



# CLIMATE CHANGE ON THE NORTH WEST COAST CONFERENCE

CHALLENGES FACING COASTAL COMMUNITIES AND  
WORKING WITH NATURE TO ADAPT TO COASTAL  
CHANGE.

29 & 30 March 2023  
Grange-Over-Sands

## CONFERENCE REPORT

With Thanks to Our Sponsors:





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## CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

The North West Coastal Conference brought together leading coastal practitioners to provide a range of perspectives on how the impacts of climate change may affect coastal management. The event was hosted over 2 days and showcased 27 presentations, 5 panel discussions, 4 field trip locations and was attended by over 100 delegates from 41 different organisations. The event highlighted a move towards nature based coastal solutions, innovative research and how working alongside communities can build a stronger and more resilient North West coast for future generations.

### WHEN & WHERE?

29 & 30 March 2023

The Grange Hotel  
Station Square,  
Grange-over-Sands,  
Cumbria,  
LA11 6EJ



### FUNDING & SPONSORSHIP

The conference was joint funded by:

- Balfour Beatty (main sponsor)
- Volker Stevin (main sponsor)
- WSP (field trip sponsor)
- North West, North Wales Coastal Group
- Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC)
- Our Future Coast Project
- Regional Monitoring Programme (CERMS).

 **VolkerStevin**

**Balfour Beatty**

**WSP**

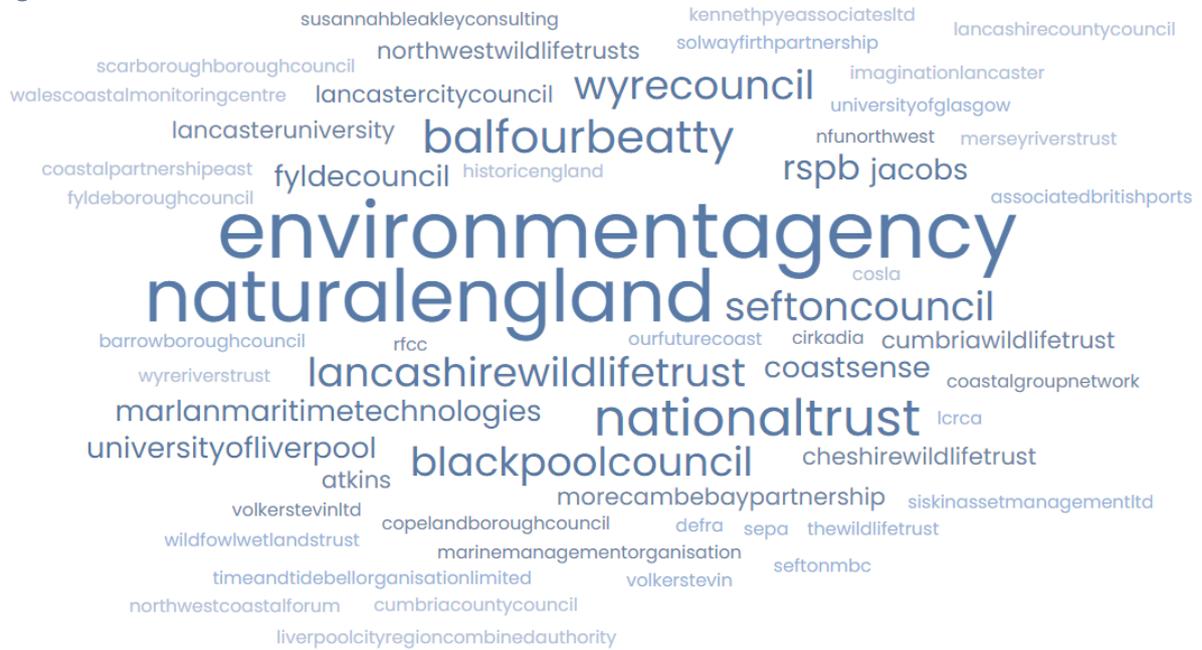
### ATTENDEES

**Delegates Numbers:** 123 registrations (Day 1: 113 attendees & Day 2: 100 attendees).

A delegates list is provided at the end of the document (**Error! Reference source not found.**).



## Organisations:



## FIELD TRIPS

Four field trip options were offered on Thursday 30 March to Our Future Coast project locations:

- **Option 1: Hest Bank:** Led by Paul Blakeley – Lancaster City Council
- **Option 2: Jenny Brown’s Point:** Led by Elanor Brown – Lancaster City Council
- **Option 3: Roa Island:** Led by Mark Ellis – WSP
- **Option 4: West Shore Park, Walney Island:** Led by Chris Jones – Barrow Borough Council



## PRESENTATION RECORDINGS & SLIDES

Presentation recordings are available, privately, on YouTube using the following links in the programme list below. Presentation slides are also available in a PDF version using the link in the programme list below.

The NWNW Coastal Group have set up a [short survey](#) to collect your key take home messages from the conference and any actions that we can all start to implement to better manage our coastline.



## PHOTOGRAPHY

Photos from the event are available on the [Coastal Group Google Drive](#).

Photo Credit: [Portfolio | Robin Zahler](#)





## CONFERENCE TEAM

- Carl Green, North West North Wales Coastal Group Chair, Wyre Council
- Caroline Salthouse, North West Coastal Forum
- Susannah Bleakley, Our Future Coast Independent Consultant
- Katie Eckford, North West SMP Coordinator Sefton Council
- Samantha Godfrey-Lord, Regional Coastal Monitoring Analyst, Sefton Council



## PROGRAMME: WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH

### Session 1: 'Climate Challenges on the Coast' chaired by Adrian Lythgo

Aim: Speakers will review the climate challenges faced by coastal communities from global, national, and regional perspectives.

- 11:00 - 11:05 **Adrian Lythgo – North West Regional Flood and Coast Committee**  
Welcome and Opening comments.  
Link to recording: [Adrian Lythgo \(Session Chair\) Recording](#)
- 11:05 – 11:15 **Rachael Hill - Environment Agency**  
*'An introduction to the FCERM strategy and the steps the National Coastal Team is taking to meet the challenge.'*  
Link to slides: [Rachael Hill Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Rachael Hill Recording](#)
- 11:15 – 11:25 **Tom de la Rosa - Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme**  
*'The climate testbed: An introduction to the flood and coastal innovation programmes'*  
Link to slides: [Tom de la Rosa Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Tom de la Rosa Recording](#)
- 11:25 – 11:40 **Ivan Haigh (video) - University of Southampton**  
*'Predicting sea level rise and coastal flood risks in the face of climate change.'*  
Link to recording: [Ivan Haigh Recording](#)
- 11:40 – 11:50 **Bryan Curtis - Coastal Group Network**  
*'The Strategic Role of the Coastal Group Network.'*  
Link to slides: [Bryan Curtis Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Bryan Curtis Recording](#)
- 11:50 – 12:00 **Steve McFarland - Scottish Environmental Protection Agency**  
*'Scotland's response to coastal change.'*  
Link to slides: [Steve McFarland Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Steve McFarland Recording](#)
- 12:00 – 12:10 **Susan Wilson - Natural England**  
*'Climate change on the northwest coast. Impacts on coastal species and habitats: issues and potential solutions.'*  
Link to slides: [Susan Wilson Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Susan Wilson Recording](#)
- 12:10 – 12:20 **Stephen Trotter & Tom Burditt - Cumbria & Lancashire Wildlife Trusts**  
*'Living, thriving coasts and a wilder Irish Sea: the view from the Wildlife Trusts.'*  
Link to slides: [Stephen Trotter & Tom Burditt Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Stephen Trotter & Tom Burditt Recording](#)
- 12:20 – 12:35 **Panel Questions**  
Link to recording: [Session 1 Panel Discussion](#)



## Session 2: 'Working with Data' chaired by Carl Green

Aim: Speakers will address the role data plays in providing a robust evidence base for climate change adaptation, and how innovative projects and community involvement can support flood and erosion risk management.

- 13:45 – 13:50 **Carl Green - North West North Wales Coastal Group**  
Session introduction  
Link to recording: [Carl Green \(Session Chair\) Recording](#)
- 13:50 – 14:05 **Adrian Lythgo – North West Regional Flood and Coast Committee**  
*'Achieving better coastal resilience by involving communities and working across organisational boundaries.'*  
Link to slides: [Adrian Lythgo Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Adrian Lythgo Recording](#)
- 14:05 – 14:12 **Dr Lee Swift (video) - Environment Agency**  
*'The EA/Defra Joint Programme: Coastal research highlights.'*  
Link to slides: [Lee Swift Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Lee Swift Recording](#)
- 14:12 – 14:19 **Paul Wisse – Sefton Council**  
*'Developing a Regional Coastal Evidence Base Fit for the Future.'*  
Link to slides: [Paul Wisse Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Paul Wisse Recording](#)
- 14:19 – 14:26 **Gwyn Nelson - Wales Coastal Monitoring Centre**  
*'The importance of innovation and community engagement for low budget coastal monitoring.'*  
Link to slides: [Gwyn Nelson Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Gwyn Nelson Recording](#)
- 14:26 – 14:33 **Dr Cai Bird – Marlan & CoastSense**  
*'An overview of the CoastSense system for assisting coastal managers in optimising decision making and gathering evidence.'*  
Link to slides: [Cai Bird Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Cai Bird Recording](#)
- 14:33 – 14:41 **Dr Cai Ladd - University of Glasgow**  
*'Selecting sites for coastal restoration using the Mini Buoy.'*  
Link to slides: [Cai Ladd Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Cai Ladd Recording](#)
- 14:41 – 15:00 **Panel Questions**  
Link to recording: [Session 2 Panel Discussion](#)



### Session 3: 'Inspiration and the Future' chaired by Bryan Curtis

Speakers will review a range of successful nature-based coastal management and resilience measures and introduce the NW's Flood and Coastal Resilience Programme 'Our Future Coast' project.

- 15:25 – 15:30      **Bryan Curtis – Coastal Group Network**  
*Session introduction*  
Link to recording: [Bryan Curtis \(Session Chair\) Recording](#)
- 15:30 – 15:50      **Tom Burditt (OFC Chair), Carl Green, Mark Ellis & Susannah Bleakley - Our Future Coast**  
*'Our Future Coast – The North West Coast's Flood and Coastal Resilience Innovation Programme.'*  
Link to slides: [Our Future Coast Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Our Future Coast Recording](#)
- 15:50 – 16:10      **Nigel Pontee – Jacobs**  
*'Coastal nature-based solutions and habitat restoration.'*  
Link to slides: [Nigel Pontee Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Nigel Pontee Recording](#)
- 16:10 – 16:15      **Ray Lawrenson - Siskin**  
*'An innovative method for coastal erosion mitigation.'*  
Link to slides: [Ray Lawrenson Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Ray Lawrenson Recording](#)
- 16:15 – 16:25      **Scott Butterfield - Blackpool Council**  
*'The role of the coast in delivering net zero – a Local Authority Perspective.'*  
Link to slides: [Scott Butterfield Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Scott Butterfield Recording](#)
- 16:25 – 16:40      **Panel Questions**  
Link to recording: [Session 3 Panel Discussion](#)
- 16:40 – 17:00      **North West Coastal Forum Awards**  
Caroline Salthouse – North West Coastal Forum  
Link to slides: [North West Coastal Forum Awards Presentation](#)  
Link to recording: [North West Coastal Forum Awards 2023 Recording](#)
- 17:00 – 17:05      **Adrian Lythgo, Susannah Bleakley & Carl Green**  
*Closing remarks*
- 19:30 – 21:30      **NW Coast Pub Quiz - Quizmaster Graham Lymbery (Optional)**  
(Approx.)      Location: Main conference room (Grange View)



## PROGRAMME: THURSDAY 30 MARCH

### Session 4: 'Changing Mindsets' chaired by Susannah Bleakley

Speakers will offer insights into aspects of behavioural science, citizen science and changing policy to encourage the uptake and understanding of nature-based solutions.

- 09:45 – 09:50      **Susannah Bleakley - Our Future Coast Project**  
*Session Introduction*
- 09:50 – 10:05      **Kris De Meyer (video) – University College London**  
*'Talking about climate change: moving the conversation from 'issue' to 'action.'*  
Link to slides: [Kris de Meyer Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Kris de Meyer Recording](#)
- 10:05 – 10:15      **Serena Pollastri - Lancaster University**  
*'Morecambe Bay Timescapes, Engaging Young People in Research on Climate Change.'*  
Link to slides: [Serena Pollastri Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Serena Pollastri Recording](#)
- 10:15 – 10:20      **Joseph Earl & Suzi Ilic (video) - Lancaster University**  
*'Communities and Citizen Science on the Coast.'*  
Link to recording: [Joseph Earl & Suzi Ilic Recording](#)
- 10:20 – 10:30      **Tayo Adebawale – Cirkadia**  
*'Examples of Community Involvement in Design (Looking at wider benefits of Design, and the importance of Community Involvement).'*  
Link to recording: NA
- 10:30 – 10:45      **Helen Jay & Sam Stalker - National Trust**  
*'Changing Mindsets: National Trust's perspective.'*  
Link to slides: [Helen Jay & Sam Stalker Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Sam Stalker & Helen Jay Recording](#)
- 10:45 – 10:55      **Len Harris & Lucy Lowcock - Wyre Council**  
*'Planning for a Sustainable Coast – Learning Points from the Shoreline Management Plan Planning Interface Project.'*  
Link to slides: [Len Harris & Lucy Lowcock Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Len Harris & Lucy Lowcock Recording](#)
- 10:55 – 11:15      **Panel Questions**  
Link to recording: [Session 4 Panel Discussion](#)



## Session 5: 'Resourcing the Future' chaired by Tom Burditt

Speakers will discuss potential funding mechanisms, methods of alternative finance and how we can resource and skill the future.

- 11:40 – 11:45 **Tom Burditt - Lancashire Wildlife Trust**  
*Session Introduction*  
Link to recording: [Tom Burditt \(Session Chair\) Recording](#)
- 11:45 – 12:00 **Tim McGrath – Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust**  
*'Wetlands for Carbon Storage: Creating and managing saltmarshes to store blue carbon in the UK.'*  
Link to slides: [Tim McGrath Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Tim McGrath Recording](#)
- 12:00 – 12:15 **Richard Nunn & Stewart Rowe – Environment Agency & Scarborough Borough Council**  
*'Future funding challenges in Natural Flood Management appraisal & assurance changes.'* / *'Blending finances to achieve multiple outcomes.'*  
Link to slides: [Richard Nunn & Stewart Rowe Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Richard Nunn & Stewart Rowe Recording](#)
- 12:15 – 12:30 **Karen Thomas & Sian Platt - Head of Coastal Partnership East & Eastern Area Coastal Lead Balfour Beatty**  
*'Coastal Partnership East – Resourcing for the Future alongside Balfour Beatty.'*  
Link to slides: [Karen Thomas & Sian Platt Presentation Slides](#)  
Link to recording: [Karen Thomas & Sian Platt Recording](#)
- 12:30 – 12:45 **Panel Questions**  
Link to recording: [Session 5 Panel Discussion](#)
- 12:45 – 12:50 **Susannah Bleakley**  
*Field trip Information*
- 12:50 – 14:00 **Lunch (1 hour & 10 mins)**
- 14:00 – 17:30 **Field trip Options (transport provided):**  
Approx.  
  1. Hest Bank
  2. Jenny Brown's Point
  3. Roa Island
  4. West Shore Park, Walney Island



## REFLECTIONS ON THE CONFERENCE

### COASTAL GROUP CHAIR – CARL GREEN

Experts from around the country provided examples of how positive action has been taken to address the climate change challenge.

The fast pace of the conference reflected the urgent need for positive action to tackle the climate challenge. The positivity and enthusiasm of the 123 delegates at the conference was matched by the acceptance that, although we are the catalyst for action, we can only achieve this by working with our communities. The challenges we face on the coast are interlinked with wider societal issues; this stuff is hard but the 'Coast Busters' in the room were certainly up for the challenge.

#### Overall Key messages:

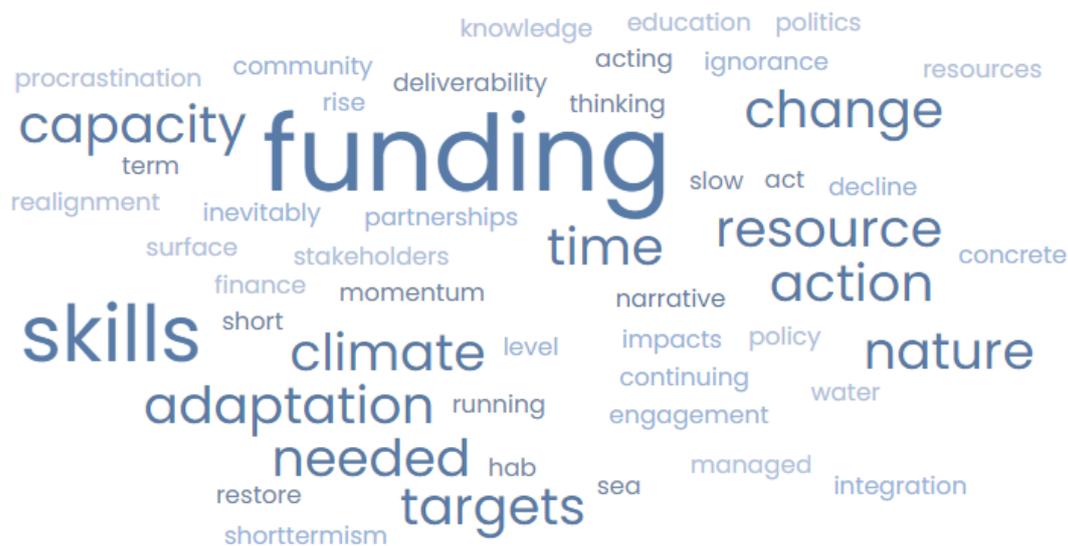
- More positive action; be brave, be honest, build trust and like Heineken, get to the parts others can't reach.
- The answers are there not necessarily from the authorities: strong honest community partnerships are needed where it is acceptable to say I don't have the answer.
- The confidence that we have a significant risk growing and we should be motivated into taking action, but scare tactics don't work.
- The Coastal Group network provides the strategic voice for coastal practitioners with the four pillars of Planning, Evidence, Funding and Dissemination.
- Collaboration across borders of Scotland and Wales makes the North West unique. We share many commonalities not least the vulnerability of our natural environment.
- Our natural environments are an amazing hidden world that hold many of the answers to societal issues.
- We need to engage and create an army of activists for nature recovery. There is a force multiplier of community involvement.
- We need to develop a common consistent narrative - what's the story that touches our communities' hearts, that motivates them to take positive action. It is the 'Hansel and Gretel' stories, the 'dragons slayed' and including all the of the hard parts occurred along the way in these stories that work.
- Action prompts conversation but should be participatory and immersive based on memories and passion for the coast.
- But these stories need grounded in data and a common truth.
- The question is what do we want to leave behind? Planet first, the power of creativity, we are the guardians of the future, and the time is now for action to take the right path to shape a positive future for those who follow.



## ATTENDEE FEEDBACK

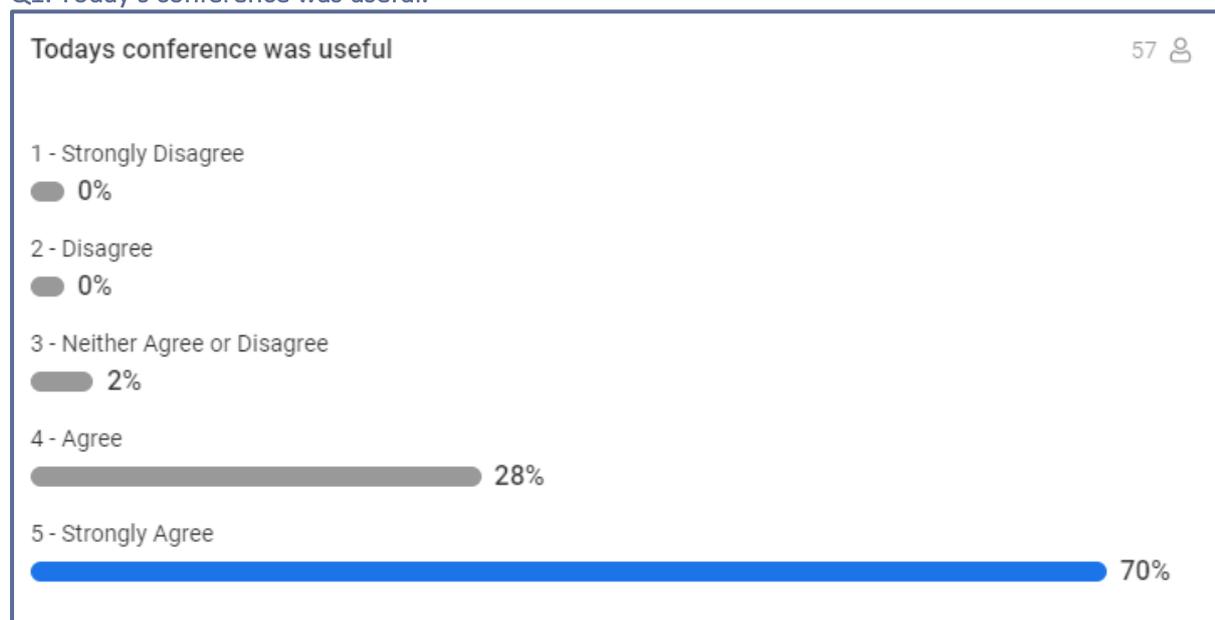
Poll results: Bryan Curtis asked a delegates to take part in a poll during Session 3 – Inspiration and the Future. The results from the poll are below.

### What is your greatest FCERM Concern?



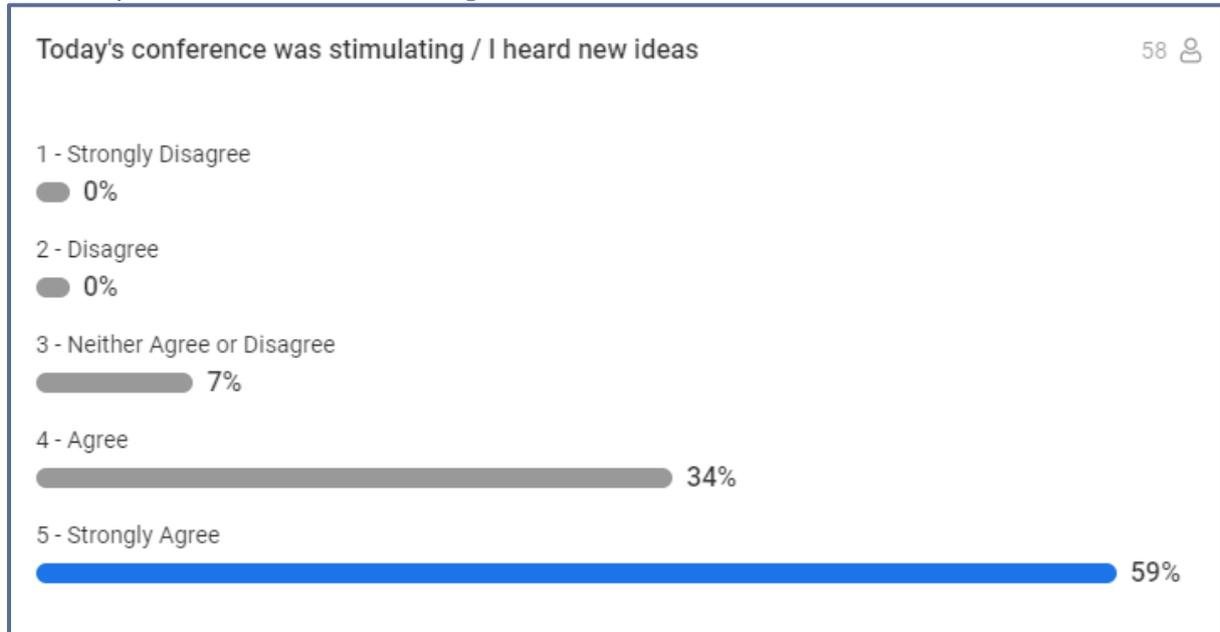
Conference Survey Results: Delegates were asked to complete a conference survey at the end of day 2. The results are included below.

#### Q1. Today's conference was useful.

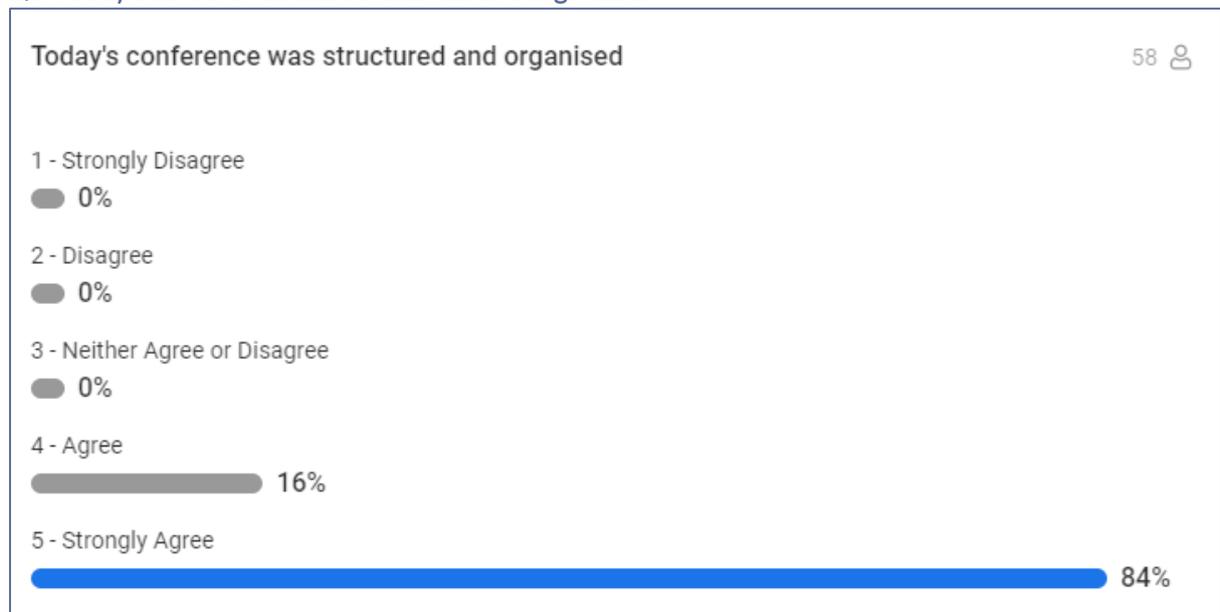




Q2. Today's conference was stimulating / I heard new ideas

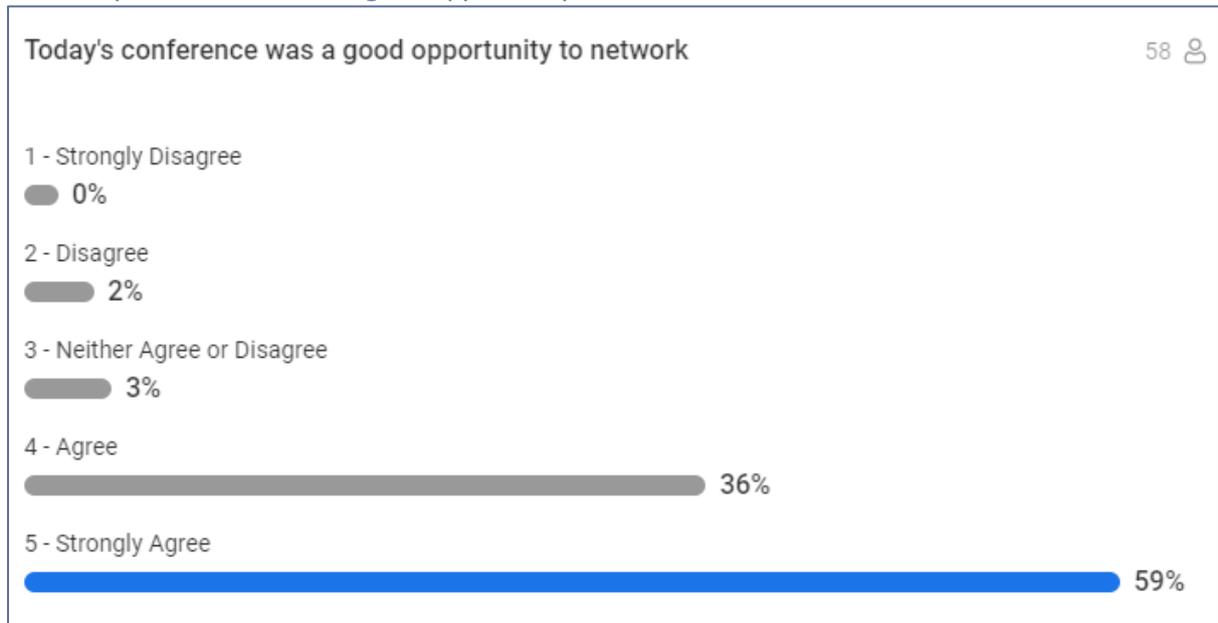


Q3. Today's conference was structured and organised.

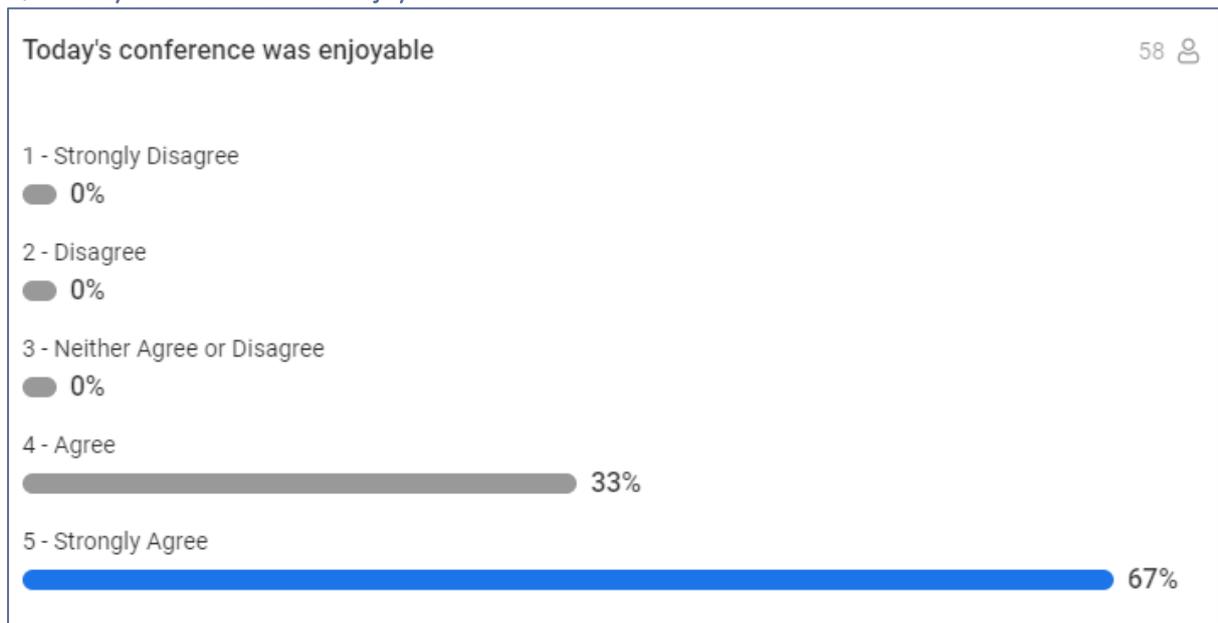




Q4. Today's conference was a good opportunity to network.



Q5. Today's conference was enjoyable.





## GENERAL FEEDBACK AND COMMENTS

- “Excellent conference in all areas -well done!”
- “Very well organised and a great opportunity to learn and network. Thank you”
- “Thank-you to the organising committee.”
- “I felt Slido stilted the question session slightly instead of promoting more discussion. The sessions were also quite intensive. Site visit was very good, just a shame it wasn't possible to visit more than one of the sites.”
- “Additional time for networking for attendees who didn't stay overnight would have been valuable. Jam packed with lots of great talks and information but limited time for discussion.” - Our Dee Estuary project
- “More time for networking and time to catch-up with the speakers, and other delegates.”
- “The conference was well organised and a pleasure to attend. There was time for some really good discussions and meeting previously online contacts in person; loved it!”
- “Very much appreciated the conference structure of short presentations that were all kept properly to time.”
- “Such a packed agenda, but excellent timekeeping by organisers and presenters meant it worked really well. Very well organised event - thank you! 😊”
- “A field trip option on both days would be great. Longer time allocation for discussions would be good too.”
- “Thanks very much for organising this, it was really good.”
- “Well done everybody, a great time in a great location.”
- “Timing with end of financial year was approval pressure to be able to attend. Fantastic event though!”
- “May have been better to have the site visits on the afternoon of day 1 as arriving back late would not have been a problem to long distance travellers.”
- “Fantastic 2 days summarising lots of Nature based solns for adaptation and Climate Change history and latest projections. Seeing new tech use CoastSense what a great piece of kit. Be great for use in other coastal places. Understanding better behavioural responses to Climate Crisis telling action stories, so useful.”- Rob Keane
- “More talks focusing on the links between coast and flood protection (Inc. nature based solutions), coastal ecology and natural processes in future would be great - examples of win-win scenarios and other situations where there have been challenges / trade-offs between ecology and ecosystem services.”
- “Loved every minute great speakers good pace and energy in the room” - Carl Green



- “Overall, the conference has been interesting, well organised and provided really good contacts for the future. I have a few constructive comments which I hope don't take away from the positive feedback. Unfortunately, I was a bit disappointed with the lack on female speakers on Day 1, I think there were only 3 females out of 21 speakers. The majority of whom were 40+ males. Additionally, providing reusable water bottles and bottled water are conflicting messages, for an environmental conference single use plastic should be avoided where possible. I was also under the impression that the buffet was vegan/veggie, there was one option for a main but fruit salad as a vegan dessert is a bit disappointing. Thank you for organising the event, the choice of content was really interesting and varied.”
- “This was a great thought provoking event. My grateful thanks to you all.” - Bryan Curtis
- “Really excellent. Well done. A tiny bit more time to make links would be good.”
- “It would have been good to have some more interactive sessions, e.g. workshops, to keep the energy of attendees up and also increase the chance to network and share ideas.”
- “Preparation and organisation of the conference is excellent.”
- “Fantastic conference. Well organised and excellent speakers. Thank you for all your hard work!”
- “Given the messages around climate change having water in plastic bottles didn't feel right. Tap water or filtered as in hotel rooms would have matched into the sustainably messages better.” - Graham Lymbery, Marlan
- “It would have been useful to be able to drill down into concepts of ‘being brave’ and ‘being innovative’. How do we learn from past experience and still be innovative?”