

Annual Review

2021/22



**Friends of
the Earth
Scotland**



Colin Hattersley



Thank you for continuing to support us.

With COP26 coming to Scotland, 2021 was undoubtedly the biggest ever year for climate action in Scotland. The eyes of the world were on Glasgow and Friends of the Earth was at the heart of the action throughout.

Our team employed lots of new people, took on huge responsibilities on behalf of the climate movement and mobilised people across Scotland to put pressure on decision makers. Delivering these commitments against the ever-shifting backdrop of the pandemic was a testament to the talent and commitment of every single member of our team and the volunteers who took part.

Throughout the past year, we created moments to put pressure on politicians and demand the transformative action that

moves us away from a volatile, fossil-fuelled economy to one that prioritises wellbeing and protects our environment.

2022 will be a year of change. Now that COP26 has concluded, our Director, Richard Dixon, has left after a decade of success. Since his arrival as director in 2013 the organisation has grown from six members of staff to a thriving team of over 20. As concern about the climate crisis has grown, the Friends of the Earth Scotland team has been at the centre of progress and the push for action.

We thank Richard sincerely for his ongoing support of our work and being an integral part of our success, now and well into the future.

Here are just a few of the many highlights from the past year in our campaigning.

Highlights

COP26

COP26 has been a huge focus for us over the past year. Knowing that the negotiations themselves would not deliver the change needed to address the climate crisis because of the positions that world governments took into them, our approach was to use all the attention and energy around the summit to get leverage for our campaign demands – particularly on phasing out oil and gas – and as an opportunity to build the climate justice movement for the work that continues long after COP has left town.

This involved everyone in the team working incredibly hard over months and years in the run-up to deliver across a vast range of areas. We hosted Friends of the Earth colleagues from around the world, played a pivotal role in building and supporting the COP26 Coalition, as well as in Stop Climate Chaos Scotland's work, kept our campaigns in the spotlight and helped bring activists from across the UK to deliver a Stop Cambo message to the UK Government.

A major highlight was the 150,000-strong march through Glasgow to demand climate justice. Organised by the COP26 Coalition, it was the largest climate march ever in the UK and brought together many different parts of the movement - trade unions, faith groups, racial and migrant justice groups, youth networks, direct action and grassroots, climate justice organisations and NGOs - in recognition of the multiple, intersecting crises we face. This was a powerful moment of global solidarity as the world was



welcomed to Glasgow and hundreds of other events took place simultaneously in different countries.

The four-day hybrid Peoples Summit organised by the COP26 Coalition saw 500 events on a huge range of climate justice issues with participants from all over the world. Attendees heard how we need to change the system from the ground up, on issues including just transitions, economic justice and work, climate reparations and decolonisation, with important contributions from indigenous movements, anti-racism and feminist organisers, disability justice activists and youth networks,.

The Just Transition Hub that we organised with allies at COP26 was a space for trade unionists, climate activists and others to come together to build our campaigns. From contributions by Chilean just transition campaigners to those in the room joining from Belgium, remote presentations from Mozambique and practical skill sharing for people in Scotland – it covered a huge range of perspectives and priorities, with one clear focus: building the power we need to win. We also joined trade unionists and workers on picket lines across Glasgow to stand in solidarity with their struggles for decent pay and conditions for key workers in public transport and waste.

Climate justice was at the heart of all our work and the work of the COP26 Coalition, and as a result the main areas in which we act and seek to influence have had exposure to concepts that are key to a climate-just response to the crisis such as fair shares, loss and damage, critiques of the sophisticated greenwash that is net zero. This enables us to get deeper into the issues and discussions with decision makers and allies that need to happen to start implementing the real solutions to the climate crisis.

OIL AND GAS

In July 2021, we created a team to focus on oil and gas, linking together work on ending new North Sea projects, securing a fair and fast transition for workers and communities, and opposing dangerous new industry technology like carbon capture and hydrogen.

The hugely successful Stop Cambo campaign came out of this group. Alongside allies, we drove this work forward using the opportunity of COP26 to challenge new fossil fuel projects. After months of fierce opposition and scrutiny from the public, climate groups and politicians, oil giant Shell paused the development. People power made this happen but the work isn't finished yet

The pressure also forced the First Minister to announce, just before COP, that the Scottish Government no longer supports drilling every last drop of oil from the North Sea. These are significant victories in both government policy and in public perception. However, we must still ensure that Cambo is officially rejected and the UK Government stops licensing new fossil fuel projects. .

The last 12 months has seen political support for dangerous climate distractions ramp up, which serves only to keep fossil fuel companies in business. We've been there every step of the way highlighting the huge issues and dangers in relying on ideas like carbon capture and storage and hydrogen. The Scottish Government Hydrogen Action Plan risks locking us into continued oil and gas use and carbon capture projects are demanding public money that could be better deployed on technologies that are working today.

In 2022, we have been highlighting the obscene profits made by the oil giants whilst the public are facing enormous energy bills. The volatility of the global oil market is giving us another serious reason to get off fossil fuels fast.

ENVIRONMENTAL RIGHTS

We continue our work to secure environmental rights – both procedural and substantive – largely through our role in the Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland, now flourishing with a team of five in its second year of operation.

We helped shape and have signed onto the ERCS petition for an enforceable right to a healthy and safe environment, and an advocacy manifesto which brings together demands for substantive and procedural environment rights and how they should be implemented. The petition and manifesto were launched at a well-attended online event around Human Rights Day in December.

We have also contributed to the ERCS response to the Scottish Government's consultation on Court Fees, which for the

first time - thanks to our lobbying over the past decade - raises questions relating to Aarhus Convention protections on costs in environmental legal challenges, and to a report on the need for an specialist environmental court in Scotland. The coming year will see legislation on the incorporation of human rights, including the right to a healthy and safe environment, into Scots Law and we will continue to work closely with ERCS and other key allies on this.

TRANSPORT

All city councils have now launched their Low Emission Zones and enforcement will begin in each one over the next couple of years. Glasgow City Council has also outlined plans to pedestrianise a large area of the city centre - the result of many campaigns we've supported. Other cities are lagging behind the scale of this ambition, so we'll be continuing to highlight what is possible.

In January, the Scottish Government published the routemap for achieving 20% reduction in kilometres travelled by car by 2030. As well as responding to the consultation, we encouraged the public to respond by setting up an online action and raising awareness through our media work.

The routemap as it's currently drafted is a disappointing rehash of existing programmes relating to transport. The commitment is at the centre of our transport work and we will be continuing to push for new measures to be included, like planning restrictions on car-dependent developments, and sufficient funding for councils to start publicly owned public transport operators. It's important that new policies are relevant to different areas in Scotland, so we're holding a workshop series to work with local people and groups across Scotland to plan what's needed.





CIRCULAR ECONOMY

Action on the circular economy has ramped back up after the Circular Economy Bill was delayed due to COVID-19. At the time of writing, the Scottish Government has just opened a consultation on the bill - and we've been building up public support through our communications in the run-up to this.

Incineration has been a significant part of our circular economy work over the past year, with the encouraging success of a moratorium on new incinerators being announced in November 2021. In May 2022, an independent review recommended that this be turned into a permanent ban on planning permission for new incinerators. Over 1,000 people contacted the review through our online action page to call for this, so it's a great success for everyone who got involved.

While it's disappointing that the Deposit Return Scheme has been further delayed,

regulations have come in that ban a range of single use plastic items including plastic cutlery, plates, straws and expanded polystyrene food containers and cups.

ECONOMY

On the economy, we've been working with Scottish Environment LINK and Wellbeing Economy Alliance Scotland as the Transform Our Economy Alliance to call for radical, transformative changes to Scotland's economy in order to ensure wellbeing for all within our environmental limits.

The Scottish Government launched its new economic strategy in March. In advance of this, we produced Ten Points for a Transformative Economic Strategy, a set of guidelines on how to judge the Government's plans which was endorsed by over 40 leading academics.

The Scottish Government's document gets poor marks against these, starting well with its overall vision but then failing on the practicalities - so

we're continuing to push for greater ambition in how to make the necessary changes happen.

JUST TRANSITION

Our just transition work continues to set the agenda and build relationships across the country. Our appointment of a just transition organiser based in Aberdeen last year is helping us to do even more in this area, working with communities to build awareness of, and momentum for, a fair and fast transition phase out of oil and gas.

We have continued to talk to offshore oil and gas workers directly to identify their demands as the energy sector changes. This requires sustained work to build trust and ensure that we are representing their needs appropriately.

One such demand was the call for an 'offshore training passport' that would ease the switch from oil and gas work to renewables. It was created with the support of workers and unions, won cross party support in the Scottish Parliament, and a motion at Westminster. The big training providers recently announced plans to identify duplications in the courses they provide but it falls far short of what is required.

On the community side, we have been able to begin building connections while also highlighting St Fitticks park residents' campaign in Aberdeen to protect community greenspace from unjust plans for a so-called industrial 'Energy Transition Zone' as a demonstrable example of the importance of community engagement in just transition planning. A recent residential in the North East brought together key



people to discuss a shared vision of what the future could look like.

DIVESTMENT

Some significant steps have been made in some of Scotland's councils, with divesting from fossil fuels having become a more prominent issue politically and with the public. We saw this in particular in the run up to the local authority elections in May, which saw the issue being raised at all the relevant hustings, with more election candidates than ever pledging to work to change investment policy if elected.

Of those elected, 17 councillors from across Scotland have signed a pledge calling for divestment. They included members from the SNP, the Greens, Labour and the Lib Dems.

A further 13 newly elected councillors in Edinburgh also backed a specific call for the Lothian Pension Fund to drop its fossil fuel investments.

Strathclyde Pension Fund (SPF) still accounts for the largest share of Scottish local government pension fund's stakes in fossil fuel companies, a year on from the council voting in favour of divesting, so we're continuing to work closely with Divest Strathclyde to push the pension fund to strengthen the policies they are proposing.

ACTIVISM

COP26 was the focal point of our activism work over the past year. In the run up to and during November, there was a huge amount of activity supporting local organising in Glasgow and across the country. We saw around 10 protests across Scotland on the Global Day Action on the 6th of November, with many of our network also coming across to Glasgow for the big march. The range of actions we organised and supported others in, was very wide in Glasgow during COP, from Stop Cambo stunts, to a migrant justice march, to mobilising climate activists, and to join striking workers on picket lines related to workers disputes around pay and terms and conditions.

Prior to COP26, we built momentum by running a series of eight “Introduction to Campaigning” sessions for people in Scotland looking to get involved. There were many new faces at these and we got great feedback that it was an accessible entry point for people looking to get



involved. We also worked closely with the COP26 Coalition to support and establish local COP hubs in cities and towns across Scotland.

In the months since COP, we have been working closely with Young Friends of the Earth Scotland, Tripod, MORE and Tipping Point to hold spaces to help activists reflect on, celebrate and process what happened, as well as starting to think about what comes next at a movement level. In December, we held a one day event in Glasgow reflecting on COP and celebrating all we achieved. We are running another event soon, to help nourish the relationships that were formed and to think about how people would like to work together going forward.

YOUNG FRIENDS OF THE EARTH SCOTLAND

Over the past year Young FoES have kept up their work creating learning spaces and engaging more young people than ever in climate action.

The second half of 2021 was focussed on the COP26, where we teamed up with other youth organisations to run the COP26 Youth Hub: a chill and positive space amongst all the chaos of COP which offered support to the youth climate movement and helped engage hundreds of new people with climate action.

YFoES members were involved from the very beginning in the fight against the Cambo oil field, and continue to support the campaign against the proposed Jackdaw gas field.

During COP we stood with trade unions on the picket lines, building relationships of solidarity and continuing our commitment to a just transition. Since then we have worked with the STUC to deliver a youth gathering on the theme

of climate justice and workers rights in May 2022, and have plans to continue this work.

Throughout the past year we have continued to learn and draw links between climate justice and other struggles such as disability justice, LGBTQ+ liberation, migrant justice and housing rights, as well as supporting young people with practical activism skills. We have plans for further workshops and skillshares throughout the year.

THANKS

Thanks to our members for your ongoing support, especially through these past few years.

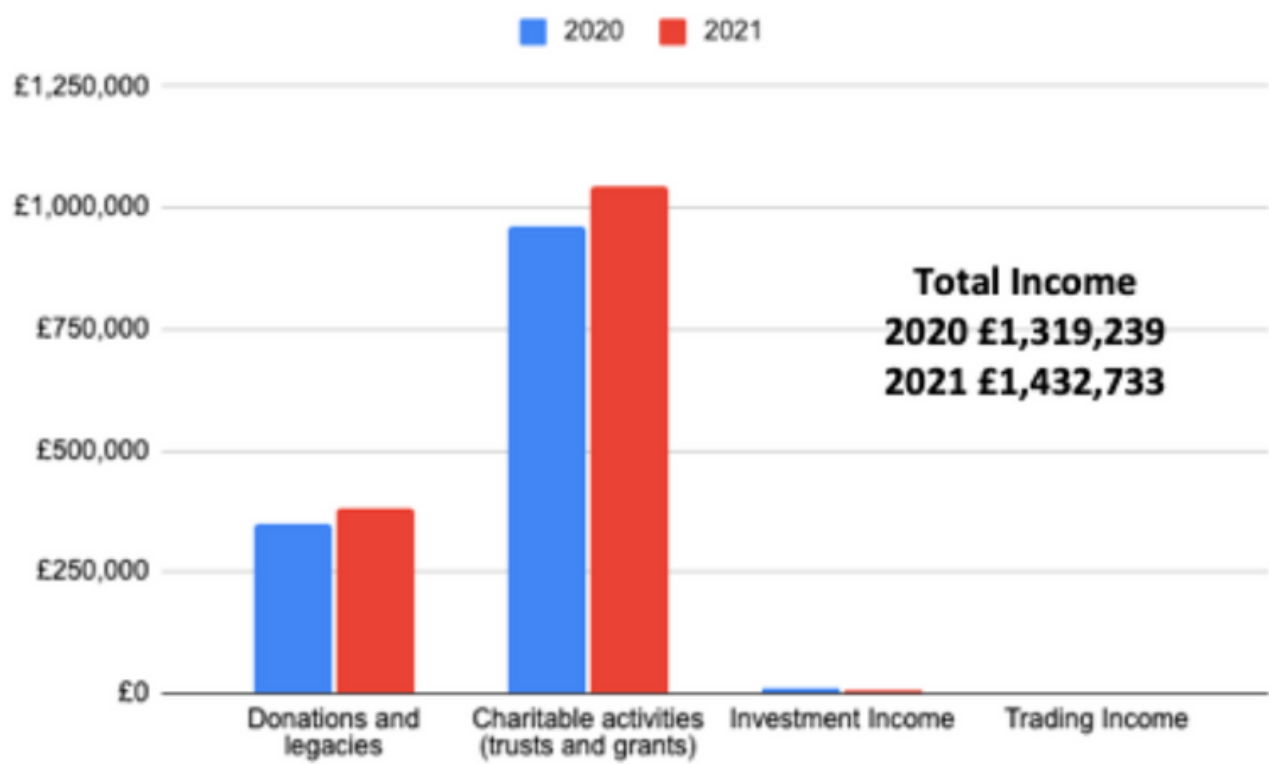
Your backing helps us deliver these successes and go from strength to strength.

Thanks to the team, our board, our supporters and members who enable us to keep working for climate justice at home and around the world.



Finances for 2021/22

Income



Expenditure

Expenditure comparison - 2020 and 2021

