

Update to UK COP26 Coalition, and other partners, of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland work on venues and hosting:

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Update 12 May 2020

Summary:

As an organisation with capacity to put towards some of the resource-intensive, logistical work needing to be done locally to underpin a successful civil society engagement with COP26, Stop Climate Chaos Scotland¹ (SCCS) has been delivering some key work as our contribution to the work of wider civil society, working with the UK COP26 Coalition, specifically via the Logistics working group. This has been mainly in two areas: creating the Civil Society Hub for COP26; and coordinating local hosting work for global civil society as they come to Glasgow.

SCCS input to the wider task can broadly be summarised as:

- **Creating *Platforms* and *Places* so that Global Civil Society can be as effective as possible during COP26 in Glasgow**

Through doing this work, we also want to support and build the climate movement in Scotland, and locally in Glasgow, and create momentum to enable us to effect real and lasting climate action in Scotland and an enduring legacy from COP26.

In all our planning we are thinking across what we need to do with, and for, all of global civil society as they come to COP, particularly about how we bring the voices of those most affected by climate change to the fore, especially people from the global south and indigenous communities.

Our two key areas of work are:

- Creating a **Civil Society Hub** during COP26: to include social and informal meeting space, hot-desks, media hub, bookable meeting and workshop rooms, and venue space for a People's/alternative/social Summit. We are also seeking space for Sunday strategy meetings for the main COP26 NGO constituencies and other international organisations so that they can all take place in the same area. Our aim has been to keep everything as close together as possible and highly accessible from the venue of the official COP.
- Creating the platform for, and coordinating and bringing together, organisations and individuals willing to **host people from global civil society coming to Glasgow** – specifically aimed at those from the global south and those with limited resource coming for the mobilisations.

¹ Stop Climate Chaos Scotland is a diverse coalition of over 50 civil society organisations in Scotland campaigning together on climate change. Our members include environment, faith and belief groups, international development organisations, trade and student unions and community groups. For more information about SCCS [see annex](#).

In order to support the hosting and local welcome work, as well as to build the movement in Scotland, to widen engagement, and to create a local legacy from COP26, we have created a **website called 'The Climate Fringe'**. This will be a platform for civil society-led events in Scotland, particularly in the lead up to COP, as well as during COP26. The website will tie together the huge variety of events and activities that are planned in advance of, and during COP, from grassroots and community events to training and workshops, arts and cultural happenings and other events. A bringing-together of all the disparate and diverse expressions of climate activism, concern and engagement into something that is more than the sum of its parts and that has an impact to new audiences and decision makers.

With the **covid-related challenges and changes** we are reorienting our work in the ways explained in this [blog](#). Firstly, to work on the aim that 'Those of us who still have the capacity to work on climate need to support the movement' we are repurposing the climate fringe website into an online hub for events and organising. This hub will focus on online events, particularly for the Scottish climate movement, but also with a focus on highlighting creative engagement on climate online.

Elements of work – progress update:

1. The Climate Fringe Website – online hub:

We are now working in a very different context with events cancelled and physical distancing imposed. Meetings, events and activities have moved online and things are likely to remain this way for some time. Ways of working are likely to be changed forever with more online working even after the danger from coronavirus has passed.

The Climate Fringe is being repurposed to an online events hub. The original aims of the Climate Fringe will remain and come into their own once we can recommence physical events and organising towards COP26 - ie once we have a new COP date set. However the online hub will remain and, we hope, become an ongoing resource for online activity and events which we expect to still remain important even after the covid-19 danger has passed.

We are still very much in development mode though and hope to add more events / online related functionality in the near future. Nick is also working closely on the development of the COP26 Coalition website to ensure good tie-in between the websites.

We are seeking views on what this should comprise and examples of content and how we can support the wider Scottish climate movement through this platform. We are always seeking more events to go up and so invite people to upload online events they know about.

We anticipate the events part of the website being very important during COP for linking inside and outside the official COP and potentially drawing people out to civil society events at the COP26 Hub.

2. The COP26 Hub:

This work is currently on hold but we will return to it once the date for COP has been announced.

Update as of March 2020: We have been offered the use of the Strathclyde Student Union Building as the COP26 Civil Society Hub, which is the biggest Student Union in the UK and has cafes, bars, a theatre space, a large function/club space, some meeting rooms and a debating chamber. We are seeking an extra space in the neighbouring institutions of Strathclyde University and the City of Glasgow college for larger capacity plenaries, meetings, and bookable workshop and office space. We are also seeking space that would be suitable for a People's Summit, with the summit itself being led by a working group of the COP26 Coalition.

The union will be a perfect space for a civil society hub, with plenty of social space, a really supportive student body, cultural, art and creating space and space for a media hub. Manish Joshi, the CEO is a veteran of COPs from his previous job and has offered us this space for free. The building will be completely refurbished immediately after COP, which gives us many exciting possibilities. For location map and photos of some of the spaces see Annex 2. We are also approaching nearby institutions over use of buildings and are relatively confident we can find the space that we need to make this a really big, exciting and influential space.

3. Hosting and Welcome:

This area of work is being delivered by Nick Cullen with the COP26 Coalition logistics group. We want everyone coming to Glasgow to have a warm welcome and we want to encourage home-sharing so that activists can be hosted in Glasgow residents' homes and in community halls and the like across the city and beyond.

The website platforms for accommodation will be the most important way of drawing all this work together and we expect development for the hosting section of the website to begin in May/June.

4. Staffing and Resource:

As part of the UK COP26 Coalition fundraising working group, SCCS has been seeking staffing and resource to support this strand of work. We were fortunate to get funding very quickly for one member of staff, and Nick Cullen, logistics and hosting coordinator, has been working for SCCS since November on COP-related work. He is also anchoring the COP26 Coalition Logistics working group. Tami Pein, Events and Venues coordinator started in April and is delivering the climate fringe work now, with a plan to move onto the delivery of the COP26 hub, once we have a confirmed date for COP.

When we can, we will be moving into a shared office in Glasgow with the UK COP26 Coalition Coordinator.

We are still seeking funding to cover the ample costs for delivering the COP26 hub in the months running up to COP.

Our Approach: working together

We, as SCCS, can create the platforms and the places, but it is wider civil society in Scotland, UK and globally, that will make things happen. The working groups of the UK COP26 Coalition are the place that much of this will happen.

Our vision of the Civil society Hub is that it will be a magnetic place; a place for refreshment, connection, collaboration, ideas, activism and power, full of culture, the arts, song and stories, and we need everyone across civil society to populate it and make it live. If we want the venues and places we are bringing together to create a wave that washes right into the official COP, then we need those places to be filled with civil society and particularly with the voices of those affected most by climate change, the global south, and indigenous voices.

SCCS believe our work in creating the venues, hosting, and supporting logistics that needed to be delivered by 'on-the-ground' people with local knowledge and connections, can help create the conditions to support global civil society to have the best chance of influencing COP. We want to support wherever we can to 'break down the walls' that keep people in the bubble of COP, not hearing from civil society outside, and to amplify the voices of civil society from outside COP to inside, particularly the voices of those most affected by climate change and from the global south.

In our hosting work, and the Civil Society Hub, we want to model the way that we want things to work inside the COP with a united, diverse and inclusive civil society, including grass roots groups, migrant, racial justice, and disability groups, NGOs big and small, and focussing on connecting-in Glasgow's communities, especially those in deprived areas. We will model a space of discussion, warmth and coming together, involving culture and the arts, song, storytelling and poetry.

We brought the basis of a statement of framing for the Glasgow COP, and invitation to Global civil society, to the second meeting of the Scottish UK COP26 Coalition for input from wider Scottish civil society. The [full statement](#) is summarised below.

It was in Glasgow in 1776, that James Watt invented the steam engine, detonating the explosion which has since grown and propagated, and which has now brought us to the brink of climate crisis. Now, nearly 250 years later, Glasgow is to host those who are gathering to agree how to respond and we believe that what started here in Glasgow, now ends here. Glasgow has a rich history of powerful social movements and we want to support global civil society to have the biggest possible impact on the talks.

As Scottish civil society we believe that the COP in Glasgow should have a sense of place, a distinct feel which inspires real meeting, engagement, listening, and can enable transformation. We want people coming to Glasgow, whether for the official COP, or for activities related to the COP, to feel the distinctiveness of our city of, *Glas gu*, the 'Dear Green Place'. Global civil society will experience a welcoming and inclusive Glasgow, and a welcoming and inclusive climate movement. Scotland has a rich

tradition of story and song, in both Scots and Gaelic, and within our multicultural communities, that has been bringing people together, in good times and bad, for centuries. We will bring ceilidh culture to the COP26, offering a place where civil society from all over the world can gather around a communal hearth and where people's stories are heard.

Next Steps:

Some of the work is on hold, but this is allowing time for more collaboration and consultation, and more involvement. When we have a new confirmed date for Cop we will be able to complete our work securing the venues that we need for the COP Civil Society Hub. Over the next months we will be keying into all relevant groups, and we will be working especially closely with the logistics, culture, international solidarity and Glasgow local working groups of UK COP26 Coalition, as well as other groups we are aware of. Expect to hear much more on this, once we have secured the extra space, necessary funding, and have the staff capacity in place to start to convene the COP26 Hub in earnest.

We are also aware that the COP26 Coalition will need a venue space for a people's/social/alternative summit and we are trying to source extra space close to the COP Hub where this can take place. We can start to tie this down when we have a People's Summit working group of the COP26 Coalition so we can ensure that we book venues at the right time.

In the meantime please put your events and activities onto the climatefringe.org online hub.

Kat Jones

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, 25 February 2020 (updated May 2020)

Annex 1: About Stop Climate Chaos Scotland www.stopclimatechaos.scot

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland is a diverse coalition of over 50 civil society organisations in Scotland campaigning together on climate change. Our members include environment, faith and belief groups, international development organisations, trade and student unions and community groups. We welcome all civil society organisations, big and small, that support our aims and principles.

Our coalition came together in 2007 to provide a strong civil society voice feeding into the development of the Scotland's first ever law on climate change, the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. We believe that the Scottish Government should take bold action to tackle climate change, with Scotland delivering our fair share of action in response to the Paris Agreement and supporting climate justice around the world. Our core funding comes entirely from our members and funds 1.4 full-time-equivalent staff.

As a registered Scottish charity (number SC039643) we comply with all aspects of charity law. We are not party political and do not undertake illegal action in pursuance of our aims.

Mission: To create overwhelming public momentum for, and major political commitment to action in Scotland to combat climate change, by providing a co-ordinated and authoritative voice for Scottish civil society.

Vision: Scotland is a just, sustainable and flourishing nation consistent with a climate-safe future at home and abroad and has encouraged others to the same goal.

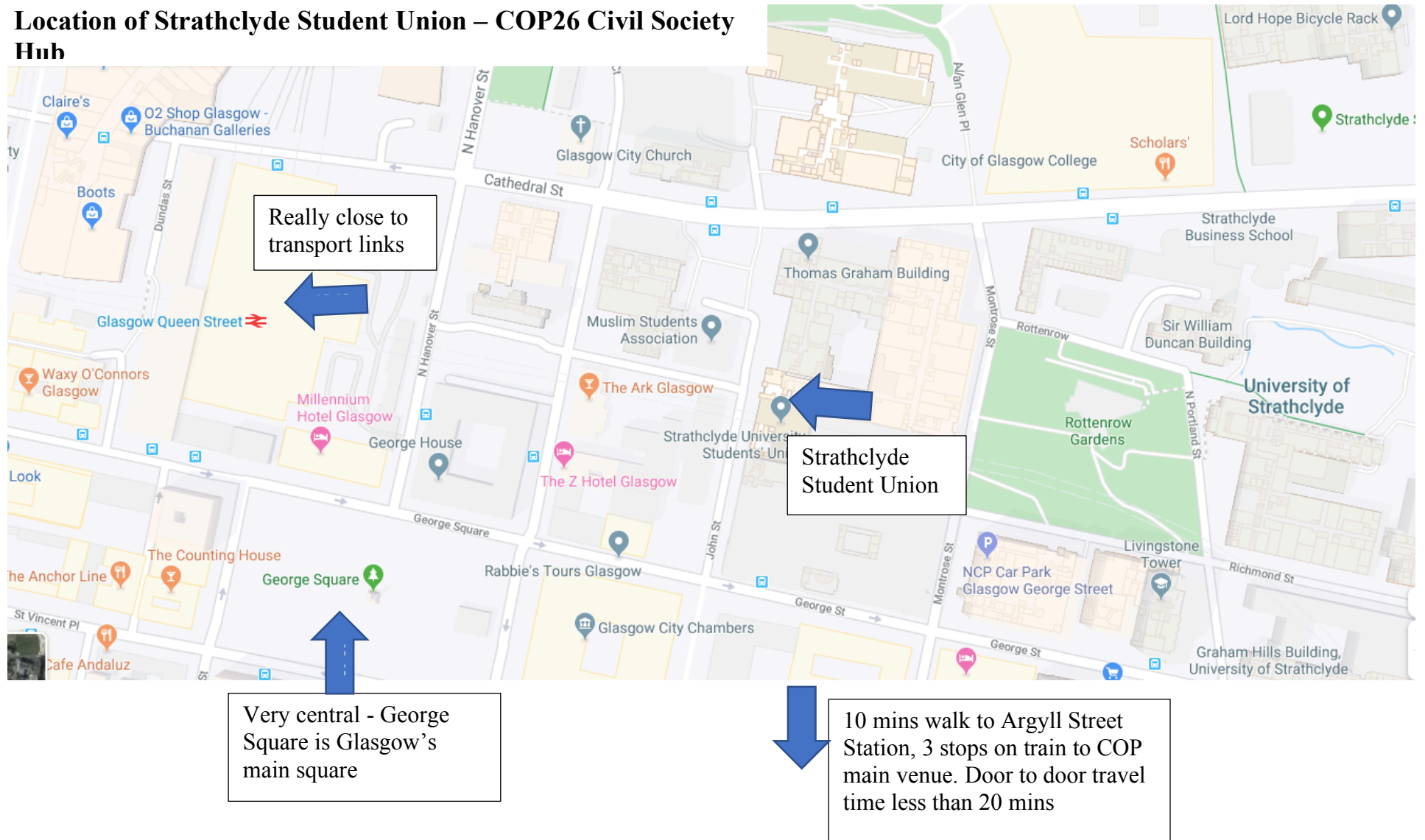
Aims: This vision is supported by four core aims:

1. **Action at home:** We want to inspire urgent action in Scotland and the UK so that Scotland and the UK have done at least their fair share to deliver climate action consistent with a safe future for our planet.
2. **Climate Justice:** We want to ensure that there is climate justice at home and abroad and that vulnerable people have been able to benefit from a green transition and adapt to the changing climate of our planet.
3. **Global Action:** We want Scotland and the UK to lead and inspire global action so that global climate emissions reach a level consistent with a safe future for our planet
4. **Building the Movement:** We want to help inspire a stronger climate movement in Scotland with strong connections in all sectors in the country better equipped to push for all of the above objectives.

Our key principles/themes

1. Without a life-sustaining planet we are nothing. Our diverse aims as faith, environment, development and other interest groups will fail if we do not meet the first priority of safeguarding the life sustaining planet on which we all depend.
2. Every human being has the right to a fair share of the planet's limited resources, regardless of creed, race, and location, and subject to the need to ensure a sustainable world for future generations.
3. Everyone should play their fair part in the change needed to achieve a sustainable world
4. We put primary value on community, family, the natural world and the viability of the planet for future generations alongside the basic needs of survival.
5. Honest, positive and supportive communication is our aim on the issues we address.
6. Campaigning together we achieve more than we can apart.

Annex 2: Location of Strathclyde Student Union – COP26 Civil Society Hub



Queen Street
Station



Strathclyde
Student Union

City
chambers

George
Square

Strathclyde Student Union

