

Climate Emergency in the UK – speaker biographies

Tom Brennan is Joint Executive Director and Head of Education & Policy at the Environmental Law Foundation (ELF), responsible for ELF's University network and Young ELF programme. A qualified solicitor, Tom first connected with ELF as an intern in 2005 and has worked in a variety of roles for the organisation over the years. He has also worked with the National Trust, the Gaia Foundation, WinACC, and the Biodynamic Land Trust. He maintains one hand in the soil and the other in the law.

Stephanie Bruce-Smith completed the Bar Course in 2021 following a law degree at the University of Oxford, studying environmental law in her final year. Prior to her legal studies, Stephanie worked at two research institutes in Ireland, gaining experience in quantitative and qualitative political and economic research. She currently works as a paralegal at Town Legal, a leading planning law firm based in London.

Becky Clissmann is the Managing Director of The Chancery Lane Project (TCLP) and a member of its Steering Group. TCLP is a global collaboration of legal professionals, which harnesses the power of commercial contracts to tackle climate change. Together, we create climate clauses that can be added to law firm precedents and commercial agreements to deliver climate solutions. TCLP works with lawyers and other professionals to ensure effective implementation of our clauses, across industries, practice areas and jurisdictions.

Prior to joining TCLP, Becky was a Senior Editor at Practical Law Environment and an environmental lawyer at Eversheds LLP (now Eversheds Sutherland). Before qualifying as a lawyer, Becky obtained extensive experience of climate change policy measures working for the Carbon Trust where she set up an account management service for FTSE 250 companies and large public sector organisations. Becky is a co-convenor of the UK Environmental Law Association's Climate Change and Energy Working Party.

Estelle Dehon is a leading public law barrister at Cornerstone Barristers. Her practice focuses on environmental law, human rights and information law. She advises on net-zero development and has acted for NGOs and community groups opposing fracking, coal mining, oil drilling and airport expansion. She is a trustee of UKELA. Estelle will be appointed a QC in March 2022.

Kit England is the Green Economy Manager for Glasgow City Council, where he leads on the development of the Glasgow Green Deal, fostering the wider systemic transformation for an economy which works for the wellbeing of all, within planetary boundaries.

Prior to this, Kit was a Climate Resilience Business Manager for sustainability charity, Sniffer, where he set up and managed the Climate Ready Clyde partnership – a group of 15 organisations collaborating. A key part of this role was developing the Glasgow City Region Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan – a transformational strategy to ensure Glasgow City Region flourishes in its future climate in a decade.

Kit has also had various additional roles at the intersection of local and regional development and climate, including advising the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on its climate change and social justice programme, and working on climate policy and economic development for Newcastle City Council. He was a contributing author to the third UK Climate Change Risk Assessment. In 2020 he was named one of only five of EIT Climate-KIC's Climate Action Champions. He also sits on the ISO and BSi working groups on climate adaptation standards, and is a Director of Alston Moor Community Energy.

Naomi Holford is a part-time law student in the final year of her degree at the Open University, where she also works as a Senior Lecturer in Childhood and Youth Studies. She lives in Walthamstow, North-East London, with her partner and cat.

Christine Holloway has been active in Winchester Action on the Climate Crisis (WinACC) for some 13 years, and set up Hampshire Climate Action Network almost 10 years ago. She was previously Assistant Chief Executive at the neighbouring local authority, and a Local Director for Surrey County Council. For 25 years before she worked in London local government and the voluntary sector.

Dr Kat Kramer has worked on climate change policy since 2004, primarily focused on the international processes including the UNFCCC, but also engaging at the EU and UK levels where opportunities for influence presented themselves. She started her career interning in the EU Commission and has since worked for a variety of NGOs and think tanks, including Greenpeace, WWF and Christian Aid. Her policy work draws on a broad academic base: she holds Master's degrees in chemistry and environmental technology, did her PhD on carbon forestry and biodiversity and also did the GDL.

Ella Stewart is a final year student studying Law at the University of Birmingham. She has undertaken pro bono work throughout her studies with the Environmental Law Matters Pro Bono Group at her university. Through her time with the group, she has had the opportunity to work with great organisations such as the Environmental Law Foundation. She holds a real interest in Environmental Law and is keen to explore the field further in the years to come.

Richard Wald QC took silk in 2020. He specialises, and has been ranked by the main directories for more than a decade, in Planning, Environmental, Energy, Administrative and Public Law. His practice extends to criminal work including POCA proceedings. He edits Thompson's Bulletin of Environmental Law, contributes to Tromans on EIA Law and Practice and Tromans on Nuclear Law and is co-author of Butterworth's Highways Law and Practice. He was appointed to the AG's B-Panel of Junior Counsel to the Crown in 2009 and an Assistant Boundary Commissioner in 2016. In 2017 he was nominated by Chambers & Partners to be Environment and Planning Junior of the Year. He spent 8 years as a trustee to the United Kingdom Environmental Law Association and the Environmental Law Foundation, taking up the position of the Chair of the latter at the beginning of 2022.