

KENT'S HEALTH AND SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE

"...it is about what we do, not what we think. It is what we do and what we do together. This is happening on our watch. It will be our legacy. This is what will be remembered for and we have the opportunity to get it right - if we act now"
- David Pencheon

Expert panel session and post-conference question responses

"That is what environment, climate change and health and sustainability are about. They are life. They are what we do."
- David Brazier

"...climate change and environmental sustainability are fundamental to people's health and wellbeing."
- Tony Grayling



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Expert panel Q&A session

Delegates were given the opportunity during the course of the day to pose questions to our experts through adding them to a flipchart at the back of the room. Before the expert panel session in the afternoon, John Warnett selected some of these questions as starter questions before taking additional questions from the floor. The questions put to the panel on the day were:

- **Going forward, do you see carrot or stick as being the most useful driver for behavioural change?**

David Pencheon:

We often get asked 'should we do A or B?', and the easiest answer is often both. In terms of behavioural change, there are times when a law, a regulation, a top down must-do will get results. Don't underestimate the power of the law to get things done. It is really good.

This approach does not usually engage people long-term or emotionally so you do need the other approach – rather than saying 'you must do this', it is ethical to explain why this is good for you; good for your families and organisations – you don't have to do it, it's not compulsory but you are well advised. So I think it is both.

Caroline Jessel:

I've always been a carrot person. I think predominantly it should be carrots, but I do accept David's point, if you think of smoking or seatbelts. In other areas of public health benefit, it has ultimately been the law or something much stronger than individual energy that has really changed the dynamic and outcome.

I expect we ourselves shall see some tightening up of laws and people getting serious about climate change and understanding the risks more fully. I won't be sad about that but at the moment people are naturally enthusiastic about their environment and naturally care, and are enthusiastic about, their children's future so harnessing that enthusiasm and energy is a lot of what we are doing.

Ian Mudway:

To use 2 American terms, if there is a clear and present danger then you may need to regulate and use the law. If something is hidden in plain sight, then you may have time to do voluntary work and where you can engage people and maybe get a better long-term result, so again it is agreeing with what has already been said but those are 2 ways you might think about encapsulating the type of action you need.

Kathryn Humphreys:

Just to add to what people have already said, part of the work we've been doing is looking at the impacts that the deregulation agenda and current government has that, particularly on local authorities and their ability to implement policy when they don't have a stick to hold up. Particularly with budget cuts, they are scaled down to the things they have to do, and the rest gets left and a lot of the rhetoric we hear is about localism, we expect local bodies to deal with this but they (government) are not going to check whether that has been done or not and that is creating problems so in a lot of the work we do that is coming through quite strongly.

Dan Osborn:

What can I add? I think there is such a history of political inertia in this area that if a politician says that you should use the carrot it is almost certainly the case you should use the stick! But equally if someone is thumping the desk saying you need legislation, you will not win the argument.



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You do need to win the hearts and minds but you do need to bear in mind that people can't do all the work themselves. They can adapt their behaviour to work around the problem; it is too appealing for politicians.

- **Is the language of sustainability a barrier to engagement. Have we got the words wrong?**

Caroline Jessel:

In a nutshell yes. But I struggle to think of better words and I look to my friends and colleagues in the media who communicate every day with the public to try and help us engage more directly with the general public, it is only then we'll get real change.

Ian Mudway:

They are simply words stuck together in consecutive order. If people want to have an issue with those words, they will have an issue. You can dress it up but then you end up dancing round the issue and green space becomes environment, you can dress it up in some wishy-washy new age term but we are talking about environment and sustainability. So why struggle to search for different words?

Kathryn Humphreys:

Ok, just very quickly, I suppose within the adaptation of different groups, people have different words for the same thing so one word is not going to help everybody. A business group we were talking about in the business session has told us that resilience is the only word that is understood. Health groups have different words so trying to find a word that suits everyone is impossible and people do use it as an excuse for inaction but really you haven't got the message across and it is about the messaging rather than the individual words.

Dan Osborn:

It is not so much the word but the ways in which it is made relevant with some kind of narrative to the person you are engaging with. That is what really matters here. What you have to bear in mind is that evidence sometimes doesn't help in winning an argument because people have a set of beliefs. It is well established in psychological literature, you have to engage them to the point where their beliefs open up. After that point I don't think the language is too important. Once you have got people engaged with their beliefs system.

David Pencheon:

I think Dan is absolutely right. I think the best way to engage people to is to talk to someone in the language they use. The best compliment you can pay someone is to use the language they use. Professionals can talk to each other in acronyms but if you are trying to work with someone else you have to listen. Not just as Dan says for the words, but actually for the emotional drivers, by asking people what it is they really wish for them and their family. If you are perceptive and responsive you learn the sort of aspirations and emotions and hopes people have got and use that language.

- **Why are we not modelling these healthy behaviours we are trying to encourage such as being here today – the lights are on, the heating is on. There were unhealthy snacks. It is too hot. We are promoting cars. We should have thought about sharing taxis before we got here.**

Ian Mudway:

I actually thought about this this morning because I walked here, not from London, but from the train station and I was thinking this is a location you probably have to drive to get to. So yes, you could find fault in everything. There is a virtue of bringing people together to discuss this even if there are some inconsistencies.



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David Pencheon:

I think the good you do means you will have to spend some resources. One interesting thing that is emerging globally is that if you cut your carbon emissions you could be increasing your resources so it is a technical fix we have to think about. It comes back to who we are engaging with. We have engaged with the hotel. Have we set the criteria for how we want the meeting to run? If we had actually said to the hotel we don't want this, that and the other, can you do that?

Maybe the building could be adjusted but I bet you the building can't be adjusted because it is a hotel. Take the natural environment building built in a university setting. It is excellent in all the things you refer to in that question, but the problem is facilities management. People can't understand how the building works or transfer its benefits to other parts of the university estate. There are many anecdotes like that.

Caroline Jessel:

I agree with the question and I apologise to anyone who also agrees because I was part of the group who planned this event and we should have paid more attention, particularly to the car sharing opportunity. Everyone is disagreeing with me but I think we could certainly could do less, we could model better behaviour we want to see it, and have less waste on the tables – for example, paper, bottled water, all the rest of it. That could be done, and travel so I accept it and the temperature in the room has been far too warm.

Kathryn Humphreys:

I'll just give an example. It might have been something Dan told me which I liked. At a meeting a few weeks ago they decided they would only have vegetarian and you had to tell them if you wanted a meat option and no-one opted for a meat option. I'm vegetarian so I loved this and everyone happily ate the vegetarian.

Dan Osborn:

I think Kathryn is right, you can send out small signs. If you go out to the foyer and ask to see the environmental health policy they can give it to you. There were reasons why this venue was chosen. Just be aware, I used to chair a meeting in Cambridgeshire where I used to get people to declare how they got to the meeting when it started. Surprise surprise eventually no-one turned up so don't be too noble. Be pragmatic otherwise you will have no friends at all!

➤ **How do you integrate sustainability into the commissioning process into the NHS?**

Caroline Jessel:

Marvellous, thank you for the question. Yes, there is a simple answer to that without going into long details and it is called outcomes based commissioning which is coming in. Rather than say we want so many hip replacements or so many anything, what the contract says is that you will deliver healthy people and you can define that a bit more closely, it might be mentally healthy but basically the outcome you want is healthy people.

It then gives freedom to the providers, to decide how to deliver that outcome and the contract, then you are held to account by key performance indicators on those particular outcomes. Not the method you got there. So if you want to take everybody for a walk on the North Downs for your outcome, or plant a forest, grow healthy food locally and that delivers your outcomes, that will be paid for with all those mega bucks that currently go into the hip replacement and all the rest of it.

Ian Mudway:

IM: Unless you have some financial mechanism then it won't change.

Dan Osborn:



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I try maybe using some examples from where sustainability has had that thinking has had surprising results. If you look at the chemical industry, those companies that adopted a sustainable approach first are generally the market leaders. It is all about resource use for that kind of thing, there are exceptions of course but generally that is the case and I think also if you look at the world economic reform and global risk report. Six of the most highly likely and most impactful issues the global economy faces are things to do with the environment, so 6 out of ten and we are not talking small numbers so if you want to be operating in the world and gain and invest confidence and this, that and the other, then the provider that is the most sustainable is probably the one who is going to be a market leader in the future, I would market commercial approaches like that.

David Pencheon:

Commission outcomes may sound like technical jargon, but how many people in this room buy energy from an energy company? Be honest. You don't want energy. You want a warm home. A secure and lit home. If that was your outcome then they would be in there like a shot. Not selling energy, but insulating your home.

You have to align the financial incentives with what is actually desirable now, and for the future. When you start doing that sort of thing, instead of selling products, people start selling services which is much more sustainable. It gets us away from this consumption focused world we have got ourselves into.

➤ **How can we get the strategic messages down to practitioners on the ground?**

I think people at the top can remove barriers. Some of the things we wish to do that any sane person would wish to do for a fairer world we can't do. We are all very good at understanding and vocalising why we can't do it, if you can put it in terms where you can remove the barriers. 'We can do this if...', there are plenty of those barriers. They are not there to make your life a misery. They are legislation written in different times. We live in radically different times so one of the things people can do is allow people to do things they would like to do and that often leads to removing things. It is quite easy to start new things. It is tremendously difficult to stop doing things we habitually do.

David Pencheon:

Communicate with them, don't be too brief, and communicate with everybody. From the policy makers all the way down to children in schools you have to take your message to them. Kids get it immediately and even incredibly young, if you tell kids some of things you might say are too scary to tell a kid, kids don't get too scared by it, they say this is outrageous. These are my ideas. Here is how we solve the situation. You should not talk down to people you should just give them the information. It is important to give them the scope to self-discover so you just don't preach, you allow them to actually see the evidence and make their own conclusions.

Kathryn Humphreys:

Very little to add to that. People owning their own ideas and owning their own processes is really important. Top down preaching is pretty useless.

➤ **You talk about communicating the message, would it not be easier to pay Jeremy Clarkson £5 million to become a convert and start talking about it? People don't believed science.**

There are certain people that are completely undermining the science so although it is empirical now, what you do about it to change those things, there are certain voices which are just undermining it and it seems very insignificant voices as well.

Caroline Jessel:



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I entirely agree. I think it is a big problem. There are some that stick out who put themselves out but they are probably not so influential such as the Jeremy Clarkson's of this world and it is a very major challenge I think. My own personal perspective on this is to say if each of us in this room can influence a few of our friends and family, so I'm always embarrassing at dinner parties because I tend to just ask people what they are doing about this and it goes bit quiet but I think there are so many contradictions in the way we are all living our lives in the face of this knowledge that you just do need to almost confront people with their own lives. We can do that in our own human way.

David Pencheon:

Jeremy Clarkson once wrote an article about me saying what a complete jerk I was and someone said I never believed what you said David until Jeremy Clarkson said that, now I do believe you! We are coming up to a General Election and climate change is not a technical issue, a schoolchild can tell you what it is. It is a political issue, ergo, write to your politician. Write to all of them by the way, don't forget that one person is a crank, 2 people is a pressure group and 3 people are public opinion. This is true. If you write to your minister it is only when they reach 3 they refer to their ministerial colleagues. So numbers absolutely matter. Don't whinge and moan, just include the paragraph: 'I'm really interested in your view about XXX, I'm really interested in political solutions and clearly your response to my request will influence how I, my family, my friends, my workmates, will vote. So just engage with the political thing. Don't sit back and just whinge. Get engaged in a helpful, supportive, facilitative way.

Ian Mudway:

I'm missing non-endorsement from him, I think. We might have some scope with anti-diesel messages with Jeremy. Maybe we can do something there. We have to try to communicate with him, as difficult as that may be.

Kathryn Humphrys:

My family don't listen to me so that won't work but the climate-gate scandal and all the stuff that came off that was hugely damaging to sensible discussions in the media about climate change and I was in the Daily Mail as part of that saying I'd conspired with scientists to mislead government. Because I'm called Humphrey they thought of Yes Minister.

There are some attempts starting up. The anti-global warming policy unit and it is trying to put a factual take on everything that is coming out of that but they are very well organised, very well-funded and it is very difficult to deal with that, particular if you are government because you can't interact with the media in that way so it is really hard but I think there are signs that it is starting to ton back and other way now.

Dan Osborn:

About 10 years ago I bought a second hand vehicle from a well-known German manufacturer and I was told I was the first person ever to ask about the petrol consumption. Very recently I replaced that car with another second-hand car. This time the salesman talked to me about the engine performance. With that kind of thing going on Jeremy Clarkson's views are an irrelevance.

- **What have you got from today? What will you take away from this conference?**

Caroline Jessel:

Huge delight that is so much going on in Kent and so many fascinating things I've learned.

David Pencheon:

I think huge encouragement there are so many energised people in the audience but a word of caution that we must do this together, talking and maintaining momentum. If you are not going away with 5 or 6 emails about things you are going to do together it is not going to happen. You have to do



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this collaboratively and see the common good which may mean changing the way you approach things. This not a competitive sport. It is a collective sport.

Ian Mudway:

This wouldn't have happened 10 years ago. Things are shifting and I'd like to move more quickly, but you have to start somewhere.

Kathryn Humphreys:

Fantastic day, really inspiring actually just to see how enthusiastic people are. Be page I met about what they are doing and information sharing and sharing what you know and also what you don't know and want to know.

Dan Osborn:

I think this has been the most highly informed local authority event on this kind of subject that I have ever been to.

Additional questions for the speakers

Following the conference, the additional questions that were posed by delegate during the day were e-mailed to the speakers.

- **How do we improve integration between environmental health, health and social care and the health and wellbeing agenda? Do we need to work differently to better integrate with health and wellbeing messages?**

Caroline Jessel:

Yes! But this is starting with the health and wellbeing boards and the joint strategy on obesity for example.

Dan Osborn:

There are two questions here. To the first: There needs to be an appreciation that social care should provide a good level of well-being and health for those receiving it. These are two outcomes from social care that could be built into the planning and delivery of social care.

To the second: Perhaps if those engaged in social care had a clear view of how to help improve health and well-being then this would help with integration. The right kind of advice is perhaps not available to those trying hard to deliver social care.

- **Can we redefine growth to mean progress rather than consumption?**

Caroline Jessel:

This has been done – check out the National Wellbeing measurements by the ONS <http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/guide-method/user-guidance/well-being/index.html> The challenge now is to get the public and politicians to take these more seriously - this is linked to answers to another question below – the politicians respond to voter pressure and memories are often short.

Dan Osborn:



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A better approach might be to leave measures of growth (provided illegal transactions were removed from international definitions of what constitutes GDP) where it is and add to it measures of consumption and income as advocated by some economists and then also add health and well-being measures to an expanded human development index. We might then have three independent tools that could tell us something about human progress and the “progress of nations” – ah, sounds like a book title!

- **How can we find out what we are already doing?**
- **How to evidence the effects/ value of preventative measures**
- **Are ESS the most effective way to demonstrate the ‘value’ of the natural environment to public health outcomes?**

Dan Osborn:

I am not sure there is a single way to demonstrate the value of the natural environment to public health outcomes. For example, the natural environment could improve outcomes if it is used to improve flood protection or coastal erosion. Equally, woodlands, gardens or beaches could help improve chronic health conditions or public health more generally (in a preventative sense). Not sure all these types of things can be accounted for by an ESS approach. The UK NEA follow-on project sets out some useful material on the values (economic, social and cultural) of the environment (see <http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org>).

- **Are there shared priorities across sectors? Or across Kent?**

Caroline Jessel:

Yes there are – as part of Kent's Health and Wellbeing strategy which has been developed based on the JSNA (sustainability chapter) and cross referenced with the Kent Environment Strategy.

Dan Osborn:

There should be some – especially good if outcome focused.

- **What deliverable ‘quick wins’ can we develop to strengthen links between health and environment? What should we do first?**

Dan Osborn:

We need to synthesise the information we already have, identify gaps and test out solutions that can have a durable health impact.



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- **How do we manage expectations for growth against pressure on the environment and hence efforts on health and wellbeing? How do we get away from short-term political goals to consider long term effects?**

Caroline Jessel:

Both crucial questions – I think the answer to the second lies in constitutional reform and the creation of an authoritative body, possibly a reformed House of Lords, which has responsibility for long term well-being – the short termism of the political cycle is part of the problem as is the nature of capitalism which requires indefinite growth to reduce the debt which is necessary for large scale investment.

Dan Osborn:

Many organisations are now advocating an approach to progress that is not growth only. This includes the OECD. See references provided in my slides for the meeting.

- **Are you aware of the freshwater habitats trust water friendly farming study appearing to demonstrate that micro-scale water conservation and quality measures are most beneficial in reversing biodiversity loss? How will this be incorporated into WFD measures and NELMS? (put to Tony Grayling)**

Yes, we are very aware of this issue; the work was part-funded by the Catchment Restoration Fund, which is administered by the Environment Agency. As it happens, the biodiversity gains were largely related to ponds and metrics that do not feature in formal WFD classification, which is focused on management of catchments at a larger scale.

Nevertheless, our support to the catchment-based approach makes it clear that local communities should seek to take action in the areas that can give most benefit to water and people, so there is scope for small scale benefits to be promoted and delivered. Catchment partnerships are being encouraged to set the priority issues to be addressed and the measures of success they want to use to indicate progress towards achieving the objectives in River Basin Management Plans. The Freshwater Habitats Trust is represented on the national catchment-based approach steering group so should be able to feed this evidence into this forum for consideration.

With regard to Countryside Stewardship (Formerly NELMS), the targeting maps and scoring system to determine which farms will be part of the scheme are in the process of being finalised by Natural England. We are working with them to incorporate water and climate change adaptation elements, to ensure these are part of the development. As this scheme is in development, there may be a good opportunity to contact them over this issue and open up a discussion.

- **Do health and wellbeing board members have a wide enough view, or do they tend to focus on their own agenda? (put to Roger Gough)**

Roger Gough:

The Kent HWB is made up of representatives from the 7 Kent CCGs, 3 District Councils, Healthwatch, KCC officers from Public Health and Adult Social Care and KCC Cabinet Members from Health, Adult Social Care, Children's Services as well as the KCC Leader.



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The Kent HWB is a strategic board and each member contributes to the board on a strategic level inputting specialist knowledge from their own organisation. Each CCG provides a flavour of what is happening locally at their CCG level and that of 7 local HWBs. As a Board, we are keen to promote this and strengthen the flow of information and dialogue between the two levels of boards.

Inevitably members will bring the particular perspective of their own areas, but our experience has been that there is strong interest in addressing issues that cut across geographical or organisational boundaries, whether they relate to determinants of health (such as housing), specific health issues (e.g. end of life care) or major programmes such as the Better Care Fund.

Dan Osborn:

From what little I know the health and well-being process does need to broaden its horizon. Maybe some of the activities promoted by H&W Boards could be focused more at the community or LA electoral ward level.

General comments

In addition to the questions received, a number of delegates also made some general comments through post-it notes.

Next to this hotel (Ashford International) a new block of flats is being built for older people with care needs! Where is the local green space? Close to major roads, pollution and noise! No sense of local community here? Seems to be at odds with H&W aims.

Check out bedzed – zero carbon community in south London: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BedZED>



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