

**Climate Change Engagement - A Values Approach**  
 presentation by  
**Tom Crompton (Common Cause Foundation)**



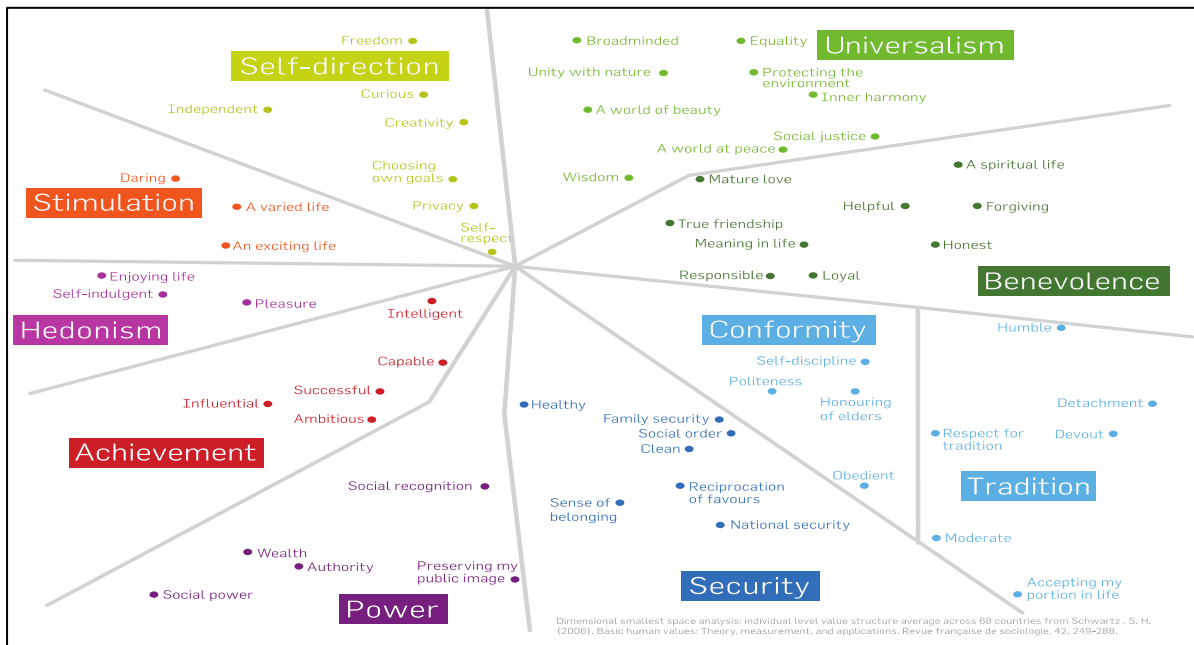
**The Melting Pot, Edinburgh: 16 March 2016**

**Background**

This event was part of a series organised by the Scottish Government’s Climate Change Hub to widen understanding on communicating about climate change.

**Tom Crompton Presentation**

The event showcased a presentation by Tom Crompton from the Common Cause Foundation, which advocates for the importance of an understanding of cultural values for groups working for social change - including climate change. Tom presented on the topic: “*Building commitment to social and environmental change: the role of values.*” The context for the presentation was the map of universal human values, shown and referenced below.



Tom’s presentation is available separately but the key points are summarised briefly below. The presentation drew on the following Common Cause Foundation published research:

**“Perceptions Matter”: the UK Values Survey” (2016)**  
**(<http://valuesandframes.org/survey/>).**

This research found that UK citizens:

- attach greater importance to *compassionate* values than to *selfish* values;
- underestimate the importance that a typical fellow citizen places on compassionate values, and overestimate the importance that they place on selfish values;
- believe that some key types of institution (arts and culture, schools and universities, the media, government and business institutions) discourage compassionate values, and encourage selfish values, relative to the importance that they attach to these values themselves.

**“No Cause is an Island: How People are Influenced by Values Regardless of the Cause” (2014)**  
**(<http://valuesandframes.org/no-cause-is-an-island/>)**

This research, conducted jointly by disability charity Scope and environmental charity WWF, suggested that a values-based approach grounded in *intrinsic* values could help build a stronger movement for change, even across apparently disconnected causes.

Drawing on these findings, the presentation then set out **4 potential opportunities** to apply the values approach in practice:

- Recognise the synergies between different policy areas, established by a values-perspective.
- Work to better align institutional values with people’s own values.
- Convey a more accurate perception of others’ values.
- Develop new indicators of performance.

**Interactive Discussion**

Participants were then invited to work in groups to consider the following questions, in relation to those opportunities:

1. **How might your own organisation or community respond to these opportunities?**
2. **What new collaborations might you establish in pursuing these opportunities?**

Pam Candea from the Surefoot Effect facilitated the discussion and feedback. The following general themes for organisations to consider emerged.

- **Review their own language and messages:** e.g. organisations (including professional institutions) to think about what language they use in communications; review signage / interpretive materials; review the values they project; ask stakeholders what values they project; ensure that their messages are coherent across different policies and areas of work and don't contradict each other; and use positive language (i.e. 'do positive' rather than 'oppose negative').
- **Identify / activate / express their own intrinsic / compassionate values:** organisations to go back to their core purpose, remind themselves of what they are there to do, 'have the courage' to identify and celebrate their long-term compassionate values; check and practice them internally – e.g. through staff surveys, looking at issues such as work/life balance.
- **Identify and challenge their own / others' extrinsic / selfish messages:** i.e. organisations could challenge the norm and change the messaging from 'do this and save money' to tap into other intrinsic / compassionate non-monetary - especially for programmes with intrinsic / compassionate motivations (e.g. to tackle fuel poverty). A number of participants noted that they would find this challenging in the context of applying for and reporting on grant funding - given the prominence of 'value for money' framing by funders.
- **Test different approaches?** i.e. should organisations use different messages for different audiences / organisations? Should they buy into the messages and framing (e.g. saving money, economic growth) that those organisations use?
- **Emphasise that 'we are not alone':** i.e. other people hold intrinsic / compassionate values and are taking action too; there is an opportunity to be part of a 'community of action'.
- **Connect across silos:** i.e. within and between organisations, connect action to address climate change with action to address other social causes.
- **Seek out new collaborators:** e.g. new partnerships outside own sectors; develop relationships with sociologists, psychologists, qualitative researchers to help design new messages.
- **Consider developing some qualitative measures** for reporting purposes.

- **Locate values work in the wider equalities / diversity / social justice context:** e.g. gender, race, refugee action.
- **Include all generations:** consider how, e.g., both students and retired people can contribute to this agenda.

### **Practical Examples of applying Values Approach**

In response to some of the points above, Tom Crompton acknowledged the pressures to use 'extrinsic' / economic language' in communicating with funding organisations. He commented, however, that it was problematic when that language seeped into all public debate; and that there was a 'great palate' of compassionate language that could be drawn on and adapted for purpose.

Tom and Pam then gave the following examples where the values approach is being or has been applied practically:

#### ***Manchester Museums work***

See the following links:

<http://happymuseumproject.org/exploring-our-values-an-opportunity-for-museums/>  
<https://naturemanchester.wordpress.com/>

#### ***Bristol Pound***

See the following links:

<http://bristolpound.org/>  
<http://valuesandframes.org/event/bristol-big-green-week-13-16-june-2012/>

#### ***Communities with a Common Cause - Action Learning Programme***

For organisations in Scotland working with communities on environmental issues. (funded by the Scottish Government).

<http://valuesandframes.org/action-learning-programme-in-scotland-recognised-with-unesco-award/>

### **Contact Details**

Tom can be contacted at [tcrompton@commoncausefoundation.org](mailto:tcrompton@commoncausefoundation.org).

Pam Candea, who helped facilitate the workshop, and her colleague Osbert Lancaster, are willing to be contacted about supporting local work through the Surefoot Effect.

Their website is: <http://www.surefoot-effect.com/programmes/common-cause/>.

Their e mail addresses are:

Pam Candea: [pam@surefoot-effect.com](mailto:pam@surefoot-effect.com)

Osbert Lancaster: [osbert@osbert.org](mailto:osbert@osbert.org)

Climate Change Hub  
Scottish Government  
March 2016