



EXPLORING THE CIRCULAR ECONOMY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND



INTRODUCTION

The Circular Economy is a broad and currently technical concept which calls for a paradigm shift in the way businesses, services and society are steered. It has the potential to open new and innovative career prospects for young people, plus create a cleaner, less wasteful society. What is more, young people have the potential to be catalysts and pioneers of this change.

The Scottish Government and Zero Waste Scotland were keen to explore the thoughts, views and insights of young people in the development of its forthcoming Circular Economy Route Map Consultation. This was with a view to co-design key messages about the circular economy to young people across Scotland at a later date.

They approached Young Scot through Zero Waste Scotland to deliver a National Survey for young people aged 11 to 25 and a youth led two day Ideas Jam Event for young people aged 16-25 to explore the Circular Economy concept and develop a co-designed viable future vision of a new system in action.

Young people, from a range of socio-economic backgrounds and a varied knowledge base, were invited to attend. We should not necessarily assume that those engaged are wholly representative of the broader demographic; however this piece of work has provided a 'snapshot' of insight into young people's attitudes and opinion from across Scotland.

The following outcomes were anticipated:

Outcomes for participants	Outcomes for Scottish Government
Increased confidence, a sense of empowerment and raised aspirations	Visions from groups of young people of the circular economy in action
Development of new skills and experience	Thinking and ideas from young people on how to achieve their vision
Greater awareness and understanding of policy development and decision-making processes	Increased confidence in how to involve young people
Increased access to information, resources and activities on the circular economy	Increased meaningful engagement with young people



Maxine Perella
@greendipped

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Brilliant to hear young people's take on circular economy.
This is being driven from the top - the Scottish Govt.

5:07 PM - 13 Jun 2015

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Shannon Goundry
@ShannonGnChange

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#YSFullCircle

3:09 PM - 12 Jun 2015



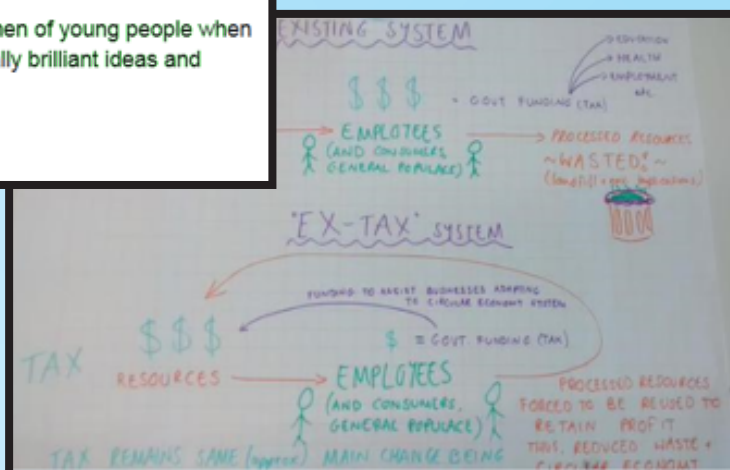
Laura Copley
@LauraSEEDCopley

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So inspired by the depth and acumen of young people when discussing #circulareconomy. Totally brilliant ideas and suggestions. #YSFullCircle

2:51 PM - 13 Jun 2015

2 2



Colin Webster
@co1inwebster

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Great tax shift idea for #circulareconomy at #YSFullCircle -
what do you think, @femkegroothuis?

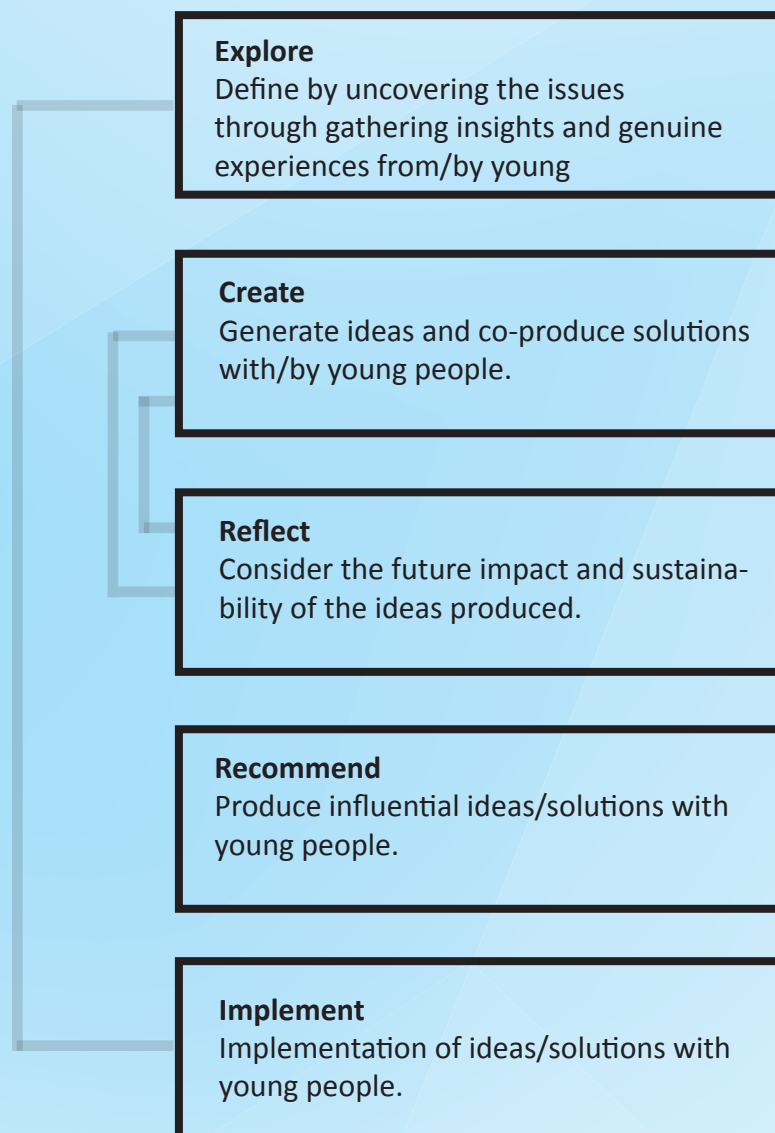
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CO-DESIGN APPROACH

Young Scot plays a key role in supporting partners to engage and consult young people across Scotland, helping them to influence the design and delivery of policy and services. Our co-design service involves young people systematically co-creating, co-producing, co-designing and co-delivering solutions. Young people are involved much earlier in decision making process through a highly participative approach, developing informed insights, ideas, recommendations and solutions for policy and practice.

We used this process during the Ideas Jam Event to enable the participants to take the lead.



Through the co-design process, young people have ownership of what they have to say; relating their views and opinions on a particular subject or policy area to deliver ideas and solutions in a spirit of co-design and collaboration.

NATIONAL SURVEY

Working with Zero Waste Scotland, Young Scot devised a youth-friendly national survey to gauge the views and opinions of young people from across Scotland. The survey was hosted online for eight weeks and shared through the Young Scot Platform (www.young.scot). The survey was also promoted through social media channels, our partner networks, on the ground at events, school visits and on the street. For anyone unable to access the online version, a paper version of the survey was sent out to them on request.

The survey was open to young people aged 11 to 25. An incentive of 25 Young Scot Reward points was made available to young people who completed the survey. The data was segmented and downloaded in data sets and analysed in Microsoft Excel.

RESPONDENTS

The number of survey responses totalled 657. The demographic breakdown can be found in the Appendix. Please note, this is not a statistically representative survey - it has been completed only by those who have chosen to watch the video and answer the questions. It does, however, give a useful indication of young people's thoughts and perceptions.

CORE QUESTIONS

Participants were shown a YouTube video "Re-thinking Progress: The Circular Economy" by the Ellen MacArthur Foundation and asked a series of questions in relation to this. We wanted to ensure the questions were relevant to ensure the responses were informed. The following tables contain the results from each question. The statistical breakdown can be found in the Appendix.

Q1. What do you think were the key messages in this video?

This question received 472 comments. Many of the respondents provided an articulated response to this question with many referencing waste, product cycles, technology, energy use and behaviour including individual/community responsibility. A selection of the comments have been selected below.

To consider the "afterlife" of a product before purchasing - to ensure that you are contributing to a more sustainable economy and lifestyle

TO CONSIDER THE "AFTERLIFE" OF A PRODUCT BEFORE PURCHASING - TO ENSURE THAT YOU ARE CONTRIBUTING TO A MORE SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY AND LIFESTYLE

**CHANGE THE WAY
THE EARTH
WORKS** I THINK**

Recycling, sustainable living,
reducing waste - changing
the way products are
manufactured and disposed of
on a global scale

RECYCLING, SUSTAINABLE LIVING, REDUCING WASTE -
CHANGING THE WAY PRODUCTS ARE MANUFACTURED AND
DISPOSED OF ON A GLOBAL SCALE

I think it was not to waste anything
and to try and take care of the
world a bit more. If we don't we
might end up destroying it

Recycling, sustainable living,
reducing waste - changing
the way products are
manufactured and disposed
of on a global scale

That companies should start reusing
useful resources to make their products
again. The world should start a cycle
like the earth so it can be a healthy
environment. People should start buying
products off of factories/companies so it
can start that cycle

Today's modern technologies are so up to
date that we expect so much from them and
we take them for granted. So when they let
us down even a tiny bit we chuck them to the
kerb without even thinking what will happen
to them? We need to rethink our future and
what we waste and what we don't if we could
waste less and change our product ideas
then we could create environmental friendly
packaging and make a better globe

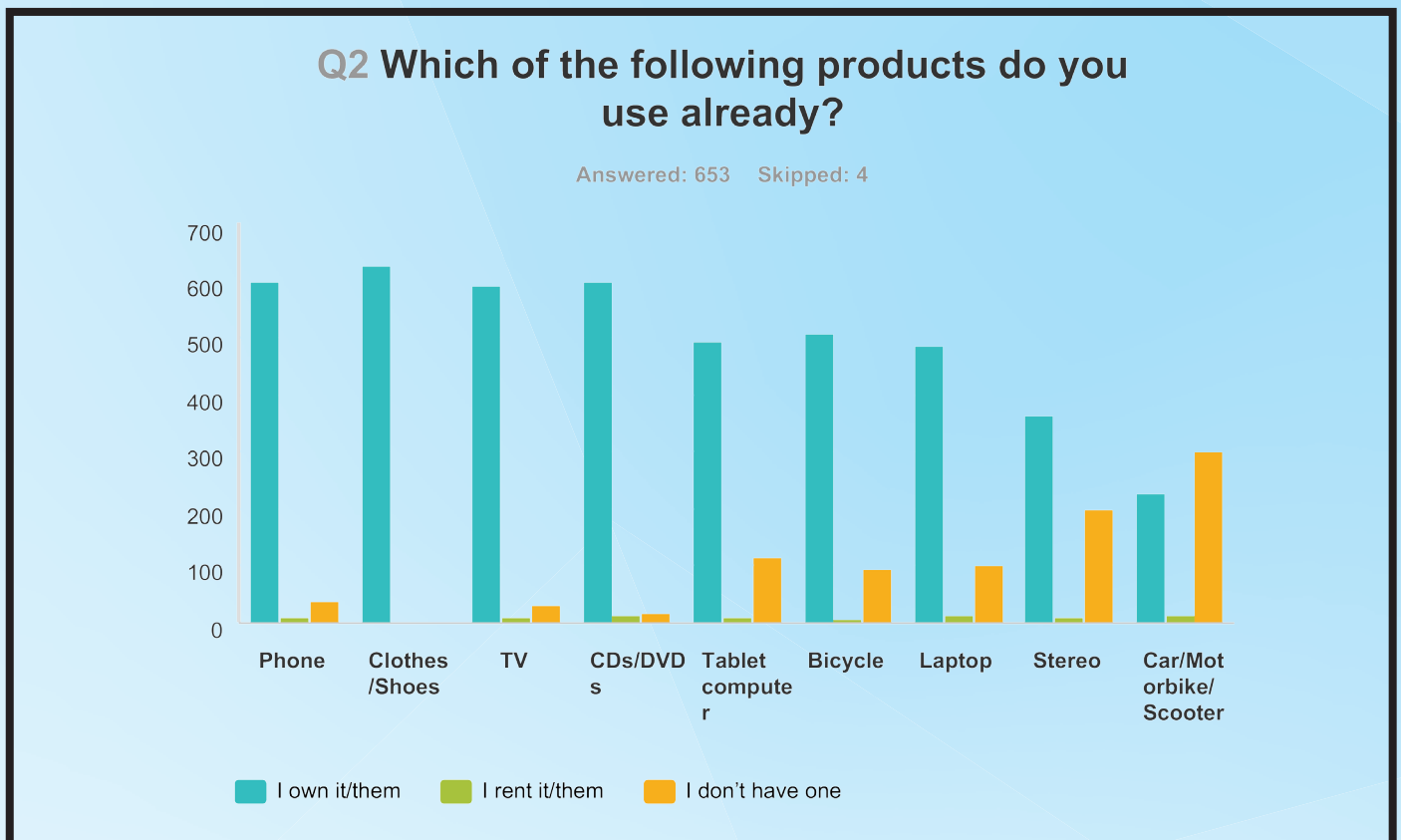
Not to waste anything and to
try and take care of the world
a bit more. If we don't we
might end up destroying it

Respondents shared that many owned all the items presented. Many did not own car/motorcycle/scooter which aligned with their age range. A larger sample do not own a computer, laptop or stereo. A small selection of individuals rented the listed items.

Q2b. Tell us of other products/services you currently rent/subscribe to.

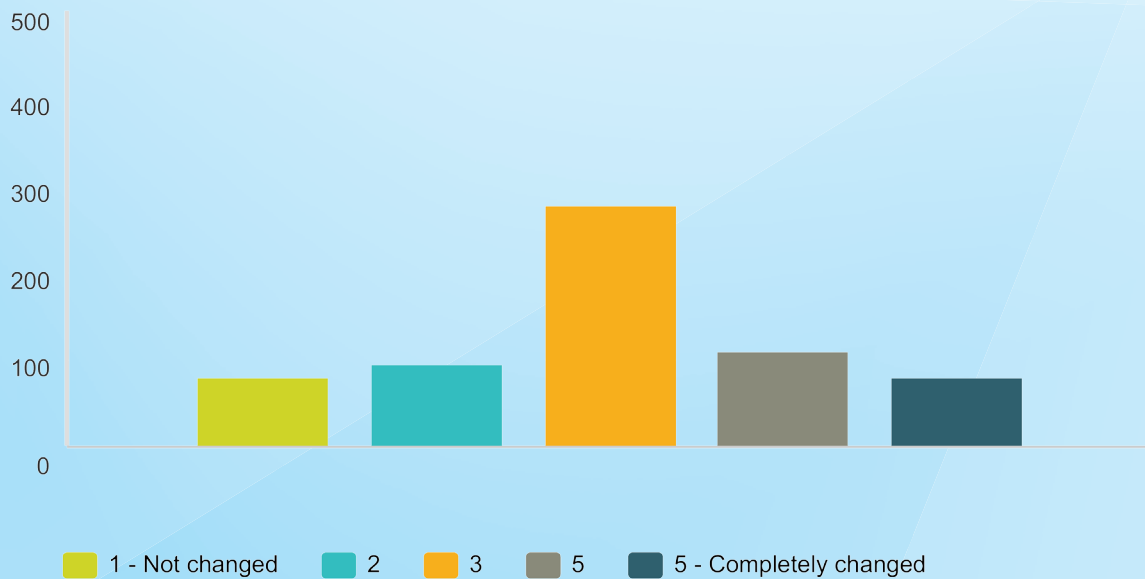
The respondents shared 202 services/products. The majority commented that they rent/subscribe to:

- **Books**
- **Gym membership**
- **Railcard**
- **Studio facilities e.g. laser cutter.**
- **Game console**
- **Netflix**



Q3 Having watched the video, has the way you think about the products in Q2 changed?

Answered: 643 Skipped: 14



The question asked to rate the extent their views have changed having watched the video. The majority of respondents felt the way they think about the products and services they use has changed to some extent, with most rating three, four or five (completely changed). 345 comments were received. Participants stated that:

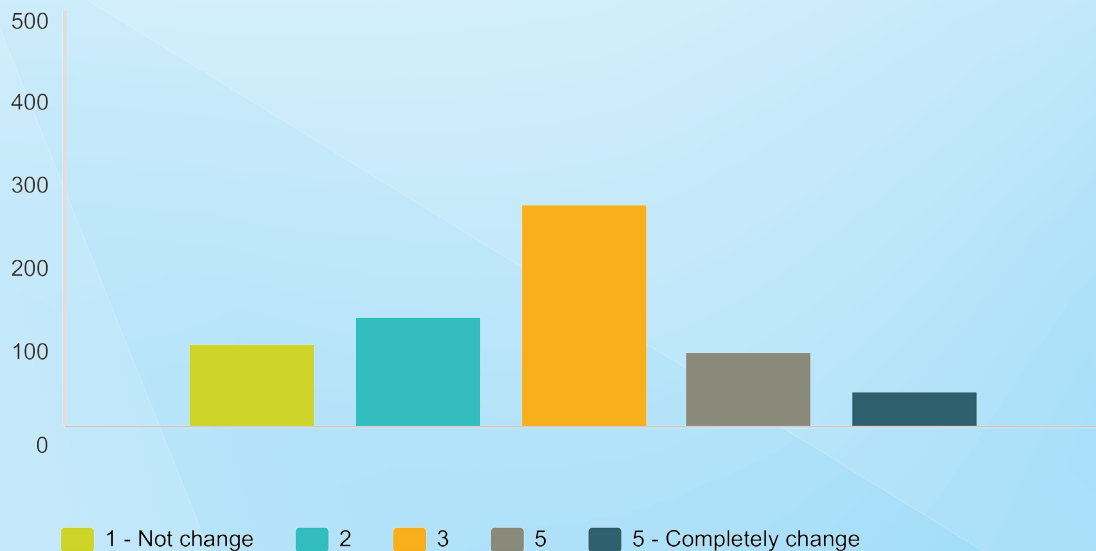
- My mentality has changed in the sense that I now realise that I perhaps own items that I could quite easily just rent. Previously, I did not consider how wasteful I was being.
- It's a very well presented video that is thought provoking
- I don't get the latest gadgets or things just because other people do. I get new clothes etc. when I really need them.
- I didn't know or think properly that we could change our ways to suit the world. Then that video showed me how we could.

For those who felt their opinions hadn't changed, they stated:

- My views haven't changed much as I am on my Eco School Committee and know a bit about this already.
- Probably because it won't catch on
- I didn't really understand it

Q4 How likely are you to change the way you use products/services in Q2 having seen the video?

Answered: 636 Skipped: 21

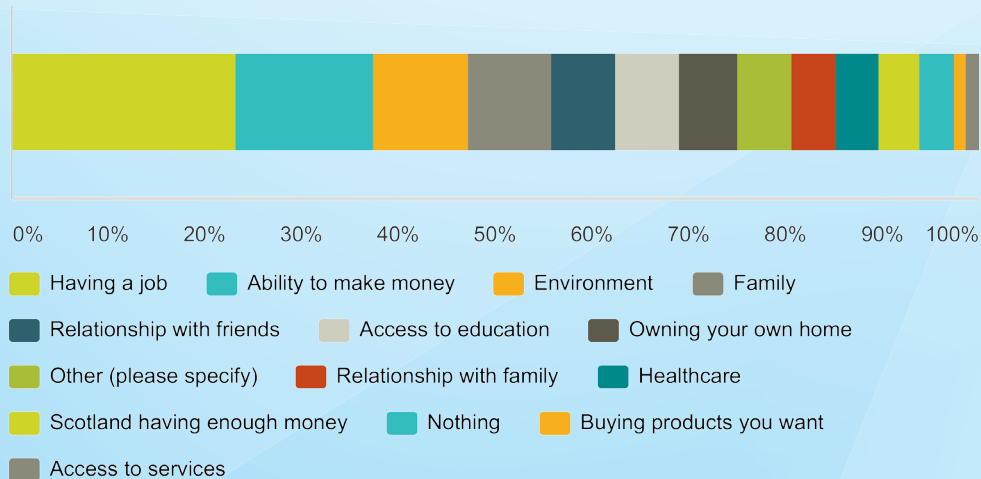


The question asked to rate how likely it would be for them to change the way they use products. Interestingly the results alter from the previous question on opinion change. The majority of respondents felt the way they would use products and services would change to come extent, but the majority rated three, two and on (not change). 317 comments were received stating:

- I feel like the way I think about it somewhat has changed. It made me not want to buy the new iPhone/laptop because most things that we get rid of is still usable it's just that people want the best newest model, which I don't think is good.
- Instead of buying a whole new outfit, I could make changes to the clothes I already own to give them a new lease of life.
- Could spend a little more time researching into which products are going to last, rather than always choosing the cheapest and most disposable option.
- I might donate my old phones

Q5 Thinking about the future, what are your main concerns?

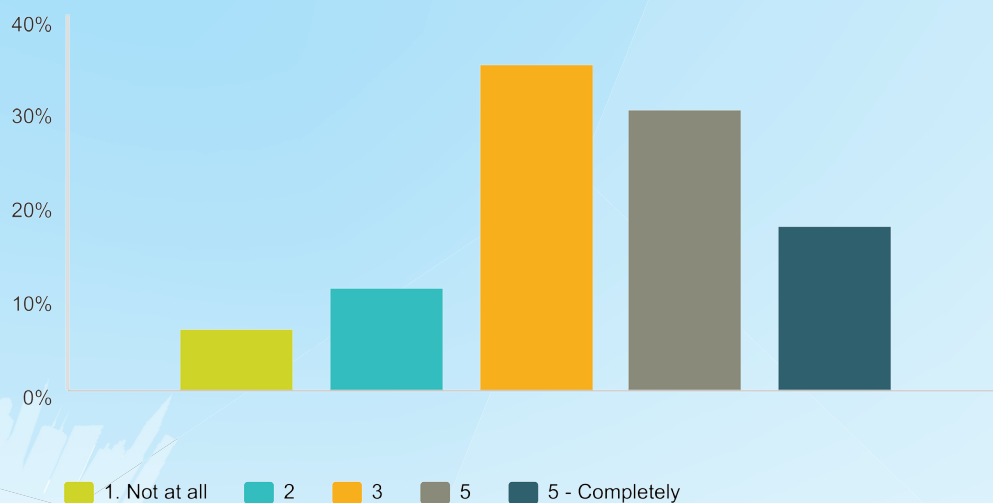
Answered: 606 Skipped: 51



The majority of respondents were most concerned about having a job (23.3%) and having the ability to make money (14.2%). The environment was a concern for 9.2% and family and most of the remaining options had fairly even responses. Interestingly, only 1.3% selected 'Buying products you want' as a concern. In the 36 comments received, some reiterated answers from the question, and others included endangered animals, religion, welfare of people and happiness.

Q6 How much does the future represented in the video matter to you?

Answered: 597 Skipped: 60



The question asked to rate how much the future in the video mattered to them. The majority of respondents felt the future represented did matter to them. The majority rated three, four and five (completely). 294 comments were received stating:

- I would like to see my own family brought up with a more considered mind-set in terms of sustainability - to be resourceful, rather than wasteful.
- It matters because if we don't start taking action future generations will have an awful world to live in
- Think, it could be one big rubbish dump!
- The future in the video is the one I am going to live in and the one my children will live in, making it a personal responsibility as well as a responsibility of humanity as a whole to care for the planet we rely on for survival.

Q7. What skills and knowledge do young people need to help make the future represented in the video happen?

This question received 402 comments. Many of the respondents provided an articulated response to this question with many referencing knowledge and education, teamwork, resourcefulness, innovation, communication, technology, life skills, employability and passion. A selection of the comments have been selected below.

- Young people need to have knowledge on the areas in their lives they can make alterations to, which are achievable. E.g. renting rather than buying.
- Children need to have parents willing to recycle etc. at home and to be able to learn WHY it is important and HOW they can help. Children need empathy to be able to understand how others view the topic.
- Teamwork, knowledge of local recycling facilities, sharing unwanted items
- As a 13 year old I think every young person needs intelligence and they will get through anything of course everyone can be intelligent but if they use their intelligence wisely they will get far
- We should all be educated in school, or get monthly newsletter (on email more eco-friendly) about how our economy is doing and how we could help to make it better.
- Young people's views on how we treat products and product life have to change. Everyone has to be grateful for what they have, and learn to treat things with respect.

Q8. What should young people do to help create the future represented in the video?

This question received 398 comments. Many of the respondents provided an articulated response to this question with many referencing self-awareness and responsibility, ambition, challenging industry, sharing and influencing others. A selection of the comments below.

- Young people should consider and research ways into making small achievable changes to the way they go about using/buying products or services in advance, thinking about the impact it may have.
- I think they should pass on what they know to their friends, everyone knows it's an issue but don't really grasp how big it actual is.
- Start with the small things
- Petitions and articles, to encourage people to think more about the world and I think another important aspect is a lot of knowledge of the subject
- Thinking about what WE can do to help make our world better
- Work together to persuade companies to follow this idea
- Campaign as all change must happen on a countywide scale and involve industry to be effective.

Q9. What should the Government do to help create the future represented in the video?

This question received 389 comments. Many of the respondents provided an articulated response to this question with many referencing that the Government should collaborate with experts, educate and engage children and young people (generation to take the ideas forward), make it law and teach young people how the economy works now so they can help change the future. A selection of the comments from participants include:

- Display such informative videos in the ad breaks of the main television channels. Try and enforce a law that could see all manufacturing companies comply with such standards, towards a more sustainable future.
- The Government should make young people more aware of this situation as I was not aware of how dire it was until now.
- They should enforce for old technology to be traded in so manufactures can take them apart and renew them and fine anyone that throws away their old technology

THE FULL CIRCLE JAM EVENT

12TH/13TH JUNE 2015, TECHCUBE, EDINBURGH

The two day workshop was based on a jam model; a co-operative gathering of people interested in a design-based approach to creativity and problem solving. The purpose of the jam was to encourage blue-sky thinking, experimentation and visionary rapid innovation. With this ethos, the workshop event was a vibrant, engaging and fun event for all participants, with facilitators on hand to help mould and shape the ideas. The workshop session plan was developed to ensure a youth led approach and a qualitative rapid response.

The sessions used a holistic approach to flexibly explore the main themes identified by the Scottish Government:

- **Design**
- **Repair**
- **Reuse**
- **Remanufacturing**
- **Recycling**
- **Climate change**
- **Skills**

Although the key strands were provided, we also wanted to ensure that the work was not prescriptive. The groups were not restricted to working to key themes but instead to use them as a hook for their ideas. We encouraged open visual and verbal exploration and ideation using dynamic tools such as experience mapping and personas.

Young Scot recruited for 25 young people from across Scotland geographical areas and diverse background to ensure representation. Unfortunately due to several last minute cancellations, our total participation totalled 13 young people.

The participant group was split into three diverse teams. All participants had varying levels of knowledge and expertise. To begin with, we set a series of tasks, including where participants had to make a sustainable paper aeroplane business as a practical demonstration of the importance of raw materials in any economic system. This set the foundation for the first exploratory exercise, in which we asked the participants to 'Dreamscape' – on a large roll of paper map their initial thoughts, ideas, and questions in words and images.



The participants rapidly explored a diverse range of themes through this exercise. Some were fairly basic questions such as 'What is the Circular Economy?!' and some points were more complex covering 'capitalistic systems' and 'modular design'. Particularly for those who did not have prior knowledge of the Circular Economy, this provided an opportunity for them to develop their understanding through discussion with those who had already had knowledge or interest. The table of questions, insights and ideas can be found in the Appendix.

After initial full group exploratory exercises, the teams were given their brief for the two days and introduced to the Scottish Government's ISM Model for Behaviour Change to prioritise their thinking and understand the interconnected nature of individual, social and material factors to enable Circular Economy models to work. The co-design process enabled them to lead using innovative tools, and focused on insight and exploration, system mapping and questioning current practices.

On Friday, using the intelligence gathered, the teams began to identify viable ideas, solutions and approaches and were encouraged to pitch their initial thinking back to the wider group. On Saturday the teams began a more intensive stage to create and prototype their ideas. Each team then were encouraged to bring their ideas to life and pitch their final Circular Economy Model Vision. This session created and fostered collective ownership by encouraging collaboration and voting on the key elements of each team's vision.

The focus of their final shared vision was entirely led by the participating young people, who pitched back using a variety of approaches including Lego models, hand drawn system maps and scenarios. Each pitch was digitally recorded and live streamed on Periscope.

THE BRIEF

THE PROBLEM:

Our population is growing across the world and we continue to consume more and more of the world's natural resources to support the demands of growing economies. In the current economic system we TAKE, we MAKE and then we DISPOSE. However, this model is damaging to our world which will ultimately lead to long term negative impacts on the social, commercial and political landscapes in which we live and work together. For societies to thrive within the world, not just survive in the short term, we need an economic system which provides people with jobs, services and well-being for them and their families.

THE CHALLENGE:

How would you solve the problem? Can we rethink and redesign the entire system so that we prosper in a world with a growing population? What would need to change to make that happen? Product design? Transport solutions? Government policy? Education? The way in which we use and consume goods? Young people in Scotland can be the pioneers of change through challenging the way we think about how Scotland could work in the future.

We want you create a vision for this new way for society to operate by 2040. You can think about the impacts of your vision on the following areas including:

- **Employment opportunities**
- **Government Policy**
- **Education & Culture**
- **Product/service design and Industry Innovation**
- **Prosperity without growth that damages communities**
- **How we communicate this new system**
- **The natural world**

FINAL PITCHES

TEAM ONE

John (22, Edinburgh City)
Kirsty (18, Dundee),
Goodness (23, Glasgow)
Mercedes (17, Highlands)



VISION

This group focused on a Tax system reform which aims to change the flow of the monetary system and re-emphasise where the nation's tax profits come from. Their inspiration comes from the "ex-Tax" System which taxes resource over labour which would encourage businesses to see the value in resources and therefore waste less. They propose a sustainably democratic system by establishing a Circular Economy research body which will feed into a dedicated government agency that will lobby policies, regulations and legislation such as; embedding the Ex-Tax system; a ban on planned obsolescence; a ban on excessive packaging; and a waste deposit scheme.

APPROACH

Their radical proposal calls for a complete system reform. However, the group clearly acknowledged and outlined the challenges inherent in such a process. They demonstrated the effectiveness of a top-down approach by using the example of 'Carrier Bag Levy' as an instant and powerful means to instigate change. Their process would begin with a large scale consultation and education strategy of which Government bodies (local and national) would implement. Business would be regulated to accommodate this new approach. Scotland would then act as an exemplar economic model for other countries to follow.

BENEFITS

The groups identified numerous benefits of the system which included businesses, society and the environment. They thought in-depth about how businesses will be encouraged to waste less whilst still remain profitable. This would be a catalysis for change at a society level by changing how we perceive resource. There will be greater employment, new industries and Scottish pioneers can become leaders in the international arena.

TEAM TWO

Fraser (20, Midlothian)
Shannon (16, South Lanarkshire)
Andrea (17, Fife)
Ben (25, Edinburgh City)



VISION

This group's vision is the concept of 'Circul8' which is a program that focuses on education and cultural transformation with an overall aim to increase job prospects and employability. Their education vision included drawing upon the impacts of Eco Schools by developing a secondary school enterprise program focused on the Circular Economy, whilst launching a nationwide Circul8 educational tour bus. To kick start a cultural revolution the group suggested the 'Circul8 Challenge', which uses a 'crowd-knowledge' sourced web platform. Here, clusters of people can share their expertise and pitch a circular economy enterprise idea to win £80. The winning Circular Economy piloted projects will build upon a Circul8 best-practice think tank.

APPROACH

The group started by focusing on the current societal arena and identified the importance of employability given that people are motivated by their ability to support themselves and their families. They advocated the idea of using best practice examples such as Sustaining Dunbar in order to spread the Circul8 concept at a community level. Their model followed a logical progression from community into local businesses, where the successful piloted projects would then be up-scaled to incorporate larger, more influential brands as a way to shift this practise into mainstream culture.

BENEFITS

They felt that if businesses are involved, cultural change can happen much more quickly, given the societal influence the businesses have on our consumer behaviour. There could be new job-providing industries as a result of the enterprising ideas coming forward from the platform, such as re-manufacturing jobs, design opportunities and swap shops. This growing body of expertise would ensure that there is a better use of resources whilst maintaining a system that supports its citizens.

TEAM THREE

Rhona (18, Midlothian)

Mike (27, Edinburgh City)

Sylvia (16, Edinburgh City)

Finlay (16, Highlands)

Colin (17, West Dunbartonshire)



VISION

Group 3's vision focuses on revolutionising the food industry as they saw this as an area with the biggest consumer interest. Their vision aims to change the food industry on three levels; through the introduction of an entirely new farming system following Permaculture principles; the concept of zero-packaging supermarkets; and food-related community empowerment through community food centres.

APPROACH

The group began by addressing how society is now and how the current systems of farming are damaging the eco-system. They also identified the power that supermarkets have in how we purchase and consume our food products. They presented three new logic models for farming, supermarkets and the community. They suggested ideas about how each new system can be implemented and integrated into the current system, by giving positive examples such as re-fillable food containers, packages distribution, incentives, social enterprise and urban farming.

BENEFITS

There were clear environmental benefits of taking this approach, such as protecting our eco-systems and our soils for future crop yields. They felt this an overall better use of community and farm land given the damage caused by current agricultural practices. The supermarket model would greatly reduce the landfill produced by the packaging created for our supermarket shelves. In addition, they felt that by creating community food hubs could empower communities to create income from their own food production and educate others into the concept of the Circular Economy at a food level.

CONCLUSION

670 young people aged 11-26 participated in the first national conversation in Scotland on the Circular Economy.

The majority of those who participated in the National Survey and Ideas Jam have demonstrated a clear appetite to help shape the aspirational vision for and with the people in Scotland. They want to be at the heart of changing the world for the better and believe Scotland can lead the way.

The majority of the participants felt the aspirational future proposed by the Scottish Government matters to them, but they recognise that there isn't a quick fix. They identified that future system change requires complex changes over the course of a number of years. Knowledge and awareness, behaviour, social norms, industry commitment to altering manufacturing processes and clear regulation from the government were some of the key factors identified.

The participants have shared that by capturing young people's curiosity through relevant information, we can spark their passion and innovation to create sustainable system change. Young people in Scotland recognise their responsibility and see they have a key role to play now to create the ambitious future we all want to achieve.

NEXT STEPS

This report has been submitted to the Scottish Government and Zero Waste Scotland to be used to inform the Scottish Government's Circular Economy Consultation, launched in Summer 2015.

Young Scot and Zero Waste Scotland will be facilitating a young people's response to the upcoming consultation.

CONTACT

For more information about the project, to request data or discuss any aspect in more detail, please contact:

Lisa Murphy, Co-design Manager
Lisam@youngscot.org

Young Scot
Rosebery House,
9 Haymarket Terrace
Edinburgh, EH12 5EZ

Tel: 0131 313 2488

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