector and communicator passionate about making complex ideas clear and simple. She is interested in how we facilitate challenging and complicated conversations about our futures.

Outside of Iris + Birch, she is [a ceramicist](#), making both practical and impractical ceramics and exhibits regularly.

# Our Sessions & Speakers

## Poetic Provocation

This thought-provoking Day 1 event opener will explore environmental justice through a poetic lens, helping to set the tone, inspire, and challenge our thinking in productive ways.

### Ashanti Kunene ([Learn 2 Unlearn](#))

**Ashanti Kunene** is a social justice activist, poetic provocateur and strategic narrative consultant working at the nexus of wealth, technology and consciousness. Dedicated to fostering decolonial dialogues and regenerative systems change, she is the founder of [Learning 2 Unlearn](#), a strategic narratives consultancy that empowers leaders and organisations to 'walk their systems change talk'. She currently serves as the Co-Lead for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Transforming Wealth Lab; she leads the Leadership & Narrative Greenhouse for the Governance Futures Network and sits on the Advisory Board for Zebra Growth, a regenerative marketing agency.

## Domains of Environmental Justice Panel

This panel session on Day 1 aims to centre the audience around key themes and approaches to environmental justice, particularly those being explored by [research themes](#) in RENEW. Consideration of environmental justice is a key cross-cutting element in RENEW's [people-in-nature](#) approach to addressing the biodiversity crisis.

### Catriona McKinnon (University of Exeter)

#### 'Theories of Environmental Justice'

What kind of injustice is environmental injustice? Philosophers have answered this question in a variety of ways. In this talk I will give a whistle-stop tour of the diversity of philosophical approaches to environmental justice - for example, recognition approaches, ecofeminism, and multi species justice - and indicate the implications they have for addressing environmental injustice in the world.

**Catriona McKinnon** is a political philosopher working on environmental and climate justice. She is a Director of RENEW and leads [Theme 2 \(Community Action\)](#).

### Charles Masquelier (University of Exeter)

#### 'Environmental Land Management as an Environmental Justice Issue'

Much of the social science work of RENEW Theme 3 (Land Managers) is devoted to understanding how land managers engage with nature recovery and what could be done to improve this engagement. One key finding arising from this work is land managers' demand for a greater recognition of their knowledge of the land in decision-making around nature recovery. This, land managers claim, would help improve their engagement. In this talk I argue that it could be construed as a demand for greater environmental justice.

**Charles Masquelier** is a social theorist and environmental sociologist working on issues of social empowerment. He is a Co-Investigator and social science lead on [RENEW Theme 3 \(Land Managers\)](#).

### Ben Groom (University of Exeter)

#### 'Distribution Over Time and Distribution in Space: A Welfarist View of Decision-making in Nature and Climate

Ben will discuss the rationales for putting a lower weight of the future than the present, and how getting this balance right is important for nature and climate policy. The discussion will explain how different governments have tackled this problem and resolved to make decisions that affect future generations in their guidance on public investment analysis and regulatory change. The talk will conclude by relating this public sector guidance to what happens in the financial sector in relation to long-term investment, and the potential need for different instruments to bring future generations to the table.

**Ben Groom** is an economist working on the economics of biodiversity, climate change and intergenerational fairness. He is the Dragon Capital Chair in Biodiversity Economics at the University of Exeter and a Co-Investigator on [RENEW Theme 4 \(Business & Finance Decision-makers\)](#).

## Provocations Panel

This panel session on Day 1 aims to provide diverse perspectives and spark debate on environmental justice. Our provocateurs will be speaking from their own experience and expertise in environmental justice, presenting a key challenge or bold idea to get you thinking.

### Nadia Shaikh (Right to Roam & Raven Network)

#### 'Recommoning and Class'

This talk speaks to the idea that for most of our history the countryside has been peopled, full of people who have worked on the land, alongside nature when it has thrived. Our understanding of the countryside today is one of absence. Farming now is largely managed by machines and individual farmers. We recognise the absence of people as 'wildness' and the unbuilt environment as a food factory, an easier blank canvas for nature restoration and rewilding, unhindered by humans.

Class too plays a big part. As the countryside has become a playground for 'recreation', we go into the countryside for respite from our non-natured lives. The accepted version of recreation is highly prescribed, there is a set of rules which are couched as 'responsibility', but does it go too far? Both these ideas allow misanthropy to thrive and nature restoration solutions to chronically lack community in all its diversity and vibrance.

**Nadia Shaikh**, a naturalist and conservationist, has devoted her life to repairing our relationship with nature. She joined [Right to Roam](#) campaign in 2021 after 14 years in the nature conservation sector, convinced that mainstream 'nature protection' wasn't involving people in a meaningful way and that the connections between enclosure, land ownership

and our devastating biodiversity loss were too big to ignore. Nadia now lives in Scotland where she enjoys roaming free, rock pooling and kayaking. She covers Right to Roam's operations, events, and work on social justice. Nadia chairs the [RAVEN network](#), a peer support group for people of colour who work in the nature conservation sector.

### Rupert Read (Climate Majority Project)

#### 'The Limits of Justice: Why Non-Human Life, the Future, and Our Task of Climate Adaptation All Point Away from Overly Centring 'Justice'

The frame of 'justice' seems impossible to resist. But what if it risks leaving out nature / non-human life? I suggest that it obviously does. The concept of justice was designed with present-day humans in mind, and that remains its home, away from which it struggles or misfires. The best alternative is *care* (or love). This frame is nature-friendly and hospitable to life at large including the further future. Care reaches far and offers much: for the figure of a judge or jury, substitute the figure of a parent or a lover. In our times of climate collapse a vast, sprawling, unfathomable injustice (an abomination, a set of holocausts) is going to grow and remain for a long time to come. In these times we should become conscious that, while justice can remain important in offering side-constraints, we need much more. What is bluntly *effective* in undertaking deep adaptation, enabling survival and a new version of flourishing, is likely more important. As is our sense of despoliation and ruptured love. We realise that utopia (the tacit or explicit goal of most justice-driven approaches) has become little more than a vapid unhelpful distraction. Instead, we are called to find and make 'thrutopian' adaptive pathways which make the very best of a very bad job.

**Rupert Read** is co-director of the [Climate Majority Project](#) and Emeritus Professor of Philosophy at the University of East Anglia (UEA). He is the author of several books focusing on the climate and ecological crisis, including *This Civilisation is Finished*, *Parents for a Future*, *Why Climate Breakdown Matters* and *Do you want to know the truth? The surprising rewards of climate honesty*.

### Sherilyn MacGregor (University of Manchester)

#### 'Against Rewilding: A (Careful) Critique'

As 'a progressive approach to conservation' which is 'about letting nature take care of itself' (according to Rewilding Europe) rewilding tends to be presented as uncontroversially good. But is it? In this short provocation, I will ask questions about rewilding from an ecofeminist perspective. Ecofeminism is deeply concerned with intra- and inter-species environmental justice. It centres care as a gendered practice and ethic, and it values that which has been devalued by dominant paradigms. Ecofeminists who have researched rewilding in the UK and Europe have found reasons to be sceptical of its potential to achieve just outcomes. With examples of rewilding projects in Portugal, Wales and the Scottish Highlands, I will argue that rewilding (sometimes) promotes the human mastery of nature under the guise of care, while simultaneously devaluing feminised forms of care work and the knowledge that stems from it.

**Sherilyn MacGregor** is Professor of Environmental Politics at the [University of Manchester](#) and the Director of the ESRC-funded [JUST Centre](#), a multi-partner, social science research centre focused on sustainability transformations that are people-centred, place-based, and

socially just. Her research looks at relationships between environmental unsustainability and all forms of social injustice (especially sexism and racism) and applies insights from critical eco-political theories and intersectional environmental justice movements to imagine inclusive and hopeful alternatives.

## Guided Reflection Activity

Join us on Day 1 for a guided reflective activity led by Vanessa Miles from Well Image CIC, who will be offering a space for you to use photography as a mindful tool to connect with nature away from the screen. Well Image has a wealth of experience in delivering workshops using photography as a catalyst to help people connect, engage with nature, enhance creativity, become present in the moment and increase physical activity.

### Vanessa Miles (Well Image CIC)

**Vanessa Miles** is a [photographer](#) with a long history working on subjects relating to the environmental crisis. In 1989 she set up the first independent picture agency in the UK specialising in environmental issues supplying the national media and NGO's. Vanessa is the founder and a director of [Well Image](#), an organisation using creative photography projects to improve wellbeing, set up as a response to the pandemic. She is the principal facilitator running small supportive groups particularly for those who face isolation. The aims are closely aligned to the NHS's five ways to mental health using creative photography projects as a catalyst for change. Well Image has worked with over 200 individuals who have a long term health condition, disability or anxiety collaborating with a host of organisations. The projects help people become more present in the moment, connect with nature and each other wherever they live and whatever their circumstances. She has a degree and Master's in photography and is a trained teacher.

## In Conversation Sessions

Our In Conversation sessions on Day 1 and Day 2 aim to allow a free-flowing deep-dive into some core issues of environmental Justice. A conversation held between two critical thinkers working at the forefront of justice-based action will seek to explore key issues from different perspectives, domains and lived experiences. We hope to spark debate and bring the audience into the conversation via a moderated Q&A.

### Gillian Burke (Biologist, Presenter, Writer) & Dr. Bothwell Kabayira (Doctor & Health Innovator)

#### 'Politics and Power'

A conversation exploring the political and power dimensions of environmental justice.

**Gillian Burke** is a biologist, presenter and writer, known for her work on BBC Springwatch. She is now the host of [If I Ruled the World](#), the system change podcast that explores how to make the world a fairer place. Gillian is fascinated with the universal themes of struggle and loss, defeat and victory, resistance and resilience – this is where her passion for science, soul, and storytelling resides.

**Dr. Bothwell Kabayira** is an award-winning dedicated doctor with over 5 years working in the UK NHS. He is interested in Health Technology, Global Health, Medical Leadership & Management.

## **Manu Maunganidze (SOS-UK) & Naftal Zinyemba (The Wildlife Trusts)**

### **‘Activism & Changemaking’**

A conversation that provides on-the-ground perspectives on environmental justice through the lens of activism and changemaking.

**Manu Maunganidze** is Co-Director of Inclusion and Climate Justice at [SOS-UK](#); Independent Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Consultant; Project Coordinator and Founder at Nature Youth Connection and Education (NYCE); Education and Community Engagement Lead at The Global Goals Centre; and Director at Bristol Green Capital Partnership.

A part of his work with SOS-UK, Manu is one of the people behind the [RACE \(Radical Action for the Climate Emergency\) Report](#) which looks at charities and funders working on environmental and conservation issues, highlighting the need for greater representation in sustainability and climate action. The RACE Report shows the racial diversity gap between the UK working population and staff in environment, conservation, climate and sustainability charities.

**Naftal Zinyemba** is an EDI Officer for [The Wildlife Trusts](#). At university, he studied BA Theology and went on to complete an MA in Theology. During his time at university, Naftal discovered a passion for social justice and developed a deep understanding of issues such as race, ableism, colonialism, feminism, and queer studies. Through his studies, he recognised the importance of social justice and the need to challenge oppressive systems that create barriers in people’s lives.

Being an EDI Officer has placed Naftal in the perfect position to do this work. He is part of a team that is committed to ensuring everyone has access to nature, and he works to remove as many barriers as possible so that people can enjoy nature in their own way.

## **Practitioner Case Studies (parallel panels)**

Our case study panels on Day 2 aim to spotlight key challenges organisations are facing in the environmental justice space and showcase examples of what successful action looks like. They will be followed by breakout discussions that will provide an inclusive space for delegates to ask questions, share learnings, and reflect on their own work and practice.

### **Panel One**

## **Victoria Bradford-Keegan (National Trust) & Emily Martey (Natural England)**

### **‘Advancing Environmental Justice Through Nature Towns and Cities’**

This presentation explores how the [Nature Towns and Cities](#) programme is driving transformative change in urban environments by embedding nature-based solutions into the heart of city planning, with a strong focus on environmental justice. As part of the RENEW

Biodiversity conference's theme "Is Nature for All?", we'll examine how this ambitious cross-sector initiative is responding to the intersecting health, climate, and nature crises disproportionately affecting underserved urban communities. Through case studies like Birmingham, we'll highlight how inclusive green infrastructure, equitable access to nature, and community-led design are reshaping urban spaces to be healthier, more resilient, and fairer for all. Attendees will gain insight into how cities can become catalysts for justice and biodiversity recovery, ensuring that nature truly is for everyone.

**Victoria Bradford-Keegan** is based at the [National Trust](#) as Programme Director of [Nature Towns and Cities](#), a coalition united by a shared mission to put nature of the heart of urban life and create greener, healthier, more prosperous places. An experienced systems change leader working at the intersection of community participation, urban resilience and nature recovery, Victoria champions bold collaboration and innovation to solve complex challenges, promote equity and achieve and long-term impact. She is passionate about the power of nature to bring communities together and improve lives, and about the critical role of communities in urban nature recovery.

**Emily Martey** is a Senior Officer in the Connecting People with Nature team at [Natural England](#). She leads on the [Nature Towns and Cities](#) accreditation scheme, designed to incentivise ambitious action for urban greening transformation. She is an MSc Conservation graduate with experience in local government and is committed to improving equitable access to greenspace and improving nature, biodiversity and climate outcomes across urban areas.

### Ly Chu & Sofia Cairns (BookTrust)

#### 'Exploring how BookTrust's Theory of Change shapes the Bookstart programme, and how strong local connections help tailor delivery to increase family access and engagement'

Dr Ly Chu and Sofia Cairns will share how [BookTrust](#), the UK's largest children's reading charity, is guided in their work by an evidence-based Theory of Change which focuses on providing partners nationally with support families to access the lifelong benefits of reading. They will discuss how BookTrust's evidenced based programmes have been co-designed with families and partners to allow practitioners the flexibility to tailor delivery and engage families from different walks of life; learnings that have inspired the collaboration with RENEW Theme 2 'Community Action' pillar.

**Dr Ly Chu** is Principal Research Specialist at [BookTrust](#), the UK's largest children's reading charity. She leads major national studies on family reading and the impact of BookTrust's programmes. With a background in sociology and mixed-methods research, she is particularly interested in how sharing books and stories nurtures children's wellbeing, learning, and growth – and how families can be supported through a behaviour change approach. [Linkedin.com/in/lychu](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lychu)

**Sofia Cairns** is Strategic Development and Partnerships Manager at [BookTrust](#). Sofia has led BookTrust's involvement in the RENEW partnership since 2023, facilitating the Biodiversity Storytelling Summits at Kew Gardens and The Whitworth Gallery alongside Dr Lucy Mercer. She is currently designing and delivering BookTrust's place-based pilot approach, working with communities and health practitioners in Barnsley and Knowsley to

increase access to books for families living in high levels of deprivation. [Linkedin.com/sofia-cairns](https://www.linkedin.com/company/sofia-cairns)

## Karen Devine (British Ecological Society)

### ‘Towards Research Equity – Doing Our Bit’

The British Ecological Society shares how they developed their 5 international research equity goals, the action plan for how they intend to deliver those goals in the short, medium and long term. They will provide an overview of their success in the last 3 years, the surprises and the barriers they encountered along with their next steps.

**Karen Devine** is the Director of Communities and Inclusion at the [British Ecological Society](https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/) (BES) and the lead for Equity and Inclusion work across the Society. She has worked closely with the international community to develop the BES's international equity goals. Within the Society, she has a diverse remit including membership, grants, conferences and professional development.

## Clive Mitchell (NatureScot)

### ‘The politics and Politics of Transformative Change’

The IPBES Transformative Change Assessment (2024) examines the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and the potential for transformative change versus the risks of lock-in to the status quo. The factors apply equally to climate change because nature is a key component of the Earth system, regulating, and regulated by, climate. The underlying causes are interdependent and identified as:

- Disconnection from and domination over nature and people
- Concentration of power of wealth
- Prioritisation of short term, individual and material gains

These all involve power relations within and between people, institutions, businesses and organizations. These relationships involve multiple, dynamic intersecting perspectives, needs and interests which may (to varying degrees) be complementary, neutral or conflicting. These are all political issues, in its widest sense.

This talk will examine these underlying causes through the lens of environmental justice, and in particular themes of distributive, procedural, recognition, multispecies and intergenerational (including restorative) justice. Examples will be drawn in relation to climate risks and aspects of a Just Transition.

**Clive Mitchell** is Head of Terrestrial Science at [NatureScot](https://www.naturescot.gov.uk/) and leads their approach on climate-nature. In NatureScot Clive has worked as a geologist, delivering operations in Orkney, on climate, energy, sustainable development, corporate strategy and resource management. In the 2000s he was seconded to the UK Sustainable Development Commission as team leader for climate, energy, transport and buildings policy. He is an Associate Lecturer for the Open University teaching final year courses on Earth Systems and the environment, including climate, nature and food systems. His interests span the natural and social sciences and their role in shaping understandings and responses to environmental challenges. He sits on the steering group of the Sustainable Scotland Network, and advisory group for WWF Scotland.

## Panel Two

### Natasha Ryan, Cia Mangat & Anisha Jaya Minocha (The Poetry Society & Young Poets Network)

#### ‘Do Not Be Afraid of Reading This Poem – using creative programming to face the climate crisis’

[The Poetry Society](#) has a longstanding commitment to environmental programming in our work with young people. Through climate-themed workshops and learning resources for schools, ecopoetry writing challenges and workshops on our online platform [Young Poets Network](#), we give young people space to address climate anxiety through poetry and use their voices to advocate for change. In this session, our education team will outline how poetry helps young people to forge a connection with biodiversity and see their voices valued, while young poet Anisha Minocha will talk about the impact of this approach on her writing development. As Young Poets Networker Daniel Clark puts it, ‘poetry can’t reverse climate breakdown, [but] as nature vanishes all around us, young poets are planting seeds for the type of world they want to grow up in’.

**Dr Natasha Ryan** is a writer and arts administrator from Cornwall, who lives in London. She is Education Manager at [The Poetry Society](#).

**Cia Mangat** is a writer from London who works as an Education Coordinator at [The Poetry Society](#).

**Anisha Jaya Minocha** is a Manchester-based writer, studying at St Andrews. She co-edits SINK magazine for Northern writers and has been published by Renard Press, Propel and the Resurgence & Ecologist magazine. She is part of the Young Critics Scheme and is regularly involved in the StAnza poetry festival. Her passion project, “‘Roots,’” explores the intersections between Indian philosophy, ecology and poetics, which was developed with Friends of the Earth and during her writing residency with environmental charity, Green and Away. With the Javaad Alipoor Company, she is in the process of creating a poetry film based on animism, ecological connection and ancient Sanskrit lyric.

### Rory Crawford (National Trust)

#### ‘Environmental Justice Starts in the Community – Learnings from the Nature Neighbourhoods project’

For the past two years, the National Trust have been working alongside the RSPB, WWF and 18 community organisations around the UK on a National Lottery Community Fund and Co-op funded ‘[Nature Neighbourhoods](#)’ project, which has sought to enhance the work of local organisations through capacity building, a small grant and practical support. Each participating urban neighbourhood also co-created their own Neighbourhood Plan for Nature, a set of community priorities for nature and climate action in their place, and a fitting follow-up to the national level People’s Plan for Nature. This presentation will lay out what we’ve learned from following a community-led approach in some of the country’s most under-served neighbourhoods, and why it is central to ending unequal access to nature – we cannot do it alone!

**Rory Crawford** has worked in the nature conservation sector for over 18 years, and is an urban nature and community enthusiast, campaigner and lapsed marine biologist. He worked on one of the world's first citizen's assemblies on nature - the [People's Assembly for Nature](#) – and loves participation. He now works for the [National Trust](#) on '[Nature Neighbourhoods](#)' – a follow-up partnership between big nature NGOs and 18 community sector organisations that seeks to support and build the capacity of local initiatives to create happier, healthier and greener urban communities.

### Jo Smith & Flavia Ojok (Derbyshire Wildlife Trusts)

#### 'In the Age of Polarisation, How Can We Remain Firm in Delivering Anti-Racist Environmental Action?'

Main takeaway: How do we act on anti-racism despite polarisation?

Environmental racism remains a pressing reality across the UK. As public debate grows more polarised, opportunities for meaningful action diminish, and marginalised voices are sidelined. In this session, we will discuss our ongoing actions, challenges, and learnings in this area.

**Jo Smith** is Chief Executive of [Derbyshire Wildlife Trust](#), leading its bold Wilder2030 strategy to restore nature across Derbyshire and beyond. Under her leadership, the Trust has become one of the UK's most ambitious conservation charities, from reintroducing beavers, pioneering urban rewilding at Allestree Park, and launching Wilder Solutions, a commercial arm delivering nature-based services. Jo champions innovation and equity in nature recovery, building landscape-scale partnerships through initiatives like the Derwent Living Forest and Wild Peak. She also advises Natural England, the East Midlands Combined County Authority, and the University of Derby on nature-based strategy and policy.

**Flavia Ojok** is Deputy Director of Equity and Green Skills at [Derbyshire Wildlife Trust](#), where she leads strategic work to make the environmental sector more inclusive and accessible. With a focus on equitable access to green jobs, justice-driven organisational change, and community-led partnerships, Flavia brings a transformative lens to nature recovery. She also serves on the Youth Environmental Service Programme Board and consults on racial and cultural competency. Flavia's mission is to work alongside individuals and communities to transform both lives and landscapes, co-creating a nature-rich future rooted in justice, connection, and collective action.

## Visioning Workshops (parallel sessions)

These 'visioning' workshops on Day 2 offer delegates a chance to draw together learnings from the Parliament and collectively think through what an environmentally just future might look like. You will have the choice of attending one of the three workshops outlined below.

### Workshop One

**Caleb Parkin (Poet & RENEW PhD student)**

## ‘Collective Poem-Making as Manifesto’

In this creative workshop, we'll reflect on the Parliament sessions we've attended, consider our own visions for Environmental Justice, then playfully weave these together using an alphapoeam or abacedarian (A-Z) to create a collaborative manifesto for the future. All levels of experience in writing are welcome and the process will be carefully, playfully structured so everyone can take part.

**Caleb Parkin** is a [poet](#) and practice-based PhD researcher with RENEW Biodiversity. He was Bristol City Poet 2020 – 22. Collections: This Fruiting Body (2021) and Mingle (2024).

### Workshop Two

#### Anna Herber (Alignment Guide, Facilitator, Speaker, Poet)

##### ‘Envisioning Environmental Justice: Guided Reflection & Visualisation’

Slow down and allow ideas to root in this meditative workshop, drawing on the neuroscience of creativity, visualisation, and nature connection. From practical embodiment techniques to a guided ecocentric visualisation and reflection journey — this session offers regenerative tools to move from eco-overwhelm to inspiration, condensing concepts from the Parliament into a resonant vision of environmental justice.

**Anna Herber** is an [Alignment Guide, facilitator, speaker, and poet](#) helping entrepreneurs, creatives, researchers and decision makers unlock authentic expression, and align their actions with the deeper purpose behind their work. Bridging soulful presence with scientific grounding and practical techniques — her in-person events, online community and group programs combine embodiment, creative principles, coaching frameworks, and human connection.

Anna Herber’s offerings focus on empowering progressive, constructive voices—reigniting individuals and organisations solving our most pressing environmental, political, and cultural issues.

### Workshop Three

#### Alicia Richins (The Climateverse)

##### ‘Narratives of Regeneration: Storytelling Futures for Environmental Justice’

This dynamic storytelling workshop combines the power of narrative with futures and foresight methods, focusing on biodiversity and environmental justice as critical drivers of change. Beginning with a guided visualization, participants will imagine a “preferred future” shaped by thriving ecosystems and communities rooted in resilience and justice. Using the Futures Triangle, we will explore desirable futures, leverage current trends, and acknowledge historical barriers to ecological stewardship and equity.

Participants will then work in groups to develop scenarios and story arcs, exploring how conservation strategies, local knowledge, and grassroots movements can intersect to shape future outcomes. Themes such as equitable access to nature, protection of species and habitats, and the leadership of marginalized communities will guide the storytelling. Groups

will share their envisioned futures in a storyboard format, creating narratives that inspire reflection, dialogue, and action toward a just and biodiverse world.

**The Climateverse** is a [transformation lab and multimedia platform](#) focused on radically imagining and co-creating climate just futures. Using visioning, futures methods and storytelling, we help humans anxious about climate change and the future to radically imagine what's possible and to become part of the transition to better futures.

**Alicia Richins** (Founder, [The Climateverse](#)) is a climate justice advocate, sustainable impact strategist, and writer called driven to imagine beyond the plausible. As the founder of The Climateverse, she leverages storytelling and futures methods to articulate and inspire action towards better futures for all. With nearly a decade of facilitation experience and five years in consulting, Alicia helps organizations and community groups develop futures-oriented impact strategies that navigate the intersections of climate, social, and economic justice.

## Poetry Performance

We'll close the RENEW Biodiversity Parliament 2025 on Day 2 with a moment of creative reflection. RENEW's Caleb Parkin will perform the abecedarian produced in his preceding workshop, and Maggie Wang and Sylvie Jane Lewis (Young Poet's Network) will perform their work, exploring biodiversity through a poetic lens and offering young adult perspectives on environmental justice. Compered by Natasha Ryan (The Poetry Society). Join us for what promises to be a powerful and thought-provoking end to proceedings!

### Caleb Parkin, Maggie Wang, Sylvie Jane Lewis (Poets)

**Caleb Parkin** is a [poet](#) and practice-based PhD researcher with RENEW Biodiversity. He was Bristol City Poet 2020 – 22. Collections: This Fruiting Body (2021) and Mingle (2024).

**Maggie Wang** is a [poet](#) interested in intertextuality, the environment, and the absurd. She is the author of *The Sun on the Tip of a Snail's Shell* (Hazel Press, 2022).

**Sylvie Jane Lewis** is a [poet, fiction writer, and researcher](#). Her work is published in *The London Magazine*, *Acumen*, and fourteen poems, and is commended in the Ware Poets Competition, the Free Verse Prize, and Verve Poem of the Month. She has an English MPhil from Cambridge and was a 2024 Poetry Society Young Critic. She is pursuing an AHRC-funded Literature and Film PhD at the University of Brighton on literary modernism and cinematic fairies.



**Renewing biodiversity through a people-in-nature approach**

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