



Notes from Thrive LDN's Sixth 'Climate, Environment and Mental Health Action Forum'

12th March 2025 10-11am; online via Microsoft Teams

Contents

Welcome and reflections on the Forum	1
Transformational Resilience and Community as Medicine	2
Member updates	5
Future Forum sessions.....	7
Summary and next steps	8

Welcome and reflections on the Forum

Ben Rossington (Project Officer, Thrive LDN)

Thrive LDN's Climate, Environment, and Mental Health Action Forum is a pan-London initiative that connects communities, organisations across different sectors, and individuals to co-develop responses addressing the intersections of climate, nature, and mental health, with a focus on marginalised groups.

Our last (in person) session on 30th January was well attended – 20 people came along – and people lots of energy for networking and collaboration. Do look at the notes on our website [here](#) to review the meeting notes and resources for this meeting, and all other meetings to date.

Several people introduced themselves in the chat:

- Tamasin [Rhymes] from [Greener and Cleaner](#), based in Bromley and SE London.
- I'm Emma [Lawrance], I lead the [Climate Cares Centre](#) at Imperial College London. Based in Oxford, working in London.
- Sacha [Wright], from [Force of Nature](#), based in London 😊
- Hello, Sophie [Van Eetvelt] from the [environment unit at the Greater London Authority](#)
- Jack Yates - Head of Income Generation at [Hammersmith, Fulham, Ealing and Hounslow Mind](#) 😊
- Hi, I'm Ruth [Plackett] a researcher at UCL [University College London] doing a placement at the GLA [Greater London Authority]
- Hi, I'm Anna [Woolf] from [London Arts and Health](#)

- Flora Isabelle Hastings: I'm a doctoral researcher in environmental anthropology, SOAS [School of African and Oriental Studies], University of London. I'm also an outdoors educator.
- I'm Shuo Zhang I'm doing a child and adolescent clinical PhD at KCL [King's College London], here more with my hat as [Nature Matter Co-lead at the Royal College of Psychiatrists](#).

Story of the Forum so far

The Forum has grown into a collaborative, member-driven space addressing climate and mental health. Each session has built on the last, shaped by contributions from members and expert speakers.

We have a diverse & engaged membership: strong participation from public health, youth, arts, and environmental sectors, as well as academia, with growing interest from creative and grassroots organisations, and great inter-sector networking.

- June 2024: Launched with an introduction to the Forum's aims, with members helping to refining these aims through interactive exercises. Heard from Zarina Ahmad ([Women's Environmental Network](#)) on inclusive climate action.
- July 2024: Explored nature, art, and mental health with insights from Holtham, an interdisciplinary artist and gardener. Co-created a summary of projects for collaboration with suggested collaborative clusters.
- October 2024: Focused on digital tools and climate perceptions. Charles Ogunbode ([Centre for Climate Change and Social Transformations](#)) presented research on UK people of colour.
- December 2024: Shared Thrive LDN's [new webpage on mental health in the climate crisis](#). Discussed engaging community-led (including Black-led) organisations in climate action, led by Abiola Okubanjo (Adventures in Compassionate Commerce).
- January 2025 (First in-person meeting): Held at an eco-friendly venue ([the Community Building in The Phoenix Garden](#)), it was energetic and collaborative; we covered storytelling to inspire climate-mental health action, ways in which members can collaborate in practice, and heard inspiring member presentations on youth empowerment, climate literacy, community action, and more.

The future of this Forum

We want to build on our great progress to develop the Forum further, and we need you to help us do this: this space is shaped by you and for you.

We want your views on how we use the next three Forum sessions: planned for the end of April; in the middle of June; and the end of July.

Building on feedback we've heard from you before, we've designed an interactive Mentimeter survey for you to fill in [here](#).

We will return to this presentation at the end of the meeting to share the (anonymised) results and reflect on them together – you'll have a chance to share any more thoughts then.

Transformational Resilience and Community as Medicine

Joseph Barker (Thrive LDN, Project Officer)

I'm going to talk about an approach to climate change and mental health that we find interesting and could inform how we work together, what kinds of projects we might do.

I'm going to use slides from the [International Transformational Resilience Coalition](#) (ITRC), based in the USA. The slides [Bob Doppelt's slides, which are available [here](#)] show an

overall framework that we will then have a chat about afterwards and give everyone a chance to reflect on it.

Content warning – discussions of trauma and environmental catastrophes. It's optional to listen to this. Look after yourself.

Also, formatting warning – the slides look like they are out of the '90s!

Introduction

There is growing research linking climate change and mental health impacts, but there remains a gap in practical implementation.

Traditional mental health services focus on individual interventions, but there is a need for community-based, systemic approaches.

Overview

The ITRC advocates for a public health approach to community-led resilience.

Community trauma is an emerging concern – climate-related disruptions weaken social networks, increasing stress and trauma on a broad scale.

The cascading effects of climate change – from displacement to economic instability – worsen mental health conditions, particularly for marginalised groups.

Key elements of Transformational Resilience:

Presencing: Self-regulation techniques to maintain emotional balance during crises.

Purposing: Developing new sources of meaning, hope, and courage in the face of adversity.

Social Infrastructure: Creating Resilience-Coordinating Networks that connect community groups, public organisations, and grassroots efforts.

Implementation

Public Health Approach: The ITRC framework emphasises prevention over crisis response.

Strengthening local support systems: Investing in social support and grassroots resilience programmes.

Challenges in scaling up: How to implement transformational resilience within different local contexts.

Please see the ITRC slides (which will be sent out with meeting notes), for more detail on what was discussed in this presentation.

Attendee Reactions & Discussion

Joe used the [Compass Points](#) method to ask people:

- What excites you about these ideas?
- What worries you?
- What suggestions do you have?
- What more do you need to know?

Attendees had lots of thoughts and responses, which are detailed below, organised thematically.

Enthusiasm for the Transformational Resilience model

- Several attendees expressed strong interest in the community-focused approach Joe outlined.

- Angela Burns (Public Health Programme Manager (Mental Health), Tower Hamlets) commented that the framework was helpful and practical, particularly the focus on strengthening social infrastructure.
- Emma Lawrance noted that the ideas presented aligned with ongoing discussions in policy and research circles.

The need for evidence and practical documentation

- Angela Burns:
 - Raised concerns about how public health teams often rely on traditional forms of evidence, which may not always capture the impact of community-based resilience efforts.
 - Asked if there were any existing briefing materials or reports that could help translate the model into a form that public health practitioners and policymakers would accept [we shared a [weblink](#) with more information, including on Bob Doppelt's book]
 - Invited Joe to come and present the ITRC's ideas in Tower Hamlets to their Public Health local Community of Practice

Concerns about funding and financial sustainability

- Abiola Okubanjo:
 - Emphasised the lack of stable funding for community-based resilience efforts.
 - Noted that while social prescribing initiatives align with Joe's model, funding for these programmes is often unreliable.
 - Suggested exploring low-cost, self-sustaining initiatives that individuals and communities could adopt without requiring long-term funding.
- Tamasin Rhymes highlighted how funding structures remain siloed, making it difficult to secure financial support for interdisciplinary programs that bridge climate action and mental health.
- Emma Lawrance said "funding is the biggest barrier for us at the moment [at Climate Cares] too unfortunately – so many people doing amazing things on little resource, it would be great to learn from others on this!!"

Public health and systemic integration

Anne Bowers (Strategic Lead, Community Public Health, Newham) cautioned against framing community collaboration purely as a 'public health' approach, arguing that many different sectors – including urban planning, education, and social services – should take responsibility for building resilience.

- Shuo Zhang:
 - Pointed out how mental health services in the NHS struggle to integrate systemic, community-driven interventions.
 - Noted that parenting support programmes, which are crucial for early mental health interventions, have been defunded – illustrating the gap between mental health theory and practice.
 - Suggested that the ITRC's could be tested within existing NHS structures – e.g., using the CAMHS [i-Thrive model](#) – to assess feasibility. Shuo mentioned that a national evaluation of this model is in the pipeline (that Peter Fonagy is leading), and shared [an evaluation](#) of work in Greater Manchester.

Calls for cross-sector collaboration

- Emma Lawrance:
 - Said it would be great to know how Shuo is measuring the impact of that CAMHS work.
 - Posed a question about how different sectors (health, climate, and education) could work together to implement the ITRC's approach.
 - Noted that many policymakers are keen to collaborate but lack a clear, structured approach.
 - Suggested developing case studies showing how different sectors can work together on climate resilience and mental health.
- Tamasin Rhymes shared [a report](#) evaluating the outcomes of engaging with the Greener and Cleaner Hub, a community climate hub located in Bromley, South East London for the last three years. The report focuses on how the Hub influences people's understanding of climate change and their adoption of low-carbon behaviours. Tamasin hoped that this report could support other organisations to support community resilience-building efforts.

Next steps

Attendees expressed interest in continuing the discussion on practical implementation of the ideas discussed, pointing to case studies, and in finding out more about the ideas in Joe's presentation.

- Tamasin Rhymes had a few comments:
 - 'If any of you are going to [Anthropy](#) [a conference in March] at Eden, Cornwall at the end of March we are running a panel on how we tackle the siloed response to the polycrisis. <https://anthropy.uk/agenda/>
 - [Citizens UK](#) are doing interesting work on bringing those with lived experience into talking to stakeholders and tackling issues at a human and systemic level.
 - Greener and Cleaner's work [with Community Energy Pathways](#) and their [Leaving no-one behind](#) project on energy advice has demonstrated there is huge impact in advice and signposting as part of a trusted, peer to peer organisation.

Anne Bowers asked whether people are aware of the work that the Resilience team at the Greater London Authority are doing around inequality, and people wanted to find out more.

Later in the meeting, Flora Hastings had comments on Joe's presentation:

- "In anthropology, there is a lot of research / ethnographic evidence regarding community projects / cohesion and understanding how they help to address climate related anxiety, albeit often in non-UK based locations.
- "It would be interesting to collate existing social science evidence around the social groups/grassroots projects in the UK, and specifically, those that flourish without the need for much funding/financial support (as this is also a form of resilience, when funding can be very volatile and threaten posterity).
- "My own research explores such low-cost social groups in the context of Barcelona through urban gardens. I understand that funders might not count qualitative research as evidence!"

Member updates

The Link Up Crew

Tazmin Miah introduced the [Link Up Crew](#), a youth advisory group for the Mayor of London, composed of children aged 7 to 15 who meet monthly at City Hall. The group discusses a

range of topics relevant to young people, including mental health, climate change, and social justice issues.

Tazmin highlighted that this year, the group has shown strong interest in climate and mental health and plans to focus on these themes in their Children's Rights Inquiry, scheduled for November 2025 in Parliament.

Tazmin invited people to connect by emailing Tazmin.miah@london.gov.uk if they have insights or resources that could contribute to the inquiry – particularly those working in youth engagement, climate activism, and mental health advocacy – and to spread the word about it.

London Arts and Health

- 1) [London Arts and Health](#) are exploring Nature, Climate and Mental Health across April and [look forward to working with artists practicing at the intersection of planetary health, mental health, and arts](#). We will be hosting workshops and panel discussions throughout April and are keen to bring diverse practitioners into the conversations. **We are looking to commission two small workshops at £250 per workshop.**

If you are interested in applying, please write to info@londonartsandhealth.org.uk, sharing your CV and a short paragraph about a workshop idea exploring this topic. [Take a look at what we did last year](#). We look forward to hearing from you! Applications close on 21st March, Friday.

- 2) Rosetta Arts are running an event next week on 18th March in Newham for Social Prescribing Day, for people living/ working in Newham, and/ or who work in Social/ Cultural Prescribing. They will presentations from several organisations, including from [Cody Dock](#) and [The Line](#). Find out more [here](#).
- 3) And we have London Arts and Health's [yearly festival of Creative Health](#) in May (19th-25th May).

Wise Ram Theatre

[Wise Ram Theatre](#) is a neurodiverse theatre company exploring the climate crisis with humour, nerve, and heart, based in Essex.

Our first production 'Decommissioned', a play exploring climate anxiety and flooding, premiered in 2023 in London.

We have delivered workshops for children, young people, university students, adults and professional creatives in making climate theatre.

We create 'active hope', where people feel enabled and inspired to take action, connect with others and look to the future with a desire to 'be the difference'.

We are also artists-in-residence at The Glitch in Lambeth, run by VAULT Creative Arts.

We will be launching a new 'Green Creative Connections' project bringing together environmental organisations and creative activities for community members in Lambeth in the summer and autumn.

Sign up to our mailing list [here](#).

We've got our **next workshop coming up, hosted at The Glitch in Waterloo on Sunday 16th March**. This is for everyone - no experience necessary – find out more and buy a ticket [here](#).

If the cost of a session is a barrier, please email us on hello@wiseramtheatre.co.uk and we'll organise a free ticket.

Wellcome Climate Impact Awards 2025

Thrive LDN are considering putting in a bid for [Wellcome's Climate Impact Awards](#) – see the following description of the funding scheme:

'The aim of this scheme is to make the impacts of climate change on physical and mental health visible to drive urgent climate policy action at scale. We will fund transdisciplinary teams to deliver short-term, high-impact projects that maximise policy outcomes by combining evidence generation with influencing and engagement strategies.'

We are keen to hear from people who are interested – email benjamin.rossington@nhs.net. The application deadline is 30th April, so get in touch soon!

Economic Wellbeing Forum session

Thrive LDN also runs an [Economic Wellbeing Forum](#), which has been shaping the development of a public mental health response to those dealing with the cost-of-living crisis and emerging economic pressures.

This Forum is holding an in-person session on **8th April from 10am-1pm**. Email my colleague Natasha Cutler via n.cutler@nhs.net if you'd like an invite and do share with your networks.

Submit to the Journal of Climate Change and Health

One mainly for academics on the call: [The Journal of Climate Change and Health](#) is calling for papers for its special issue investigating whether and how climate policy and health policy can be integrated to better protect both human health and the climate. The deadline for submissions is 30 June 2025 – find out more [here](#).

Letters to the Earth's nature-based retreat

Kay Michael explained that next week she's leading [Letters to the Earth's](#) "first nature-based retreat and think tank where we'll be exploring ways to support personal, cultural, organisational and systemic shifts towards nature-centred ways of working and the value of doing so: following a programme drawn from our Letters to the Earth pillars of Connection (Awareness + Presence + Relationship), Creativity (Giving Voice to Nature), Feeling (Gratitude, Grief & Belonging) and Action (Reciprocity & Service). I'll happily report back at the next meeting!"

Future Forum sessions

Ben

Let's return to the Mentimeter survey shared at the start of the meeting on what people want from future Forum sessions – thanks for sharing your thoughts, and feel free to do so after the meeting (we will send round the survey again).

Here are some key findings from initial survey results:

- A preference for a mix of in-person and online meetings
- Suggestions to focus future sessions on collaborative action most of all, but also a lot on knowledge-sharing and networking
- Key themes of interest for future sessions include social prescribing and mental health, along with many other suggestions, such as engaging marginalised groups, youth involvement, community projects, urban design, and how to work together.
- Feedback also suggested that the Forum should include more funders, healthcare providers, and diverse community leaders to improve inclusivity.
- A key theme was a desire for the Forum to move towards collaborative action.
- Angela Burns said, 'it seems to be like the mental health / emotional side of climate hasn't really been acknowledged by politicians – that would be another good group to engage', and others agreed with this.

Summary and next steps

Ben

I think we've managed to fit a lot into an hour and it's good to see connections developing between people on the call.

We will write up the notes from this meeting very soon and email them round with the ITRC slides, and [a link to the Mentimeter survey](#) on future Forum sessions (we'll leave the survey open for a bit).

We will send out invites to the next three Forum sessions soon (for the end of April, mid-June, and the end of July), so that people can get them in their diaries already.

Based on people's feedback in the Mentimeter survey, we will probably be running one of the next three meetings in person, and we will be looking for venues, so let us know if you'd like to offer one or have any suggestions (Tamasin Rhymes offered a venue in Bromley for in-person meetings on Tuesdays or Wednesdays).

Feedback from attendees

At the end of the meeting, Ben invited attendees to share reflections on what went well and suggestions for improvement.

What went well?

- Several people commented on how valuable the discussion had been.
- Anna Woolf noted that it was "a great meeting—nice to hear different perspectives outside of culture."
- Sumaty Hernandez highlighted the opportunities for people to connect.
- Angela Burns commented that the presentation was great, and Tamasin Rhymes said it was a "fascinating topic".

Even better if...

- Angela Burns said "even better if you can find people to join who don't already agree with everything."