

Pick of the Festival of Politics

The Festival of Politics begins on Wednesday 20 October 2021, running for four days until 24 October.

The event under the overall chair of the Presiding Officer of The Scottish Parliament, the Rt Hon Alison Johnstone MSP, brings together academics with writers, policymakers with business people and politicians all debating the climate emergency.

Over the five days there are free panel online sessions offering you to have your say and assess for yourself whether the planet is still saveable. This event is themed around the United Nations' Sustainable Goals and will explore poverty and inequality alongside climate impact.

This year you do not even need to leave the comfort of your own home to enjoy the many talks which will all be aired online.

Here are our top choices:

Greenwashing – can planet and profit work together?

The opening hour long event will allow you to join the panel chaired by Claire Baker MSP to find out about profit motivation and the pursuit of climate friendly practices in a business setting.

Participants include Ian Cochran of University of Edinburgh

Business School, Clare Reid of Scottish Council for Development and Industry and Jo Chidley who is co-founder of Beauty Kitchen and a circular economy expert.

Safe city spaces for everyone 5pm to 6pm

Making the inner city safe for everyone no matter their age, or whether they are men or women, is a question posed to a panel chaired by Paul McLennan MSP. The participants include Sophie Reid a member of the Scottish Youth Parliament who represents GirlGuiding, Dr Ellie Cosgrave, an engineer and Associate Professor of Urban Innovation and Policy at University College London and Alex Bottrill of Sustrans leading their strategic objective 'Liveable Cities and Towns for Everyone'.

[Book tickets here.](#)

In Conversation with George Monbiot

George Monbiot is a writer, activist and environmentalist. As well as having a regular Guardian column, his books include: *Feral*, *Age of Consent*, *How Did We Get into This Mess?* and *Out of the Wreckage: A New Politics for an Age of Crisis*. His latest collection, *This can't be happening* (Penguin), is a collection of galvanising speeches and essays, calling on humanity to stop averting its gaze from the destruction of the living planet, and wake up to the greatest predicament we have ever faced.

George co-wrote the concept album *Breaking the Spell of Loneliness* with musician Ewan McLennan, and has made a number of viral videos. One of them, adapted from his 2013 TED talk, *How Wolves Change Rivers*, has been viewed on YouTube over 40m times. Another, on Natural Climate Solutions, that he co-presented with Greta Thunberg, has been watched over 60m

times. George is working on a new book, to be published in 2022, about how to feed the world without devouring the planet.

This event is chaired by Alison Johnstone MSP, [Presiding Officer](#) of the Scottish Parliament.

[Book tickets here.](#)

What will power my home in 2045?

Scotland is cited as Europe's potential green powerhouse where renewable and clean energy is plentiful. But how do we overcome the resource, commercial, cultural and behavioural barriers to achieve this impressive claim?

Join the panel to discover how and when renewable energy inventions will power our homes and workplaces – and what can we learn from other nations – and how will households with fuel poverty and social housing be affected by this low carbon revolution?

This event is bought to you in partnership with the [School of Social and Political Science, University of Edinburgh](#). It is chaired by Dean Lockhart MSP, [Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee](#).

[Book tickets here.](#)

Radical Solutions to poverty – give everyone £5,200?

One in four children in Scotland live in poverty – the vast majority within working households. Is it now time to get radical and adopt the suggested Universal Basic Income of a guaranteed £5,200 per person, per year?

Would this stop generations of children growing up without

resources to obtain the type of diet, amenities, living conditions and ability to participate in activities, that we'd expect in 21st-century Scotland?

What other radical solutions are out there to mitigate the detrimental effects of poverty? And to improve life chances before the cycle of generational poverty finally ends?

This event is brought to you in partnership with [Glasgow Caledonian University](#). It is chaired by Neil Gray MSP, Convener of the [Social Justice and Social Security Committee](#).

[Book tickets here.](#)

Fast Fashion

Fashion is allegedly one of the world's biggest polluters. Even worse – 300 000 tonnes of used clothes are burned or buried in landfill annually, much of this unworn, as manufacturers dispose of unsold stock.

The UK is one of the worst offenders when it comes to buying disposable clothes, with the average person buying more clothes per capita than any country in Europe.

Join the panel who will help fast fashionistas understand why it's now time to make radical changes in our clothing manufacturing and buying habits.

This event is brought to you in partnership with [Zero Waste Scotland](#). It is chaired by Monica Lennon MSP, [Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee](#).

[Book tickets here.](#)

Scottish Islands on the front line

of climate emergency

Scotland's islands are the 'canary down the mine' on the climate emergency. Since 2000, the rising sea levels, heavier rainfall and frequent powerful storms have been eroding the dunes and machair land that protects many low-lying communities whose well-being and livelihoods are now being altered.

Join the panel to hear from local island communities dealing and adapting to the climate emergency on their doorstep: from innovative carbon neutral energy and transport schemes, to food sustainability and packaging-free shops, the future lies in the islands.

This event is chaired by Liam McArthur MSP, Deputy Convener of the [Rural Affairs, Islands and Natural Environment Committee](#) and Deputy Presiding Officer of the Scottish Parliament.

[Book tickets here](#)

Resilient and sustainable cities

With two-thirds of the earth's population estimated to be living in urban centres by 2050, and 90% of those urban areas located by coasts and rising sea-levels, it's in everyone's interests to make cities as resilient and sustainable as possible.

Innovation to address these challenges is already in place from Vancouver to Singapore, and Stockholm to Glasgow.

One of the panelists is Anna Richardson who leads the City of Glasgow Council. She is currently Convener for Sustainability and Carbon Reduction, with a particular interest in transport, equalities and the mainstreaming of sustainability across all Council functions and is lauded with the introduction of

cycling measures in Glasgow.

Ideas range from retro-fitting buildings to district heating, vertical and urban forests, and the creation of the 15-minute city, where people can walk or bike to work, shop and deal with a government agency, within 15 minutes.

This event is chaired by Elena Whitham MSP, [Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee](#).

[Book tickets here](#)