

# SOCIAL WORKERS *for* CLIMATE ACTION

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2023

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End of Year Newsletter

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# HELLO

from Emma

It's said so often that it's a cliché these days, but hasn't this year gone by so quickly? With the school holidays upon us and for some of us a few days off work (a big thank you to everyone still delivering great services over the holiday period!), it's a good time to reflect on another big year.

Early in 2023 we joined up with North Queensland Conservation Council on their Climate Action Group subcommittee. Townsville is so lucky to have NQCC. It has been an absolute honour working so closely with their co-ordinator, Crystal Faulkner.

As part of the subcommittee we were invited to attend a meeting with the Mayor of Townsville and the Integrated Sustainability Services Dept., where NQCC presented the Sustainability Tree they created with the local community. The Tree highlights where the people of Townsville believe the City Council should be focusing their sustainability efforts.

It was invigorating to meet such passionate council workers and to see how open they are to new ideas and collaboration with local organisations. We're looking forward to seeing where these networks take us and our fight for climate justice.

We hope you enjoy our end of year newsletter, and maybe get motivated by some ideas for your own practice. As always, get in touch with any of your own news or ideas. We'd love to hear from you!



L to R: Sandra Croaker (SW4CA) and Mayor Jenny Hill (TCC) reading contributions on the NQCC Sustainability Tree



L to R: Sandra Croaker (SW4CA), Nicola (TCC) and Emma Small (SW4CA)



Sandra (SW4CA) voting for Townsville to plant more trees at the 2023 Our Townsville

# MEETING THE MINISTER

Sandra Croaker & Emma Small

One of SW4CA's aims is to raise awareness of the interrelated nature of environmental, social and economic issues. So when a Community Cabinet meeting was held in Townsville in October 2023, we would not let that opportunity pass to speak with QLD State Government Ministers about eco-social justice.

Leading up to the event, we felt quite excited for diverse reasons. Neither of us had done something like this before. We had to come up with a submission in a very short time, do some background research and decide which of the pressing topics to choose for our 15-minute timeslot. Anyone who knows Emma or myself (Sandra) would see the challenge of keeping within that 15-minute time window (it was hard)! We also had to adjust our original pitch last minute as we didn't get paired with the minister we had initially requested.



Our initial submission was in anticipation of meeting with either Shannon Fentiman, MP (Health portfolio) or Meaghan Scanlon, MP (Housing portfolio). In the end, we met with MP Leanne Linard, who holds the Environment, Great Barrier Reef, Science and Multicultural Affairs portfolio.

We asked the MP about the QLD government's position and current action on addressing the social and economic impacts of environmental issues. Our focus was to discuss eco-social justice, a concept neither the Minister, the Director General nor the Minister's advisor had heard of. But we were prepared for that. So before getting



into the specifics, we had a quick discussion about eco-social justice, what it is, what it entails and how we can move forward to achieve it. It was encouraging to be able to talk about the intersection of climate change and the lived experiences of individuals and communities with those in these positions of decision making power.

In our time with the minister, we shared an example of a local family experiencing harsh eco-social injustices, caught in a system of perpetuating poverty and trauma, caused by insufficient and siloed policies.

Using a real-life example from practice allowed us to specifically identify and discuss those siloed policies within different portfolios and how that system is detrimental in the lived experiences of locals. Further discussion highlighted how this can, and does, also lead to inaction on climate change, and how those inactions affect those who are already trying to deal with other vulnerabilities and issues.



The MP, her Director-General, and her advisor engaged with us in dialogue and shared a couple of points of what they have been able to 'move' for people caught in similar situations in their electoral district. From that point, it was encouraging to see how politicians act on issues they become aware of (in their electoral district). We also briefly chatted about the QLD Climate Action Plan. While we wouldn't say we made great strides in our 15 minutes, it was a positive moment for us to be able to bring the work of SW4CA to the attention of the Minister and remind those in these positions of power of the human side of climate change.

With 2024 being a state government election year, perhaps our experience encourages others to explore opportunities in their communities. Feel free to connect with us to



share your experiences, ideas, or for mutual support. You might also end up with a photo with the Premier! Please continue reading for our reflections and take aways from the experience.

L to R: Emma Small (SW4CA), Peter Hanley (Amnesty Townsville), Annastacia Palaszczuk (QLD Premier), Sandra Croaker (SW4CA)

## Meeting with the Minister was a mixed experience, but here Sandra and Emma share their top 3 take aways.

- 1 Citizen engagement is super important, kinda fun, and worthwhile pursuing. To see the changes we want happen we need to connect with, and engage in conversation with our elected politicians. We had a good time meeting other locals and hearing about their initiatives we hadn't heard about previously. We were entertained with music, coffee, and macaroons. The whole affair felt a bit like an upmarket parent-teacher interview (and we certainly have some experience with those).
- 2 Keeping informed about current policies and initiatives. A resource shared with us was the [Climate Change Risk Management Plan](#), developed under the [QLD Climate Action Plan](#). This resource could be an informative tool for social workers in community education and case management work for assessing risk and adaptation strategies with their clients. One concern may be the tool's intended audience and the potential exclusion of specific groups of people in our communities. We would love to hear your feedback on the tool, where you can see its usefulness in your day-to-day work, what's amiss, and how your organisation may utilise (or already does use) the tool. There are feedback loops to the government, so we are interested in building a working group for people interested in reviewing the tool and brainstorming ideas on how it could be improved for work with clients and other supporting agencies e.g. Department of Housing. [Email us](#) if you are interested in getting involved.
- 3 Doing things that we are interested and passionate about with others is creative and fun. We came across an opportunity, ran with it, learned a few new things and made new connections. We got some energy out of it, which helps us keep our heads above water in an otherwise often energy-draining situation. The people we met may have different agendas than ours and approach the environmental debate from a different perspective. That's okay, we can work with that. We need the initial step of engaging in dialogue. The rest will come!



Last, but not least, a big thanks to Crystal from North Queensland Conservation Council and Peter from the island for their guidance and feedback in helping us write our submission and prepare for the meeting. We couldn't have done it without you!

I have just completed my Bachelor of Social Work, with my final placement being at Community Gro in Townsville. Community Gro has two centres, and between the two centres on opposite sides of Townsville, it has given me a lot of time to reflect on eco-social work that could be actioned in Townsville in the community sector.

## FIELD EDUCATION STUDENT REFLECTION



By Siahne Stones

When I started this placement, I was not thinking too heavily about eco-social work, but as a part of the JCU placement criteria, students had to engage with eco-social work in their agency. I was lucky to have Emma Small, a SW4CA member, as my supervisor.

Through working with Emma my knowledge and understanding of eco-social work grew, and with that came more critical thinking and a better ability to notice issues in the community. Looking at mezzo, macro and micro issues, I could identify those that affect the communities that are serviced across the centres, but also the systemic issues that broadly affect all in Townsville. Local issues such as better bus services; how people in lower socio-economic demographics are more affected by disasters; food waste (and redistribution to prevent waste); and how the housing crisis is also a climate issue.

Many of these things I had already been conscious of and thought about but I had not connected it to eco-social work and eco-social justice. I had been aware of climate change for years but had never connected it to social issues until starting this degree. Being in a space where these issues were spoken about freely, and with open discussions, helped me to shape and better my understanding of the climate crisis and how it impacts the world on every level.

Noticing these connections showed me that eco-social work has always been a vital part of the social work profession. Having such passionate people advocating and speaking up about eco-social work and how we can all do our part shows that we are moving in an upwards direction to enact change and show the world what social work is all about.

Many of these things I had already been conscious of and thought about but I had not connected it to eco-social work and eco-social justice.



# INDOOR AIR QUALITY & THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE

Emma Small

As an increasing number of the world's population is spending more of their time indoors than in any other time in history, having good indoor air quality (IAQ) is becoming more important than ever. According to NASA (2019), indoor air can be up to 30 times more toxic than outdoor air. However, with the world heating up, in turn causing more heat stress and other health problems, just sending people outdoors isn't always a viable, or better, option. What you can do as a practitioner may not only help your clients' and your own physical and mental health, but also has the possibility to impact on the planet's health too. Not to mention save you money on your air con bill and improve productivity and attendance.

We're talking plants.

Former studies have shown that indoor air quality "contained about seven to



ten times the amount of [volatile organic compounds] VOCs as outdoor air" (Kim, Yang & Lee et al, 2014). Physiological and psychological effects can be caused or exacerbated by VOCs (Kim, Yang & Lee et al., 2014).

"... an attractive and cost-effective way to improve indoor air quality"

Pegas, Alves, Nunes, et al., 2012, p. 1371.



Research has shown that using indoor plants is an often cheaper and effective way of improving the indoor air quality, with less upkeep and outlay than alternative options.

“... drops in temperature between 0.8 and 4.8 C have been obtained..”

Perez-Urrestarazu, Fernandez-Canera, Franco & Egea, 2016, p. 123)

Reading about VOCs can actually be quite alarming, but there is a wealth of information out there. To save you time however, here are a few points.

Variety isn't just the spice of life, it's quite fundamental to life, and to healthy life especially. Not just when choosing what's for dinner (spaghetti again Mum? Seriously?!?) but in keeping those VOCs in check. Some plants can and do filter multiple VOCs, but not all, so you will need a variety that can tackle different compounds.

Also important to remember is that while the leaves photosynthesize (remove carbon dioxide from the air and release oxygen) the roots and soil do the bulk of the air filtration (NASA, 2019).

And lastly, using plants for air quality control is like using rocks for building a seawall. One or two just won't do.

Different studies suggest different amounts (varying conditions after all). I recommend looking into suggestions for

your own environmental and structural conditions, or, just jump in with as many as you can manage.

Talking of seawalls though. Do you ever feel like a lonely rock trying to hold back huge waves? Not only do seawalls and air filtration systems need plenty of individuals working together on a common goal, so do we as people. So if you're feeling like you're one little pebble trying to fight climate change, that's actually pretty accurate. The large boulders are governmental bodies and big corporations. We need them on board to tackle climate change too!

No one would ever expect one pebble to be able to hold back huge waves, just as we need to stop thinking individuals are responsible to tackle climate change. But we do need a big strong seawall to be able to mitigate and adapt to climate change, meaning we need as many of us as possible working together. You get the picture.

Don't forget to water the peace lily!



# BEST PLANTS

There are lots of plants that do well indoors and are great at purifying air and bringing down the temperature. Here are only 6 to get you inspired.



**Ficus Plants**



**Spider Plant**



**Peace Lily**



**Ferns**



**Guava**



**Palms**

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NASA (2019). NASA Plant Research Offers a Breath of Fresh Air. Retrieved from [https://spinoff.nasa.gov/Spinoff2019/cg\\_7.html](https://spinoff.nasa.gov/Spinoff2019/cg_7.html)

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Pérez-Urrestarazu, L., Fernández-Cañero, R., Franco, A., & Egea, G. (2016) Influence of an active living wall on indoor temperature and humidity conditions. *Ecological Engineering*, Volume 90, Pages 120-124, ISSN 0925-8574, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoleng.2016.01.050>.

# WHEN CREATIVITY & CARE COLLIDE WITH SUSTAINABILITY

Zanna Gudge from ZannaG Creative Care has developed creative workshops and programs to connect through creation and create independent creative arts opportunities from everyday waste materials. The rise in 'paint-and-sip' events and the growth of the creative arts as social stress relief have paved the way for creativity to be a conduit to personal growth and independent arts practice and has become a welcome down-time activity for people. Zanna gives this concept a new and conscientious spin by offering TRASH ART workshops. We were intrigued and booked a workshop with Zanna. It was so much fun, creative and much deeper than we first thought, so we asked Zanna to spend a little bit more time with us to share her work and vision with us and our readers.

Sandra: Hi Zanna, loved our workshop. How did you come up with the name TRASH ART?



Zanna: It's a play on words and refers to the medium I utilise in the workshops and in my art, which simply is mine and other people's 'trash'. So, as you know, in our workshop we used a lot of soft plastic bread bags and other soft plastic packaging that cannot be easily recycled and usually ends up in landfill. I repurpose these materials, which diverts them from landfill, but also enables me to make art more accessible and affordable for people.



Sandra: That's an interesting point about the accessibility and affordability. Can you tell me a bit more about that?

Zanna: Yes sure. So, in our workshop we made my famous Eco-clay cubes, where we used my special mixture Eco-Clay made from paper pulp and a variety of cost-effective low-impact binding agents and filled each cube with soft plastic waste. The cubes for example, but also all of my art



available for purchase, contain the materials we have yet to develop recycling processes for. My art doesn't change them, I just encapsulate them and lock them away, creating time whilst our community continues to develop the infrastructure to process them and time for industry and consumers to evolve to produce less wasteful packaging.

That also keeps the cost for material lower than buying everything ready-made from the shops, which in turn helps me to take my art workshops to a wide variety of people. Aside from my many years of creative arts training and digital art education, I am also a carer and love working with people living with a disability. My creative thinking process expanded and has grown into work with NDIS clients to explore how they can create their own unique products to meet a need or highlight a particular fundraiser. There exists so many opportunities for creative thinking entrepreneurs, and I'm hoping to provide a pathway for my clients to create within their means and, by proxy, make recycled art.

My art business combines my driving passions – my love for people,

creativity, sustainability and affordability. With my art I want to encourage people to change the way we see our waste. I am also a mother to 6, so I have to always keep an eye on the budget. We all love to be creative, so I got thinking about how I can share the creativity of making art with



my family and others without breaking the bank. I totally love that I found a way to do that in a way that doesn't further harm Mother Nature.

Sandra: That's super cool and just love the way how you unpack that. And there is more to it, isn't there? I mean, we just did our workshop with you and afterwards I just felt energised, calm and collected, despite us chatting about some heavy topics during the art-making.

Zanna: It's widely known that being artistic and creative is a healthy stress reliever.

Sandra: Yes, I can attest to that! And you also keep a strong focus on community work. Could you please explain to our readers what you see in there?

Zanna: In my work, I recognise that true innovation comes from understanding the unique needs and aspirations of diverse communities. With workshops that adopt a community-centric design approach, involving those directly impacted by the challenges in the ideation and implementation of creative solutions. This ensures that the end products not only address the issues at hand but also resonate with the people they are designed to benefit.



Sandra: And that is also underpinned by your strong awareness of social justice, isn't it? Could you share a bit more about that?

Zanna: You might be aware that the rate of employment for those with disabilities still falls grossly short of the national average. The labour force participation rate for people with disability remained largely unchanged from 2003 (53%) to 2018 (53.4%). In contrast, the labour force participation rate for people without a disability increased from 63.6% (2003) to 84.1% (2018). So, that is a significant social justice issue. With my workshops, I demonstrate that people with a disability are as creative, productive and engaged as others. We need creative thinking to come up with new ideas for the big challenges lying ahead of us. Rather than pushing people with a disability to the side, I see here a huge opportunity for a more diverse and therefore more resilient employment market. Mental Health is a huge burden in our society. Covid had significant impacts on our communities. The increasing incidence of loneliness was well documented prior to the pandemic however, extensive research has shown that the extended periods of isolation due to lockdowns had resounding consequences and even more significant consequences amongst our disability community. In response to these concerns and a significant mental health system burden, that was actually the trigger for me to start my art business, to provide an antidote to these covid consequences.

Sandra: I am super glad you had that creative spark because what you have built with ZannaG Creative Care is really one of a kind. Thank you so very much for your time and the fabulous workshop. I love my affirmation cubes!





# Wanted

## FABRIC SCRAPS AND OLD CLOTHES

No scraps too small! If you do any sewing, or have clothes worn beyond repair, and you want to avoid adding to landfill, please contact Emma at [info@socialworkersforclimateaction.org](mailto:info@socialworkersforclimateaction.org). Townsville locals only please. All scrap sizes wanted - larger ones will go to a community sewing group and those too small for projects will be split down and spun into recycled yarn.



# INTERVIEW WITH A WALKING WARRIOR

Sunshine Coast based social worker Renee works in the disability sector. Recently she had a chat with client Tom about climate action and eco spirituality. Tom has an acquired brain injury and schizophrenia.



R: In what ways are you environmentally friendly?

T: I don't know.

R: What things do you do that are good for the environment?

T: Rubbish

R: When you say rubbish, do you mean eating rubbish?

T: No lawn mowing clippings.

R: Tell me more.

T: Put clippings in green bin.

R: What about the yellow and red bins?

T: You put some things in one bin and some things in the other.

Yellow - cans, glass, hard plastic, cardboard

Red - plastic wrappers, other rubbish

R: Where do they take the rubbish?

T: Your place! NOOOOOOOO. The tip.







## The Walking Warriors

Tom walks or catches public transport. He goes to a day program that has a bush walking group called Walking Warriors. The group do a bit of research and decide where they want to walk. Once a week they meet up at the centre and catch public transport to the start of the walk. They meet at 9am and finish at 2pm. The participants bring lunch and they often stop for a picnic.

R: You do a lot of walking and that's great because you are not polluting the environment. What else do you like about walking outside?

T: Get fit.

R: What do you like about being outside?

T: Fresh air, trees, people.

R: Where do you go with your bushwalking group?

T: Today we walked to the sea pool and usually we go walking on bridges.

R: When you go out walking in nature, what do you like about it?

T: Girls, people in general, dogs and cats, birds, bush turkey, snake on the path.

R: Do you prefer the river or the ocean?

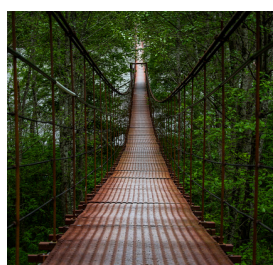
T: Ocean.

R: Are you a mountain or a valley person?

T: Mountain.

R: Why?

T: Don't know, just am.



# WHY WOULDN'T YOU SLEEP IN THE GARDEN?

Natalie Lindsay

Who could have imagined that a simple shade cloth, some tent poles, tent pegs and guy ropes, along with a few potted plants would make for an amazing, stunning, peaceful place to live?

When I say a simple shade cloth, some tent poles etc, and a few potted plants, really, I should say about 20 shade cloths, maybe 100 tent poles, couldn't begin to count how many tent pegs or how many metres of rope, along with possibly 300 potted plants, a crateful of lanterns, a box full of solar lights, oh, and a couple of tarps to make some waterproof areas. This is exactly what my hubby and I did when faced with a big empty yard with no shade and insufficient space in our rental house. Our garden house had many names, oasis, biosphere, paradise, the jungle, but to us it was home. We started with it being 12 feet (3.65m) wide and 20 feet (6m) long and ended up with it being approximately 52 feet (15.86m) long and 44 feet (13.5m) wide. We had various 'rooms' within our garden house. We slept in, yes slept in every night, an extra-large swag which sat on plastic pallets to get it up off the ground. This was one of the areas made waterproof by a large tarp. We had a dining room with a solar light chandelier above our concrete table. We made various sitting rooms which



Natalie Lindsay (SW4CA) in the garden oasis (below) they created in an industrial suburb



displayed some of our favourite plants. And then there was the wellbeing room where we relaxed and recharged our mental, physical, and emotional energy. This had a beautiful big round daybed surrounded by stunning maiden hair ferns on one end and featuring a smokeless biolite firepit on the other end, because who doesn't like sitting watching a flickering fire during Winter.



During the 3 years we were at that rental house we gradually built our garden home piece by piece. Through the trial and error of having it fall down after the usual Townsville Summer torrential rains and with us having used the wrong sort of tent pegs, and the yearly will-we-or-won't-we take it down during threats of cyclone, we built something that was not only pleasing to the eye but more importantly, pleasing to the soul.



With others in this newsletter extolling the virtues of being surrounded by plants, whether that is with indoor plants or while walking in the mountains or in a park, this is something that I can also attest to while living and sleeping amongst a jungle of plants in my backyard.

A garden oasis does not need to be as large, and as some might say, over the top, as ours, it can be tailored to fit the space that you have.

At that rental house we had a very large open yard which we made good use of. Sadly, as often happens when you're in the rental market, we had to move on from that place.

Where we are now the yard is smaller and not all of it flat. So, we are now in the process of rebuilding our garden home to the configuration of a new space. We are working out the best places for our various rooms to go, which takes a bit of time, trial and error. The house has a lovely large undercover area which we are incorporating into our garden design. Between this area and the backyard, we are building another green oasis filled with plants where we can relax, recharge, and live.



# CLIMATE CONVERSATIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

Georgie Stewart



Hello to everyone reading this! Thanks for taking the time to stay connected to Social Workers for Climate Action throughout the year, in whatever capacity you've been able to - we appreciate it!

I thought I would throw my hat into the ring and add a few thoughts to the newsletter, as over the past month or so in particular, I've found myself thinking of SW4CA during my days at work. Increasingly, I've noticed a connection between climate change impacts and the people I work alongside to support. I thought I might put fingertips to keyboard to see if I could flesh my emerging thoughts out...

Before I jump into sharing my thoughts, you'll note that my tone for this article is informal and conversational. There are two reasons for this. The first being that academic writing feels a touch "too hard" as we approach the end of the year (that's my most truthful reason) and the second is that talking about social work and the climate can often be intimidating... I know that I appreciate any attempts made by people to remove the 'scariness' of these discussions and so this is my attempt to do the same!

As a brief introduction to what I "do" during my work days, I am employed by GROW Australia as the Queensland Team Leader. Funded by Queensland Health, we offer mental health support groups, known as Grow Groups. Our Grow Groups offer peer-based support to people looking for support for their mental health. The program is based on a 12-step program of personal growth, mutual help and support. Our groups are open to anyone over the age of 18. They are free, don't require a referral or doctor's diagnosis and there is no waiting time to access a group. Importantly, they are anonymous and confidential.

So, with that brief overview in mind, it stands to reason that we support people from all walks of life and from late adolescence through to retirement age. In the interest of remaining honest and transparent, something that has struck me in my day-to-day work is that discussions surrounding a person's eco-anxiety haven't been limited to those who are on the "younger" end of the spectrum. Perhaps naively, I (wrongly) assumed that this would be the case; however, I've enjoyed robust climate discussions with people across the age spectrum. (Unintentional prejudice challenged? Check!)

I feel that it's important to note that first and foremost, I believe it's the responsibility of our government to be addressing climate change (and therefore, solutions to climate change) on a structural level, with systematic change. With our government failing to rise to the IPCC's 2022 "It's now or never" call to action, they are failing us, as Australian - and global - citizens. As many of us do, I feel a responsibility to engage in this space by remaining committed to undertaking environmental action and activism on a macro level. With our AASW Code of Ethics now acknowledging the natural environment as a social justice issue, I believe it's a responsibility that all of us in the profession should explore.



I'm often reminded of a graphic I'm sure many social workers are familiar with: a cliff, with an ambulance waiting at the bottom contrasted next to the identical image, but with a fence at the top of the cliff, which renders the ambulance on ground level useless. The graphic challenges us to consider which solution is more effective... With the latter graphic being the clear winner. This graphic is applicable to the way we approach our work - and it's particularly relevant where the climate is concerned.

However, with the above said, I'm mindful that many of us work with individuals, families, groups and communities in "people facing" roles. Many of us tend to work in micro and mezzo spaces and our day-to-day reality often involves working one-on-one or in small groups. As a result, we're hearing (and witnessing) firsthand how climate change is impacting those already vulnerable. So, how do we engage with the people we work with in our everyday lives to champion the climate? How do we avoid eco-paralysis and complete overwhelm - for us and others? To be completely annoying by answering these questions with more questions... Could one solution be to simply encourage discussions? To provide a safe space for people to voice their fears and worries and to come together to pose some achievable actions and solutions? I believe that it is. It's something I've seen work incredibly well in our Grow Groups, time and time again.

There's a sense of power and ownership that comes from people coming together to discuss, explore and seek to resolve their own problems. We know that peer-to-peer programs are most effective in supporting mental health recovery when the below four key ingredients are present:

1. Hope, optimism, a vision for a meaningful life
  2. Social connectedness, secure relationships, mutuality of support
  3. Active sense of self and positive identity, critical reflection
  4. Empowerment, self-efficacy, taking responsibility
- (Rubenstein, 2015)

With keeping my examples very general, to respect people's privacy within our confidential groups, here are some ways I've heard eco-anxiety raised, discussed and solutions brainstormed in our groups:

- One person joined the group for support with the impact that climate "doom and gloom" was having on their pre-existing mental health condition
- One person identified as an environmental activist and shared how they include achievable tasks in their day-to-day life to "do their bit" for the environment
- One person shared a problem relating to the impact that the heat was having on them. It was impacting their mental health by not being able to be out in the garden and walking as means of taking care of their physical and mental health
- One person shared that the unseasonable weather was impacting their ability to socialise and meet up in person outdoors, in free public spaces. They highlighted the cost that's associated with needing to attend a café and purchase a drink to be able to socialise whilst staying out of the heat
- One person shared experiencing increasing financial pressure, due to increased electricity costs by running their air conditioner regularly.

Throughout this year, I've noticed an increase in the frequency of the climate crisis being raised in group discussions; there's no denying it's popping up more and more. Thinking about this has highlighted to me the importance of us, as social workers, facilitating safe and supportive environments for people to share their eco-anxiety. I've found that witnessing, and being part of, these conversations - combined with remaining proactive in the environmental space - has cemented the importance of holding space for people to voice their climate concerns. I hope that sharing my thoughts here serves as a gentle reminder to our readers that it's important we provide a safe space for peers to discuss ways they can be proactive on an individual level and hopefully from there, be inspired to advocate for change at a systemic level. I have seen first-hand the importance of providing safe spaces for climate conversations at a grassroots level; it's a way of activating ourselves and each other. Peer to peer support groups are one means of doing this, as is being connected to Social Workers for Climate Action.

# JOIN US IN 2024

ACTION  
Participate  
ENGAGE  
Unite

Be sure to follow us on social  
media for meetings, events and  
opportunities in 2024



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## Writers

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We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to contribute to eco-social justice.

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**GET IN TOUCH!**

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