

**Anna Wardle, 17 years, Year 12, Whitley Bay High School**

Last June I attended “*The Time is Now*” demonstration in London together with my mum and a group from our church. I talked to you in front of the Houses of Parliament about the worries of my generation that not enough is being done by the government to combat Climate Change. I am pleased to say that a lot more is happening in our local area with the Friday for Future Movement supported by Primary Schools, Middle Schools and Headteachers at the coast.

But this is not enough, and the terrible Covid-19 Crisis has shown us that the government can act with necessary force if needed because you cannot put a price on human life. We cannot put a price on our environment and nature, and the future of our planet. We need to act now. For too long we have been ignoring nature, sustainability and justice and equality as the recent Black Lives Matter demonstrations have also shown us.

We need a “*green recovery*” from the Covid-19 crisis where nature got a break and during which we all so much more appreciated the nature around us, especially us living next to the sea. We cannot just go back to how it was before or worse. If we are to avoid a climate catastrophe, we need a new way of thinking and cannot just return to the unfair and unjust conditions which destroy our planet and many human lives.

The well-respected conservationist Jane Goodall said, “*We have come to a turning point in our relationship with the natural world. One of the lessons learnt from this crisis is that we must change our ways. We have brought this on ourselves because of our absolute disrespect for animals and the environment.*”

**I ask you, not to let my generation down!**

**Jack Newton, 16 years, Year 12, Whitley Bay High School**

Although the climate crisis may seem to many to be a faraway future apocalypse that can be fixed at the last minute, that is unfortunately not the case. It is happening now. Its effects can be seen from Australian wildfires to Zambian droughts to record flooding across Britain. We must see the reality that this is happening now and our actions as a nation do not only affect us. If we do not act very very soon, in a very substantial way, we will contribute to triggering climate tipping points which leads to the climate crisis continually worsening out of control.

So really what I want to say is: I’m sure that you, Sir Alan, know the science and the details behind what many are demanding of Parliament. I’m sure you believe in climate action, but climate action must happen now, it cannot wait till after Brexit, it cannot wait till after the most recent political emergency to shake Parliament. It is too late to sit around and discuss what should be done for the next 5 years without actually doing any of it. It is too late for simple individual action to make the needed difference, it must be systemic.

We must take the chance of now to build back better to tackle the climate crisis in a similar vein to tackling the COVID crisis. **I honestly fear for the future of our planet and the life it holds, if you do not act now.**

**Crispian Oates**

Sir Alan, Thank you for taking the time to hear us today.

We are living in strange times and they give us the opportunity to rethink how we might move on going forward out of this.

I think we should use this opportunity to strongly invest in a way that will secure our future against another worldwide crisis, namely climate and ecological crisis. I'm very conscious that the date for reaching stated goals in 2030 is only 10 years away. That is just this Parliament and the next Parliament and then we are there! If we don't act now the climate is jeopardised for everyone and that includes my children and grandchildren who have to live through that potential crisis.

What we are asking for today is a healthier, greener and fairer economic recovery from the current pandemic. I'd like to mention four things in particular that I would like you and Parliament to work for.

1. To make a net-zero carbon test touchstone criteria for assessing and deciding all spending and taxation measures. We are needing a whole culture change in this respect if we are to meet our goals, and a net zero carbon test needs to be embedded in our whole economy and decision-making today!
2. The government election manifesto promise to build and make all homes energy efficient by 2030 - the 10 years I spoke about just now. I'd like you to press them hard on this. It is a win-win to do it now, as it will create jobs when many will go, it will improve health for those who get warmer homes and it reduces our carbon footprint.
3. It is good to see some of our local authorities here in the north-east taking cycleways and reducing our car dependency and use in town more seriously, but this needs to be done more intentionally. The use of electric buses to give access to local shops rather than out-of-town shopping centres would again be a win-win, keeping town centres alive, reducing car journeys and having a more sustainable transport infrastructure.
4. Finally, and it reiterates my first point, as we come out of the covert crisis, we should ensure that any financial rescue packages are only made on the strict condition that those receiving them must sign up to the 1.5°C commitment of the Paris Climate Agreement, and be able to demonstrate what they are doing in relation to that in order to qualify for government money.

We know that some of the poorest families have been hit hardest by covid and that a climate disaster in the years to come will also hit the poorest worst. **I want to urge you to ensure that the whole economy aligns to a healthier, greener and fairer recovery for a sustainable and resilient future that will benefit everyone including our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. A fair settlement, so everyone can benefit.**

**Susanne Wardle, Teacher**

I would like to talk about how we can make sure that nature recovers at home and abroad.

- During the Covid 19 pandemic, the relationship between people and nature has strengthened. Many of us have enjoyed the nature around us so much more, whether it was

in our gardens or during walks in the park or where we live, next to the sea. The health and well-being of people and nature must be placed at the heart of the recovery and everybody needs to have access to green spaces which is so important for physical and mental well-being.

- We need the government to set world-leading targets for the restoration of nature in the Environment Bill and by delivering an ambitious Agriculture Bill which delivers for nature, climate and human health enhancing biodiversity.
- Finally, I would like to speak about sustainability with regard to trade deals and supply chains.

Any future trade deals the government is seeking, must guarantee sustainability. Food imports cannot undermine our environmental standards, our food safety and our animal standards.

We need to reduce our global impact of consumption by requiring companies by law to ensure the sustainability of their supply chains.

**We need to reduce our global footprint and restore nature across the world.** The Covid 19 crisis forces us to take stock and shape the direction of the food system ensuring it is sophisticated and profitable but above all sustainable, just and healthy for nature, climate, animals and humans. This will make us more resilient against future pandemics.

**Dr David Golding CBE, Associate, Faculty of Science, Agriculture & Engineering, and Honorary Chaplain, Newcastle University – Closing Remarks**

“We thank Sir Alan most sincerely for giving us his valuable time, and assure him we’ll be following up on these and related issues. We’ve had many meetings over the years, ever since I led a delegation to talk to him about Third World Debt, in 1997. He’s been unfailingly attentive and sympathetic and a real force for good in the corridors of power – and of course the response we’ve received from him has helped us to keep going!

**I cannot emphasise too strongly that what’s really important to us about the climate emergency is that he and his colleagues are not only supportive, but that they give these issues the priority – the desperate urgency – they deserve, for everybody’s sake.**

“We’d be grateful, FIRST, if he’s get his staff to put out some tweets, indicating his involvement with this initiative – I’ve given them the details;

“SECOND, if he’d be so kind as to write to the Prime Minister to tell him about our support for a green and fair recovery in general, and the recommendations in The Climate Coalition’s ‘Plan for a Green, Fair & Healthy Recovery’ in particular;

“And finally, we’d be most gratified if he’d sign the Climate Coalition’s ‘Declaration for a Healthy, Greener, Fairer Tomorrow’, showing his commitment to bold action on nature and climate in the build-up to the United Nations climate and biodiversity conferences taking place next year. And again, our thanks!”