

ECO EAST

Be.Green

2021



Welcome



East London has always been at the forefront of social action and inspiring political change from the matchgirls strike of 1871 to the Stepney school strike in 1971.

As such, we, Be.Green, decided to tackle the heart of the issues on climate at a local level- here in Poplar. Over the last six months, we have cultivated our knowledge and worked with organisations such as Wen and R-urban to create our own social campaign now shedding light on stories across East London on environmental issues.

This is EcoEast.

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Who are we?

Aparajita

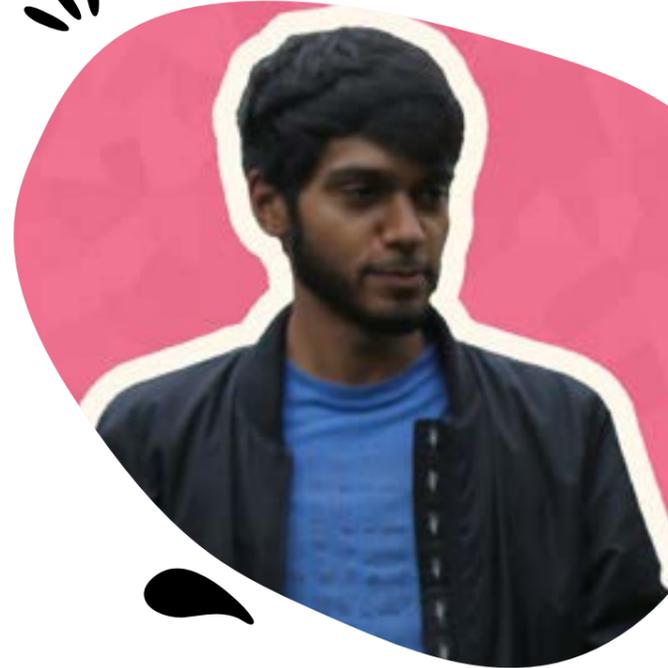


Hello, my name is Aparajita and I'm 16. I live in Tower Hamlets and I joined Be.Green because I am passionate about making local change to improve our environment.

I am currently studying Biology, Chemistry and English Literature at A-level and I have always been concerned with climate change and trying to help our planet for the better of our health, our wildlife and our futures.

This project has been very stimulating and has immensely broadened my knowledge of campaigning for the environment. Be.Green has allowed me to branch out to meet many new people and has made me even more determined to see further positive environmental change.

I hope that by reading this zine you too will be inspired to take climate action!



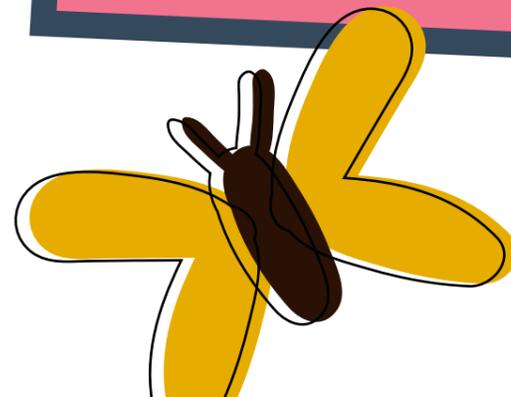
Krishan

As I grew up, I never did realise the importance of reading, exploring and always trying to develop. I have been trying to get into this habit more that I see the benefits of it.

From this, I have been able to indulge into new experiences and make new friends. This course has allowed this to happen, it has been a rollercoaster but every minute of it was worth it.

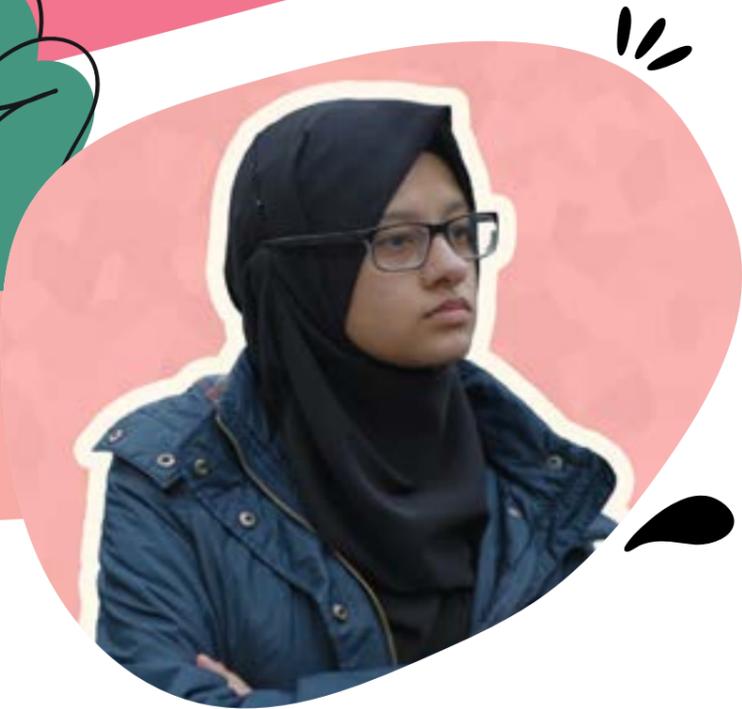
Every aspect of the course was great, the workshops, peers, influential organisations, organisers all I had learnt from. I aspire to learn more about climate change as it is so vast, but as of now I am strongly behind learning about our food systems and the problems we face in this.

My name is Krishan and I hope you enjoy and also learn from the Eco East.





Nazifa



Hello, my name is Nazifa and at heart, I am a poet and artist. Originally, I joined LiCs Be.Inspired where young creative women learnt from each other to create an art project. However, some will be surprised to find that I am actually studying Chemistry, Biology and Geography for my A-Levels!

I live in a strange world where I appreciate the need for science and art and I think that my creative background is what is needed to find solutions to the biggest problem the world is facing: climate change. The environment around me is what inspires most of my writing, yet there is still so much we have yet to discover- 80% of the ocean remains unexplored.

It would be a shame if we were to lose the chance to find and understand even more species before they disappear. This is why I joined the Be.Green project, to be a part of climate action, learn more and use my creative background to offer solutions.



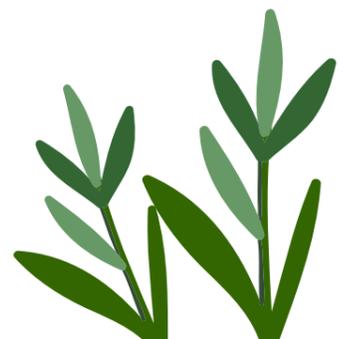
Rafia



Hi! Im Rafia and Im 16. I live in Woodford, and am currently studying English Literature, Classics and Psychology at A-Level.

I first heard about the Be.Green project through Leaders in Community because I was already part of the Be.Leaders programme. I decided to join because sustainability is a huge part of what drives me to do the things I do, as I have younger siblings, and I would really like them to experience the same world I grew up in, which is practically made impossible by extinction and climate change.

I really hope that, in reading this zine, you will also feel the same way about preserving our world for future generations!



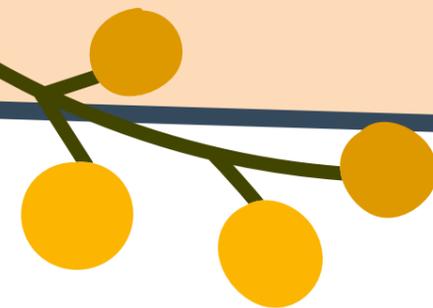
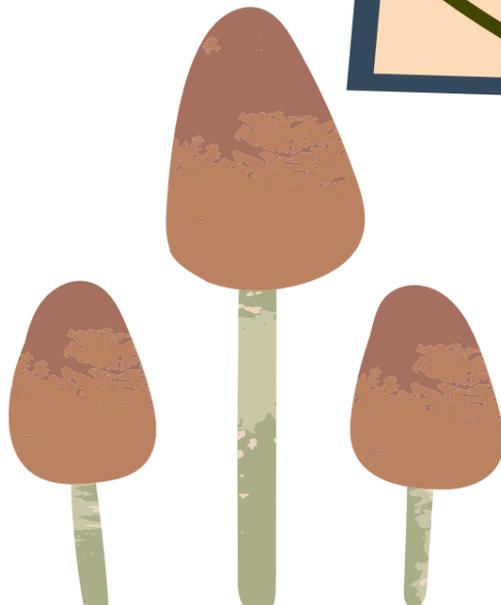
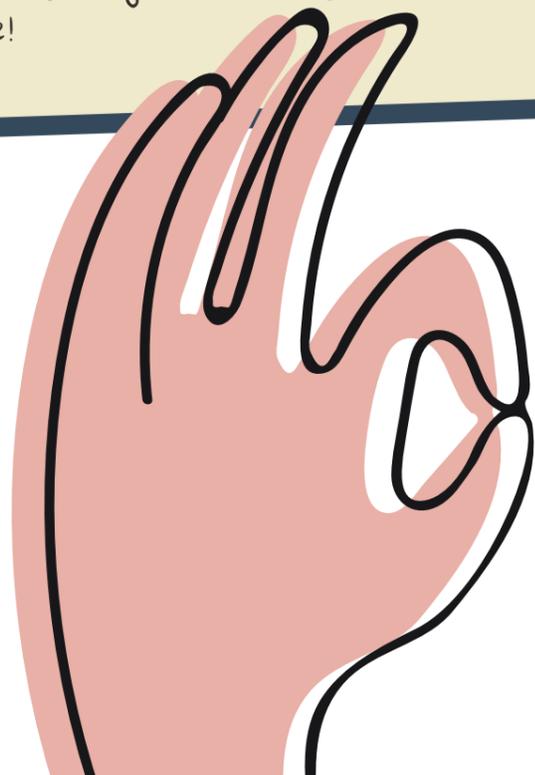
Serena



Hey! My name is Serena and I'm 17. I am currently studying History, English and RS, in my final year of A-Levels.

I live in Bromley and I first got involved with the Be.Green programme because I wanted to work with like-minded individuals to enact change and create healthier, more environmentally friendly and considerate habits.

I really hope our collaborative zine inspires you to think about what being environmentally-friendly means to you and to get involved with others to create a greener future!



Yasin



Hello, my name is Yasin. I am 18 years old and I live in Poplar. I am currently studying Business information Systems at the University of Westminster.

I got involved in be.green because I wanted to do something that can positively impact and change my local community for the better.

I believe that our Zine can show that little changes can make big positive differences.



Our Journey



Over the course of the past four months we have learned a lot about climate change, and just what a huge messy issue it is, but we have also learned first hand the ups and downs of trying to create a climate campaign.

As a collective, we were all passionate about reducing waste and consumption to tackle climate change. We were excited by this area and felt it was somewhere we could do some genuine good for the community. We came up with plenty of ideas and initiatives from implementing roof gardens in Poplar, to encourage localised food systems, to contacting supermarkets to install fridge doors in cold food sections in order to tackle energy waste.

However what we began to realise was that there were many barriers obstructing each of our plans and it was going to be a huge challenge creating a successful campaign in such a short time.



for example, we dismissed our initial idea of roof gardens to encourage people to grow their own produce after we discovered that there was already plenty of food in the world;

The main problem is that food is not distributed fairly. Hence, we did not want to potentially add to this problem by growing more food and creating more waste as this, in our minds, would defeat the purpose of the gardens.

This is just one example and we went back and forth over other ideas but we kept hitting contradictions, logistical issues or the reality of what impact we could actually have. In the end, we realised that our difficulties understanding how we could have an impact were probably shared amongst the wider population, with many people likely wondering what they can do and what impact they can really have.



Workshops

So we set off to speak to the general public to better understand what they thought of climate change. Is it really our issue to solve? Is it the responsibility of governments and big corporations? What impact can we really have day to day?

Through the rest of this zine we will take you through our journey with Be.Green and then dive into some of the illuminating conversations we had with various people.



Be.Green is a climate leadership program delivered by Leaders in Community (LIC) which aims to educate and empower young people in Tower Hamlets to create local climate campaigns. It started with a two month 'knowledge phase' which exposed us to various experts in the field; we heard from activists, campaigners, food educators and many more. It has been fascinating to hear about climate change in a more in depth way and also be able to spend time with some amazing people who are doing what they can to make change.

An Introduction to Climate Change

Our journey started online with a series of workshops- the first being with the CEO of LIC, Momtaz!

This was key in getting the foundations of our understanding of the climate change problem- who has the power to solve it?

We discovered that when talking about solutions responsibility is shifted to the individual and not to the corporations who exploit the environment. If every single person in the US were to take the steps to reduce their carbon footprint, only 22% of CO2 emissions would be reduced, whereas scientists estimate that this will have to be reduced by 75% to have a significant impact.



Following this we learnt more about how specific industries contribute to causing environmental harm such as the fast fashion industry. We found that most of the fashion brands we know such as Primark and Zara are fast fashion and we could hardly mention any of the slow fashion brands.

Slow fashion is a form of fashion that involves making the production of the product more environmentally friendly and ethical. Slow fashion means clothes can be recycled and fewer resources will be put to waste.





A Short History of Climate Change

As we started to embark on our journey of learning, we as a group met and completed a workshop with Joshua Virasami from Wen (Women's environmental network). This was an inspirational experience as Josh's talk on systemic climate issues showed us that we cannot solve the climate crisis without solving social issues.

He also shared with us where climate activism started and why it started. We began to see how it is often those typically without power or resources who start the process for change; it took the global south years of activism before the Western World woke up and realised the damage it was causing around the World.

The Journey of Food

On the next part of our journey we were introduced to Celia Briseid, a food educator with experience of supporting student projects. Her workshop was all about the journey of food and the massive impacts they have on the climate. For example the journey of the banana.. firstly, some banana facts:

The banana is grown in 150 different countries around the world.

The banana is a berry not a fruit

The banana needs a tropical environment with lots of sun, water and nutrient rich soil.

Bananas are sterile; you can't sow seeds and grow them.

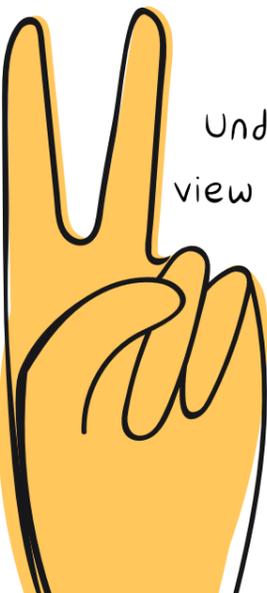




We might not think much about a bunch of bananas that we pick up at the supermarket but the system that exists to grow, harvest, package, deliver and sell a banana is huge and therefore has certain effects on the planet. The banana can negatively affect the environment by contaminating water, creating high levels of plastic waste and by causing deforestation and destruction of habitats. When over 114 million tonnes of bananas are produced each year the hidden negative effects can be great.

When demand for something becomes so great it often results in cheap labour and exploited workers. Workers in plantations earn between 4 - 9% of the total value of bananas, whilst retailers are able to earn up to 40% of the price paid by consumers.

Understanding the journey of the humble banana helped us view our food in a different way and begin to understand the immense journey that occurs from farm to fork.

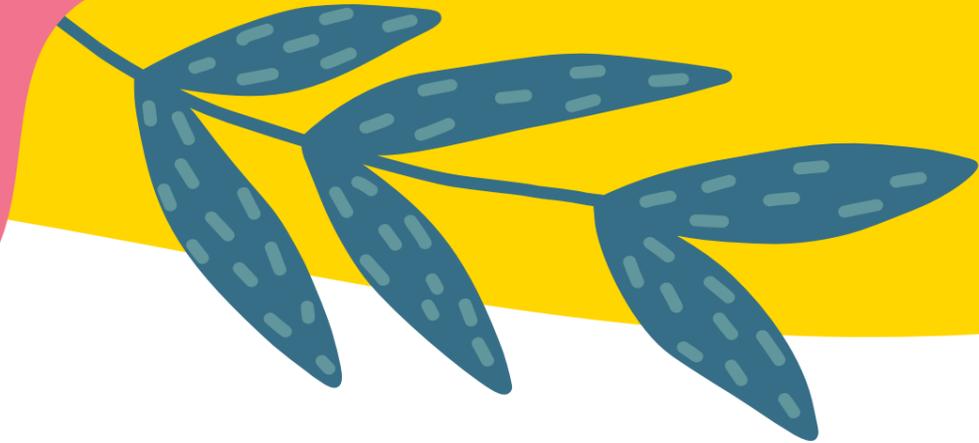



Zero Waste Living

During a session with SunnyJar, a social waste which runs zero waste educational workshops, we were exposed to the various ways of living sustainably in a household. It was brilliant, we were given different types of household products such as soaps, oils, and other natural ingredients that people can practically incorporate in their everyday lives.

Maud, our workshop leader, gave us a warm herbal tea that she gathered herself, which was made up of dried orange peels and nettles. She told us it was an enjoyable activity from her childhood that allowed her to express her creative side and environmental exploration. She spoke about relaxing with her family and drinking refreshing, sustainable herbal tea that also aids digestion.





We learnt many things that session and only wish that more people could know and experience the great things that Sunnyjar does. Finally, she showed us how to utilise old t-shirts and make them into bags that could be used for various purposes such as shopping bags for vegetables or fruits. As a group, we were inspired by these low cost, healthy, and exciting practices and so we made a promise to use them in our everyday lives.

Developing environmentally friendly and sustainable habits would waste less resources and encourage resources to be used efficiently.



The Circular Economy

The Circular Economy. We heard this a lot as we entered the homely garden of R-Urban. We were shown around by Andy and Kaitlin, introduced to the many different parts of R-Urban. First, we saw the stocks of wood that can be re-used and collected from the community for continuing uses so the wood doesn't go to waste. After this, we were introduced to their composting unit.



Part of R-urban's mission is to utilise food waste for energy, thus creating a closed loop system. One way they do that is by utilising their anaerobic digester which breaks down food waste to produce biogas and fertiliser. R-urban collects food waste from a handful of local residents who in turn receive fertiliser when it is ready. They are investigating whether this is a viable way for cities to create a circular system.

Food waste is massive and Andy had told us that the weight of waste from households was equivalent to 225,000 double decker buses. They are working on a small scale at the moment but show how food waste can be put to good use even if you don't have space for your own compost pile. Later during our visit we were shown their garden where they grow a wide range of vegetables with local residents.

They run cooking and growing classes and engage the local community in various workshops. In their small container, on an estate in East London R-urban are doing something amazing. It just goes to show what can be done in a small area and we can't help but wonder what London would look like if every estate had an R-urban area included!



What makes a successful campaign?

In our final workshop of the knowledge phase, we had the pleasure of having a workshop with Organise. Organise campaigns on workplace-specific issues like low pay, bad conditions or mistreatment of workers at specific companies; as well as national issues like raising the minimum wage and holding the government accountable over Brexit and workers' rights protections.

This workshop was presented by Pavlina Draganova, who is the Global Network Lead and campaign manager at Organise. She was also a climate change researcher at Ten Years Time, an organisation supporting charities and foundations to develop their understanding of climate change and confront the climate crisis.



In this workshop we discussed the various issues to do with climate change and were shown that sharing a solution is better than sharing a disaster. One was shown as a disaster where ice caps were melting and there was no hope, whereas the other portrayed a solution to improve our society, economy and welfare for healthy lifestyles for everyone. This showed us that change must be done with positive solutions and optimism for the future and that is what affected the group of us as a whole in this workshop.

Later, we were shown one of the campaigns they have worked on. It was a campaign to stop wastage and the disposal of good, high quality products at Amazon which was filmed by employees at their warehouses. This was a massive problem as the products could be used in many other ways.

Pavlina helped us go onto our campaign stage and showed us that a solution was better than sharing disaster!

Be.Green Timeline

September - November

What Impact can we have?

Creating a Zine showcasing our journey and local voices

Conducting Climate interviews

Creating ECO East

August

What makes a successful campaign with Organise

R-Urban and a circular system

Living Waste free with Sunny Jar

July

Welcome to Be.Green

fast fashion

WEN and a socially just food system



Be.Green was fortunate enough to attend the cop26 event in Glasgow for three days. By partnering with WEN (women's environmental network) we were given access to the green zone where we heard from many activists and organisations.

We arrived in Edinburgh by train on Thursday 4th November and, after settling into the apartment in the evening, we attended a virtual climate event where activists spoke about having a feminist approach to climate change and also how climate change impacts indigenous people which was very insightful. It was eye opening to attend COP26 and see how discussions on climate change are held on an international level. We all felt inspired by the weekend and even more passionate about making changes in our communities.



Did you know?



75% of the world's food supply derives from just a handful of plant species and 8 animal species.

Food production is responsible for one-quarter of the world's greenhouse gas emissions.

2.5 million people used a food bank in the United Kingdom

70% of global freshwater is used for agriculture.

1.3 billion tonnes of food that is wasted globally each year

Did you know?

4.95 million tonnes of edible food thrown away each year

Amazon used to destroy up to 200,000 items of unsold stock a week

The fashion industry is responsible for 8% of carbon emissions

10% of the plastic we use yearly end up in the ocean. That's equivalent to 700 billion plastic bottles

The production of plastic uses around 8% of the world's oil production.



Placenta

A poem reflecting on gender based violence and climate issues, read at COP26, written by Nazifa.

She would know

Her hands move like spiders that web nature's intricate design

Weaving silk in swathes of sweat

Just barely on a dime

She would know

The sea that spits in a hissing fit

Swallows her home whole

Washing the tin amongst her son's bones

She would know

How they set alight



The flourishing forest - The Earth's placenta

Become a ploughed field of hot ash

She and her and her

Are the umbilical cord connected

To the life blood that flows, nourishes

festers, brings anew

But they wouldn't know

Paint their walls green as they walk

on blood

They talk the talk while she stands

Wondering whether she was ever

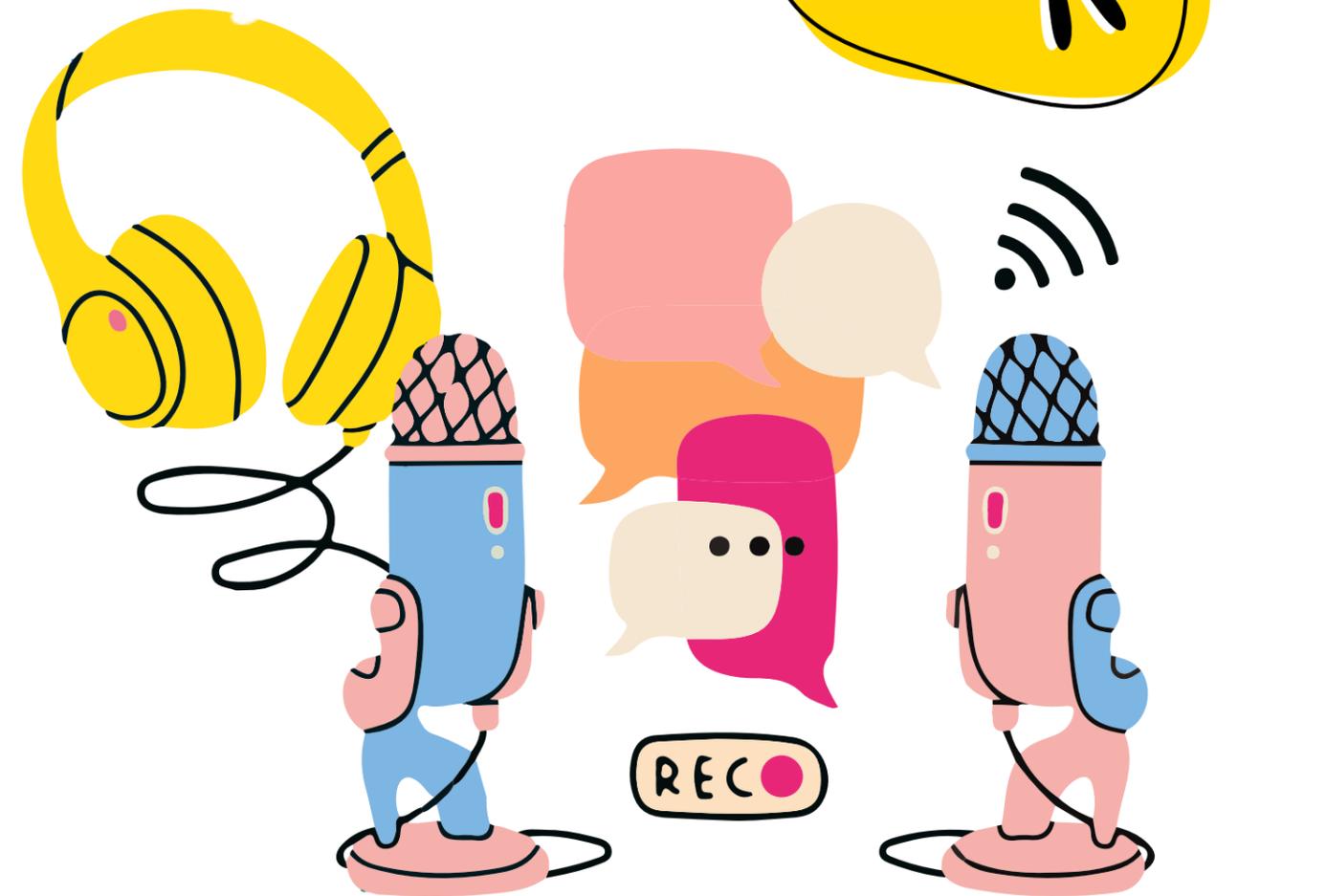
really there.



Our Interviews

To gain an understanding on how people in East London view environmental issues, including climate change and how they will differ from person to person we decided to interview a range of people. We had spent so long as a group contemplating what action we could take and what would be impactful that we wondered if everyone else also had these thoughts. So we set off to interview family, friends and professionals to gather a wide range of views and opinions on climate change.

Speaking with organisations



Thames 21 | Dilwar Hussain

Aparajita talks climate, food and barrier to change

Eco East's Aparajita interviews Dilwar Hussain, the Thames Connections Officer at Thames 21. It was very insightful interviewing Dilwar for Eco East, not only did I hear about his views on climate change, I also learnt more about Thames 21 and what they are doing to help the environment.

Thames 21 works with communities across

Greater London to improve our rivers, canals, ponds and lakes for people and wildlife, offering inspiring ways for communities to get down to their local riverbank. They believe rivers, canals and stretches of open water are the perfect antidote to urban living – which is one of the reasons thousands of volunteers help us rewild and protect them every year. Their aim is to rebuild the relationship between communities and their rivers; restoring river health and boosting wellbeing and community cohesion in the process.

Is climate change important to you?

Yes, climate change impacts us all locally and globally so I find it to be of utmost importance to me. I think it is something we should all be concerned about and thinking about. There is a lot of action that needs to be taken and it's important we think about how we can make positive changes on the environment as individuals.

Do you think you see the effects of climate change?

Yes, in the past few years we have seen a huge change in the weather, there's increased flooding locally, rising temperatures, even colder winters, sea levels rising, and impact on wildlife. The effects are becoming more obvious as time goes on.

What do you think contributes to climate change?

Human consumption of natural resources and our carbon footprints, things like our use of cars, aeroplanes, lifestyle, food consumption, deforestation. Corporate greed and the actions of big corporations is also an important consideration. The ecosystem is affected by the way we choose to shop and dispose of our rubbish.

“We have seen a huge change in the weather, there's increased flooding locally, rising temperatures, even colder winters, sea levels rising, and impact on wildlife”

Are you aware of the effects of food production on the environment?

Yes a bit, I think mass produced food is unethical and has a negative impact on wildlife. Industrial farming, mass slaughtering is having an effect on the environment, as well as packaged foods and plastic leading to pollution. These processes really impact wildlife, especially marine wildlife and ecosystems.

Do you think your diet can have a positive impact on the environment?

Yes, if we eat more ethically, consume less and less packaged food, as well as eating only free range animals which are reared on a farm. It's also important to grow your own and locally sourced food, rather than transporting food from other parts of the world. This type of diet is more sustainable, and would have a positive impact on the environment on a wider scale. Communities need to have more opportunities to grow our own food and have a sustainable diet. The current issue is that supermarkets are cheaper and people opt for the cheaper options, but communities need to come together to work towards more sustainable options.

Do you know what happens to your food after you put it in the bin?

Food that is wasted ends up in landfill, and can end up in habitats, disrupting ecosystems and affecting wildlife. Industrial waste is also an issue, it often does not get recycled and could be burned

What barriers do you face?

It's difficult to change some of my habits, for example I'm so used to driving which is difficult to stop and would have a great change on my lifestyle. Change itself is a barrier, there are financial barriers, for example locally sourced food is more expensive. I would love to produce my own food, but living in the city it is difficult to do so, ultimately we need more investment and more opportunities for people in the city to live more sustainable lives.

I think we need more guidance for people on how to make positive change, we can't just rely on the government to make changes in the policy, we need to be more proactive as individuals.

Do you do anything to tackle climate change?

I work to protect and maintain healthy rivers which includes cleaning up and raising awareness on some of the local environmental concerns and educating people towards having less of a carbon footprint and buying more suitably, like not flushing wet wipes down the toilet

My work gives people opportunities to volunteer, raising awareness on making better choices. Rivers are a huge part of the environment and have a great impact, they are indicators of the impacts of climate change. The changing state of our rivers directly, visually and conclusively provides evidence of the climate emergency.

Do you think individual behaviour can have a positive effect in changing the environment?

Yes, we should be more conscious of our carbon footprints, fly-drive less, eat more healthily, stop buying into consumerism - changing our consumerist habits can have a positive impact.

"The changing state of our rivers directly, visually and conclusively provides evidence of the climate emergency."





Leaders in Community

~ Momtaz Ajid

Interviewed by Aparajita

Is climate change important to you?

Climate change is very important to me because we are in a global climate crisis and the communities that I work with are going to be suffering the most. They are already in a disadvantaged position with food and financial poverty and will be further impacted by the climate crisis.



Do you think you see the effects of climate change?

Yes absolutely. We have seen really high temperatures and floods in countries where these things do not usually take place. We have seen wildfires that have been taking place for weeks and low land countries suffering great floods. It is very worrying!

What do you think contributes to climate change?

Multinational corporations, food consumption, the fast food industry, transportation, cars, the fishing industry, and the transportation of food contribute significantly.

Are you aware of the effects of food production on the environment?

Yes, but I would like to learn more about this. I want it to be a part of our everyday learning.

Cattle farming, meat farming, transporting the food we have from our supermarkets, because our food is not locally sourced, causes a lot of pollution. There is also lots of food packaging, plastics and food waste during food transportation.

"Lots of food is wasted when travelling, before it even reaches our kitchen."

Local food would lead to less waste, it would be fresher and it would reduce pollution.

Food grown in unnatural places and on a large scale requires certain chemicals to be used which is also very bad for the environment and causes environmental changes to ecosystems.

Do you think your diet can have a positive impact on the environment?

Yes. Plant based diets should be encouraged, a balanced diet is good for our health. I want to be eating more vegetables for the planet but also for the benefit of my own health.

Do you know what happens to your food after you put it in the bin?

No idea. I don't use composting systems so my food waste isn't going to a good purpose, it just gets dumped elsewhere. My council doesn't provide a food waste service which is a shame, the systems in place need to be better to encourage sustainability.



Do you think individual behaviour can have a positive effect in changing the environment?

Yes, for example we need to walk and cycle more when travelling; eat healthily, eat locally sourced food, and better insulate our homes. For me personally, I will reduce driving to places.

Do you do anything to tackle climate change?

If yes, what do you do?

In my workplace I am very vocal and active about things like reducing waste and plastic. I am trying to encourage my staff to take more green initiatives and encourage people who use our centre to stop wasting, reduce plastic use and promote recycling.

If no, why not/what barriers do you face?

There are some financial barriers e.g. changing your boiler system.

People need to have cars for things like shopping. If electric cars were more affordable, more people would be able to use them and this would have a positive impact on the environment.

I think that this Be.Green project and Eco East has really opened my eyes to practical solutions I could be making to my everyday lifestyle. I really believe that little steps of behavioural change will make a big difference. We should encourage people to think about small changes they could implement into their day to day lives.

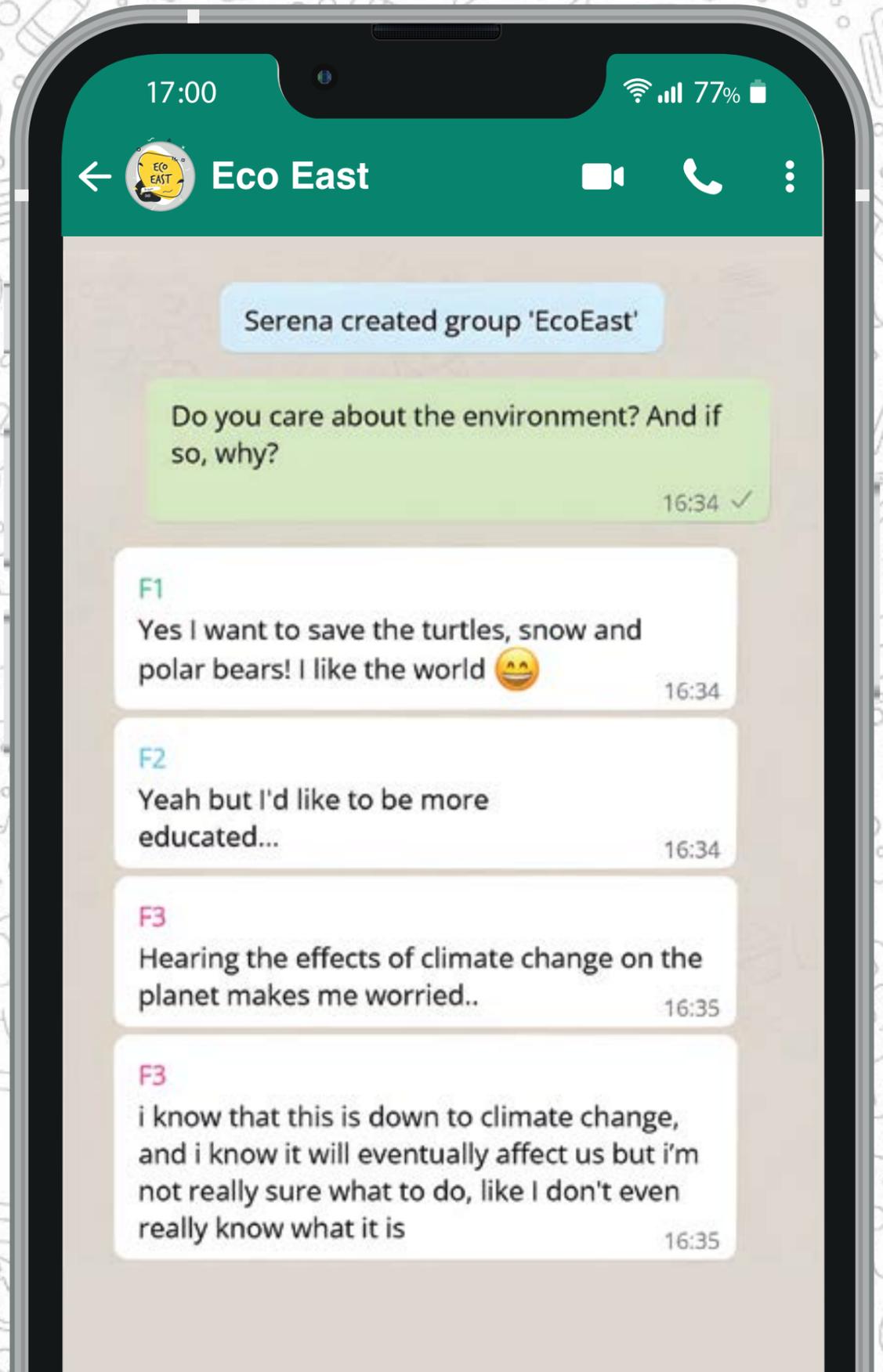


"We all need to join up as communities and come together as a collective instead of targeting people to look at the wrong things they are doing."



Speaking with friends

Serena asks difficult questions to her school friends, having an eye-opening conversation about climate change



17:00

77%



Eco East

Serena created group 'EcoEast'

Do you care about the environment? And if so, why?

16:34 ✓

F1

Yes I want to save the turtles, snow and polar bears! I like the world 😊

16:34

F2

Yeah but I'd like to be more educated...

16:34

F3

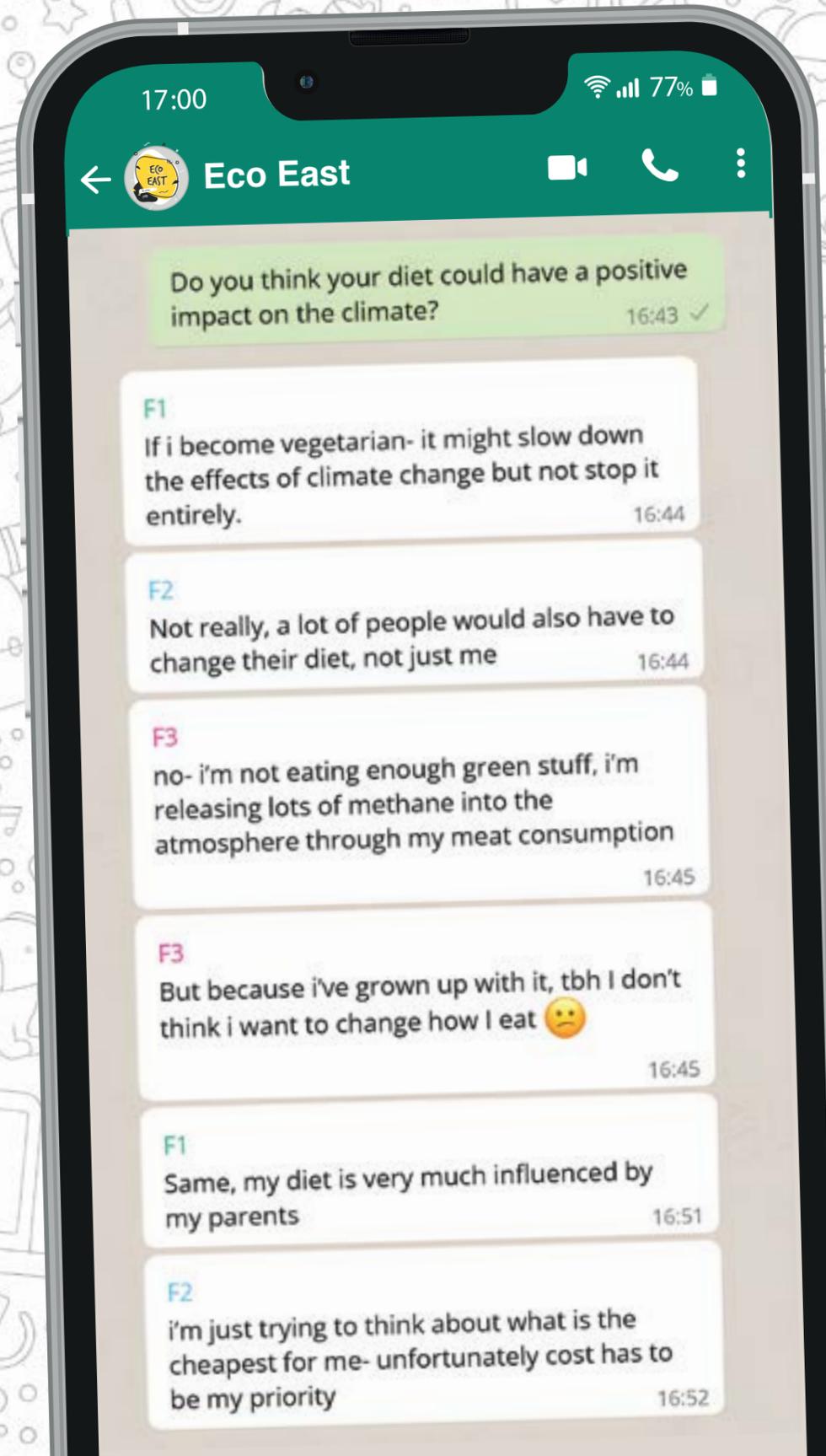
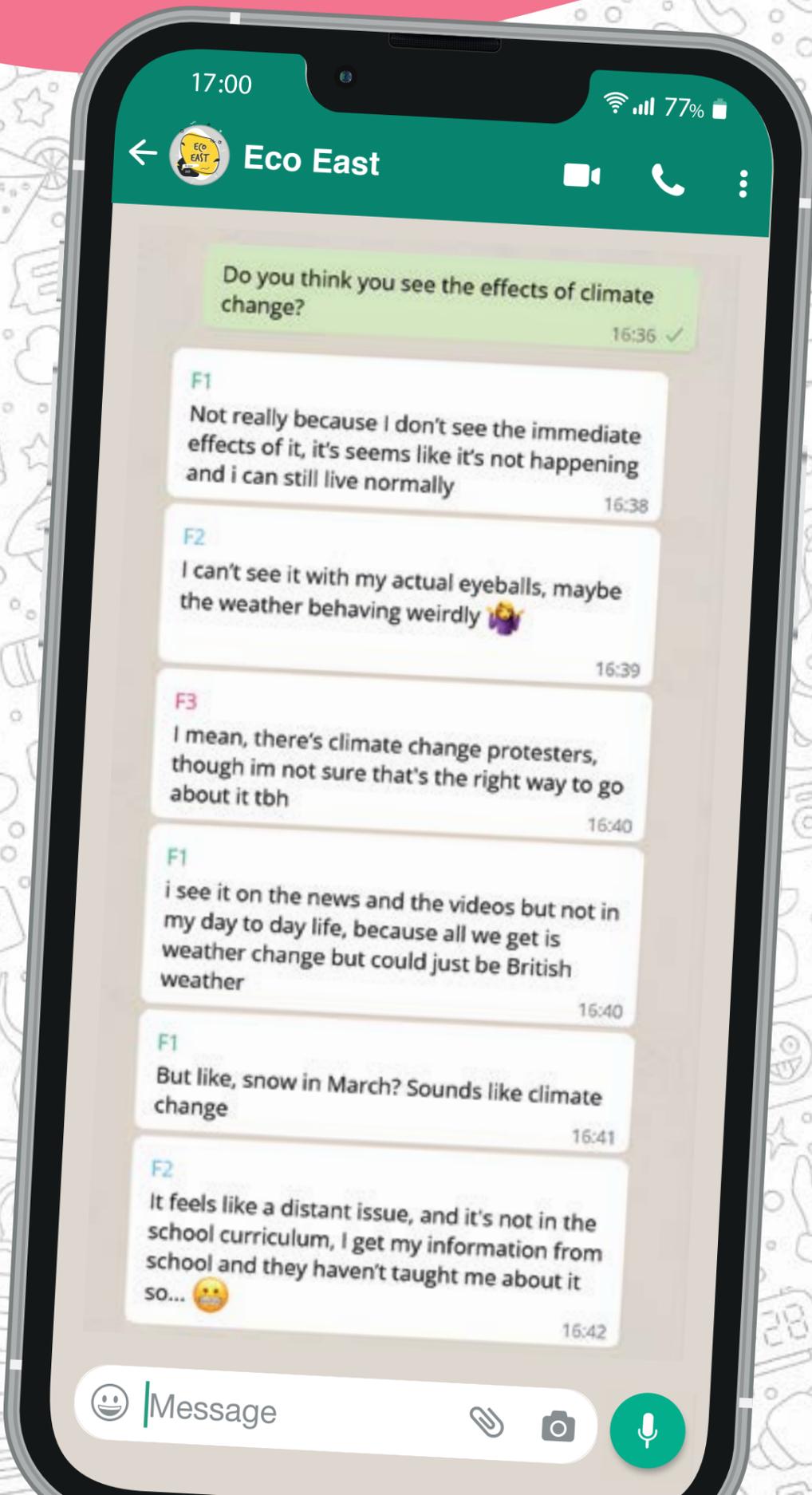
Hearing the effects of climate change on the planet makes me worried..

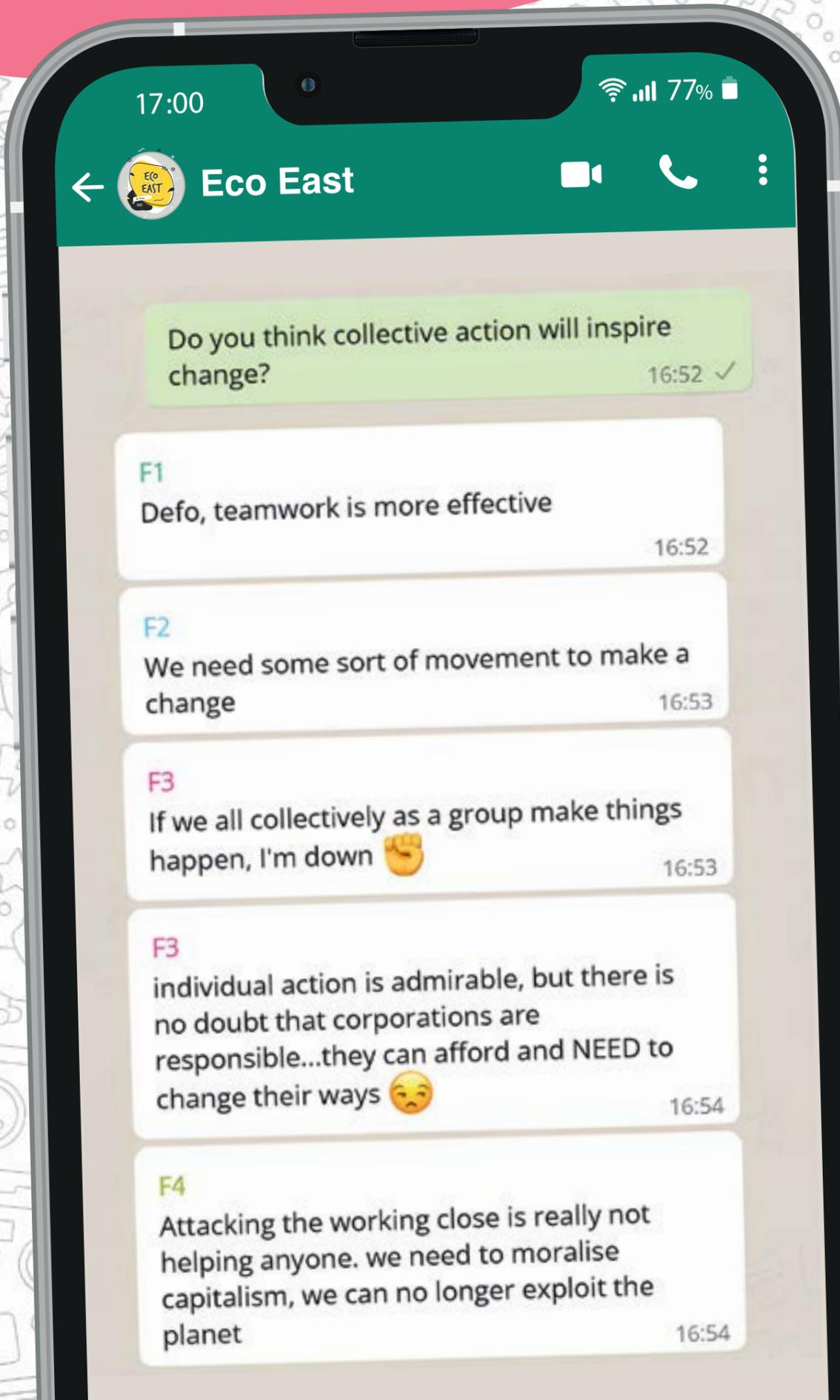
16:35

F3

i know that this is down to climate change, and i know it will eventually affect us but i'm not really sure what to do, like I don't even really know what it is

16:35





Do you think collective action will inspire change? 16:52 ✓

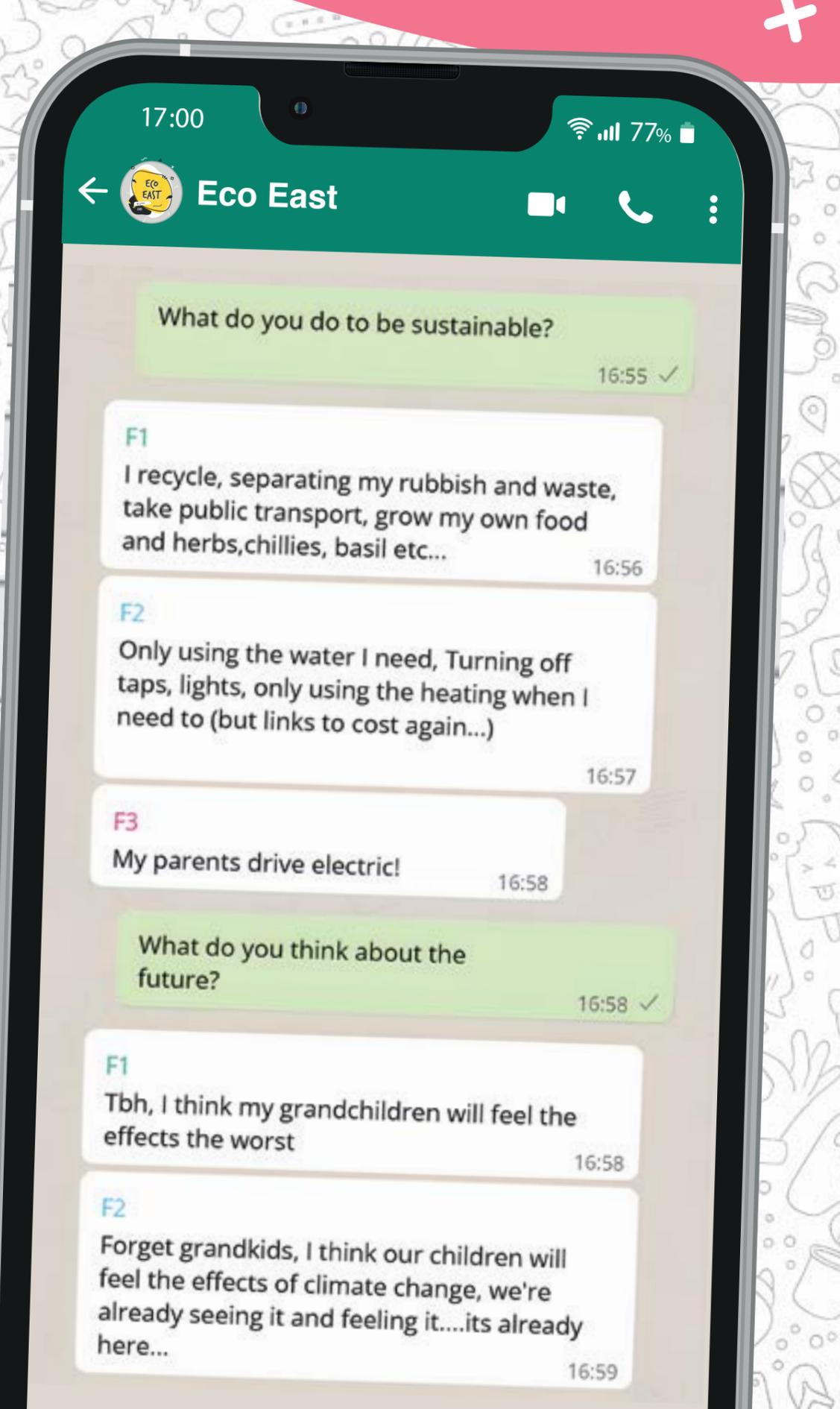
F1
Defo, teamwork is more effective 16:52

F2
We need some sort of movement to make a change 16:53

F3
If we all collectively as a group make things happen, I'm down 🦊 16:53

F3
individual action is admirable, but there is no doubt that corporations are responsible...they can afford and NEED to change their ways 🙄 16:54

F4
Attacking the working class is really not helping anyone. we need to moralise capitalism, we can no longer exploit the planet 16:54



What do you do to be sustainable? 16:55 ✓

F1
I recycle, separating my rubbish and waste, take public transport, grow my own food and herbs, chillies, basil etc... 16:56

F2
Only using the water I need, Turning off taps, lights, only using the heating when I need to (but links to cost again...) 16:57

F3
My parents drive electric! 16:58

What do you think about the future? 16:58 ✓

F1
Tbh, I think my grandchildren will feel the effects the worst 16:58

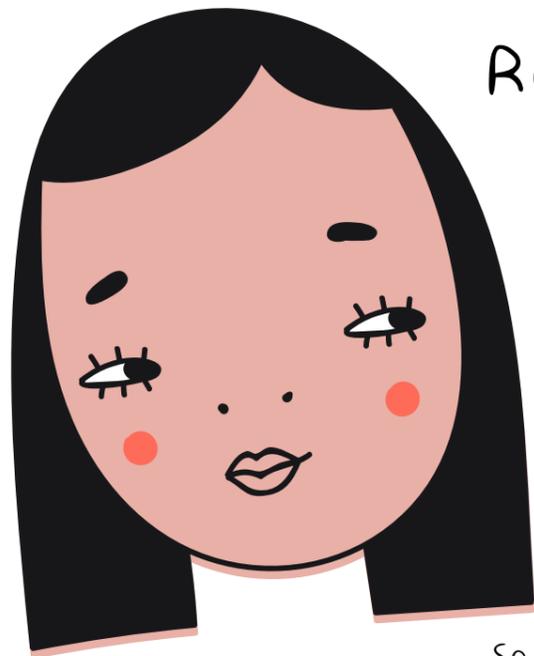
F2
Forget grandkids, I think our children will feel the effects of climate change, we're already seeing it and feeling it....its already here... 16:59



Sadia Batool

Corporate Environmental Responsibility

Interviewed by Krishan



Conducting my interviews was a great experience as I was able to sit with my friends and family and talk about solutions for the climate crisis.

It was something I have never tried before and learnt a lot from. This experience had me speaking with peers for hours trying to understand what the climate crisis is and what has caused it.

So I encourage you, the reader, to speak with your peers about the climate crisis, what we can do as a collective to prevent future generations looking down at us.

Also, as an ending I would like to recommend one of my favourite news pages that I use to read up on climate related topics which is @plantbasednews on instagram, I have seen a lot of factual data that has positively affected the way I live and make decisions on my consumption.

One of the people I was lucky enough to speak with was Sadia Batool who had some strong views on who are the real culprits of climate change and what responsibility looks like.

Is climate change important to you? Do you see the effects of climate change?

As an environmental advocate, I can certainly say that climate change is incredibly important to me. When discussing climate change, I find it especially important to draw attention to the fragility and interdependent relationship we, as humans, have towards the various spheres we inhabit or attain sources (of food, medicine and material) from.

Although those of us living in increasingly developed regions may feel the effects of climate change less than those in undeveloped areas, such as Haiti, it is safe to say that the overwhelming amount of reports concerning warmer summers and lashing floods coupled with the overflowing shop shelves filled with 'vegan', 'dairy-free', and even vegetarian options indicate the growing concern those in west feel towards climate change.

What do you think contributes to climate change?

Although I'm aware there are numerous factors which contribute to climate change, I feel as though removing women from education is the most important factor contributing to climate change.

I feel it's unsurprising that any attempts to mitigate climate change whilst excluding women as active agents of change inevitably fail. Educating women can emphasise their role in reducing carbon emissions, waste and even their consumption.



"In addition to increased female education, I feel larger companies are indelibly responsible for climate change, its unutterable effects and for having created the idea that the consumer is more responsible than the corporation itself."





Are you aware of the effects of food production on the environment? Do you think your diet can have a positive impact on the environment?

It is clear that there's increased concern surrounding the effects of the ever increasing demand for meat products, which were once perceived as luxuries. Ultimately, food production has affected and will continue to affect the environment and in turn, wider society. In regards to the effects of diets.

"I feel an individual's choice to change their diet to accommodate less environmentally damaging foods can only make so much change - real change must come from large corporations which account for over 70% of global emissions."

Do you know what happens to your food after you put it in the bin?

I feel that waste is less discussed compared to consumption and distribution. Despite the UK's attempt to become more environmentally friendly, it is no surprise that much of their rubbish is ignited or sent abroad. For this reason, I can only imagine that some of the food I throw away enters a compost or environmentally sustainable source while most of it enters an unsustainable spot.

Do you do anything personally to tackle climate change?

In attempts to reduce the effect of climate change, I neither consume meat sources nor purchase resources containing palm oil. However, as I mentioned earlier, I feel individual change and effort can only go so far and that large corporations must make real, positive change seeing as they contribute the most to climate change and so widen inequalities and increase climate induced illnesses.

Why do you think corporations contribute the most to climate change?

Under such intense scrutiny from wider society, it's incredibly easy to accept the notion that consumers are responsible for the emissions the products they purchase produce. I believe that companies are the main contributors to climate change as they promote the idea that consumers are responsible rather than themselves for the environmental and social regulations they fail to adhere to. This is especially true of companies which are centered around the sale of biscuits using palm oil. Such companies clearly fail to use and identify alternatives; casually placing blame on the consumer for their decision. It is important to mention that there are companies which have become increasingly aware of their contribution and responsibility in light of increased concern surrounding climate change, however there remains a large number of corporations which fail to uphold environmental and social responsibility.



Speaking with Family



A family conversation about climate change

Before sitting down with my family I hadn't really interviewed anyone before, so I didn't really know what to do but because I was interviewing about something I was interested and passionate about I just went with the flow and it ended up being really fun and simple. It was eye opening to speak with my family about these issues and hear things from their point of view.

Is climate change important to you?

Mum: somewhat

Aunt: Yes as it affects our day-day lives

Uncle: Yes as it occurs every day

Do you think you see the effects of climate change?

Mum: Yes, for example the change in weather throughout the year as well as increase in sea level and also the loss of wildlife species.

Aunt: Yes, for example change in weather when there shouldn't be. Plus a shift in habitats; deforestation, wildfires and heat waves have forced plants and animals to shift towards the poles and to higher altitudes thus they have started dying as the animals can't adapt to the new conditions leading to their extinction.

Uncle: Yes, for example rain patterns plus high temperatures.

What do you think contributes to climate change?

Mum: Vehicles can cause it but mainly humans are the cause like overpopulation.

Aunt: factories, Pollution (Cars, Air, Ship etc.) release of greenhouse gases, humans in general.

Uncle: Global warming, the bad habits of humans. The industrial revolution started it all

Do you do anything to tackle climate change?

Mum: Yes, I always walk or take public transport to most places that I go. I don't use plastic bags for shopping, I use paper or other reusable ones.

Aunt: Yes, I walk when I don't need to use my car such as going to the local shop or walking or taking public transport to work; plus I use paper bags for shopping.

Uncle: Yes, as I take public transport and walk to work and have been doing so for 10 years.

Are you aware of the effects of food production on the environment?

Aunt: Plastic wastage, factories, importing and exporting, pesticides.

Uncle: Yes, transportation of foods that can't be grown locally.

Do you know what happens to your food after you put it in the bin?

Mum: It goes to a landfill site.

Aunt: Goes to landfill sites or the compost heap.

Uncle: It goes to the waste fill site.



Reflecting on our Interviews

We hoped that through these interviews we could highlight the views of those voices which aren't normally heard. By conducting interviews with family, friends and professionals we wanted to show the diverse mix of opinions, knowledge and passion.

One interesting theme that came through the interviews was the tension between individual responsibility and the impact of large corporations. Should it be us, the individual, to bear the burden of climate change? Can we have an impact if we all come together? Or must we wait for governments and corporations to change their ways?

These are just some of the questions that we toyed with throughout this process and came up again via our interviews. These are just some of the questions that we, as a society, need to consider as we try to take steps towards a better, greener future.

We hope these modest interviews have shown the selection of views and opinions that we all hold when it comes to climate change, and we hope it gives you the motivation to speak with those close to you about the most pressing issue we are all facing. Whether you feel we can have an impact or not, we must keep speaking and keep sharing, it will bring us closer and stronger as we enter the strange future that awaits us.

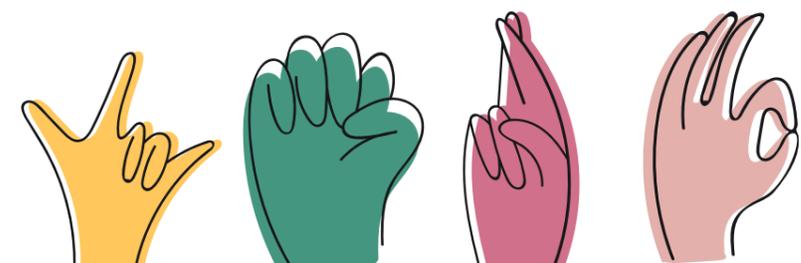


What now?

Working on the Be Green project for the past 6 months has been a fantastic opportunity for us all. We have had amazing opportunities such as hearing and learning from such knowledgeable people and being able to travel to Scotland for the COP26 event. We did learn a lot but it would not be worth it without the chance of spreading our experience with you all, the fact that we learnt something and think that everyone should know these facts and figures to better improve our longevity and health.

As well as this, none of the text you are seeing before you would happen without the immense support from our mentors Momtaz, Sergei, Sunara, Joshua, Andy, Kaitlin, Maud, Celia, Pavlina, Mo, Hannah, Roshini and all the organisations they are apart of that allowed us to learn and will keep on teaching to younger generations that will one day make a brighter future, we would like to say thank you to our families and friends as well as Leaders in Community for organising this course.

We hope you have enjoyed reading Eco East and that it inspires you to join the conversations, after all we are all in this together.

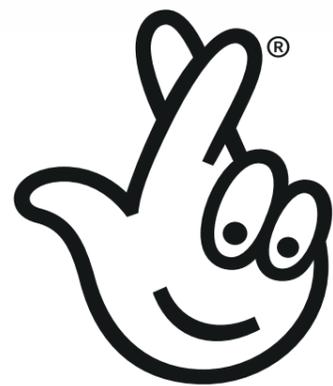




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