

#MentalHealth  
#COP26



# COP26 Citizens' Forum on Climate Change and Mental Health

**Date: Friday 5 November 2021**

**Time: 14:00–17:30 (UK Time)**

**Format: Zoom**

**UK Government theme of the day:  
Youth and Public Empowerment**

**Host**

The Mental Health Foundation  
in partnership with  
Glasgow City Council

**Chairs**

Dr Shari McDaid (Section 1)  
Mr. Toni Giugliano (Section 2)

## Why are we holding this event?

The climate crisis is currently damaging the mental health of hundreds of millions of people around the world and is having a growing effect on the mental wellbeing of people across the UK. The Mental Health Foundation has partnered with Glasgow City Council to explore these issues during the week of COP26.

This event will give attendees the opportunity to hear experts on Mental Health and Climate Change from around the world talk about the known links between climate change and mental health.

Attendees will also be given the opportunity to share their views on climate change and mental health, to make suggestions for research, and to discuss the actions needed to ensure a just transition.

## How will the event run?

Today's event will be split into two sections. The first will explore the issue of climate change and mental health.

The second will explore the features of a just transition to net zero emissions in Scotland. In each section, three speakers will discuss their area of relevant expertise/experience for no longer than 15 minutes each.

After all speakers have provided their input, attendees will be placed into breakout rooms for 45 minutes to discuss each subject area and take part in relevant activities.





# Structure of event

14:00–14:05	<b>OPENING REMARKS: Chair</b>
14:05–14:10	<b>OPENING REMARKS: Mark Rowland, CEO of the Mental Health Foundation</b>
<b>SECTION 1 – CLIMATE CHANGE AND MENTAL HEALTH</b>	
14:10–14:25	<b>SPEAKER 1</b>
	<p><b>Dr Panu Pihkala</b></p> <p><i>Dr Pihkala is a leading expert in interdisciplinary eco-anxiety research at the University of Helsinki and has published monographs in Finnish about eco-anxiety and ecological emotions. Among other positions of trust, he serves as a leading advisor for the Finnish national project on social and health sector responses to eco-anxiety. He has been awarded several prizes in Finland for his public work around eco-anxiety.</i></p> <p><b>Climate Change and Climate Emotions</b></p> <p>Dr Pihkala will discuss the variations of climate anxiety and climate emotions, based on both Finnish studies and the recent global survey (Hickman &amp; Marks et al. 2021). He will share information about various interventions and resources which can help to address climate anxiety and climate emotions constructively.</p>
14:25–14:40	<b>SPEAKER 2</b>
	<p><b>Professor Susan Clayton</b></p> <p><i>Professor Clayton is a Whitmore-Williams Professor of Psychology at the College of Wooster in Ohio and a visiting fellow at the Paris Institut d'Études Avancées. Professor Clayton's research examines people's relationship with the natural environment; she has written about the effects of climate change on mental health, and about climate anxiety in particular. She is a lead author on the forthcoming Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.</i></p> <p><b>Climate Change Impacts on Mental Health and Wellbeing</b></p> <p>Professor Clayton will speak about the ways in which climate change is likely to affect mental health. This will include evidence about impacts of extreme weather; what we know about the potential impacts of rising temperatures; indirect impacts associated with things such as displacement and food insecurity; and vicarious impacts due to awareness that climate change exists.</p>

14:40–14:55	<b>SPEAKER 3</b>
	<p><b>Miss Emma Dullaghan</b>  <i>Miss Dullaghan is a Business student at the University of Strathclyde and a participant of the Mental Health Foundation's Leaders Unlocked programme. She has a great deal of interest in campaigning for more mental health support and services. It was this that led her to join the Leader's Unlocked programme which enables young people and underrepresented groups to have a stronger voice on the issues that affect their lives.</i></p> <p><b>The impact of Climate Change on the Mental Wellbeing of Young People</b>  Miss Dullaghan will discuss her anxieties about the future in relation to climate change as well as the sense of hopelessness young people are feeling from not having an effective voice in climate change deliberations.</p>
14:55–15:40	<b>BREAKOUT ROOM 1</b>
	Attendees will be split into smaller breakout rooms for facilitated discussion. Available speakers will be rotated around breakout rooms for 10-minute periods.
15:40–15:50	<b>BREAK</b>
<b>SECTION 2 – JUST TRANSITION/CLIMATE JUSTICE</b>	
15:50–16:05	<b>SPEAKER 4</b>
	<p><b>Dr Michael Mikulewicz</b>  <i>Dr Mikulewicz is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Climate Justice at Glasgow Caledonian University, leading its research themes on international development and intersectionality. He previously worked as a Project Associate for the Center for Sustainable Energy in San Diego, California, and has activist experience with organisations such as 350.org, Amnesty International and the Sierra Club.</i></p> <p><b>Connecting Climate Justice, Just Transition and Mental Health</b>  Dr Mikulewicz will explain the need to transition to a carbon-free economy and the effect of this on the mental health of individuals in both the Majority World and the Minority World. To illustrate this, he will use examples of research conducted at the Centre for Climate Justice at Glasgow Caledonian University and other organisations around the world.</p>
16:05–16:20	<b>SPEAKER 5</b>
	<p><b>Dr Gary Belkin</b>  <i>Dr Belkin is the Founder and President of the Billion Minds Institute and former NYC Deputy Health Commissioner. The intention of Billion Minds is to link mental health to problems of great scale, specifically to the climate crisis, and to safeguarding sustainable societies through a humane social climate. He is the former Executive Deputy Commissioner in the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene where he led the Division of Mental Hygiene and its development and implementation of the innovative NYC-wide public mental health initiative, 'ThriveNYC'.</i></p> <p><b>If everything must change, mental health must change...a lot</b>  Dr Belkin will discuss how environmental change and damage will not only yield massive levels of unmet mental health needs resulting from hardship, loss, and destruction, but also from the broader dislocation and disruption wrought by global-sized adversity, social transformation, and uncertainty.</p>

<b>16:20–16:35</b>	<b>SPEAKER 6</b>
	<p><b>Councillor Susan Aitken</b></p> <p><i>Councillor Aitken has been Leader of Glasgow City Council since May 2017. She is currently co-chair of UK100, a network of local leaders committed to delivering Net Zero, and an advisory board member of the Cities Climate Investment Commission, which is addressing the challenge of financing Net Zero transition in major cities across the UK. For her work to deliver equal pay justice for thousands of women in the city, she was awarded Scottish Local Government Politician of the Year.</i></p> <p><b>Glasgow: The Transitioning City</b></p> <p>Councillor Aitken will discuss how the failure to prepare for Glasgow’s post-industrial future in the late 20th century continues to be felt today and how the notion of a just transition is particularly pertinent in a city which still lives with the legacies of its industrial past. She will discuss what the City Council and its partners are doing to ensure the climate agenda remains relevant to the lives of ordinary citizens, their lives and their life chances.</p>
<b>16:35–17:20</b>	<b>BREAKOUT ROOM 2</b>
	Attendees will be split into smaller breakout rooms for facilitated discussion. Speakers will be rotated around breakout rooms for 10-minute periods.
<b>17:20–17:25</b>	<b>CLOSING REMARKS: Chair</b>
<b>17:25–17:30</b>	<b>CLOSING REMARKS: Lee Knifton, Director of Mental Health Foundation Scotland and Northern Ireland</b>

## URGENT CONTACT INFORMATION

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