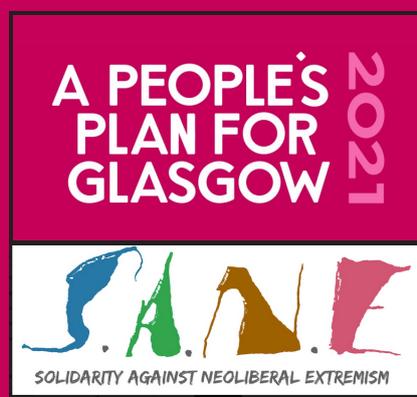


CONVERSATIONS 4 CHANGE

THE HOUSEPARTY PACK



2021



A PEOPLE'S PLAN FOR GLASGOW

2021

CONVERSATIONS 4 CHANGE HOUSE PARTY PACK

Produced in 2021 by members and supporters of
Solidarity Against Neoliberal Extremism for
The People's Plan for Glasgow

To learn more, visit www.sanecollectiveglasgow.org
or
follow the Glasgow SANE Collective on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

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BACKGROUND – SANE

The House Party Pack has been developed by community activists, many of whom are involved in community groups, brought together by the Solidarity Against Neoliberal Extremism (SANE) Collective, to create a People’s Plan for Glasgow. SANE is a social movement concerned about the destructive and corrosive nature of neoliberalism. SANE aims to link activists across the broadest possible range of social and environmental issues and organisations, to create actions and interactions that challenge the foundations of neoliberal capitalist ‘common sense’.

The SANE Collective is an informal grouping of politically aligned and non-aligned individuals and groups who want to create real democracy practices, initiating new forms of critical activism and supporting others which already exist. By reclaiming civic space and rejuvenating critical civic activism SANE members look to play an active role in the global movement for social, economic and environmental justice, in fact for system change.

Principles of solidarity, inclusion, transparency and "power with not power over" are central to the way SANE works.

ROLE OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Glasgow is one of Scotland's 32 local authorities responsible for providing a range of public services. This includes education, social care, roads and transport, economic development, housing and planning, environmental protection, waste management, cultural and leisure services.

Each local authority is governed by a council. The council is made up of councillors directly elected by the residents of the area they represent. Councils must take corporate decisions: there is no legal provision for decisions being made by individual councillors.

HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE

FULL COUNCIL

The full council meeting is the governing body of the council, where all councillors meet to debate and take key decisions. Some functions of the council can only be discharged by the full council. These include setting the annual budget and the annual rate of council tax.

COMMITTEES

Councils can delegate most decision-making to committees or sub-committees of the council. Individual councils set out their arrangements for delegation to committees in their internal governance documents, such as Standing Orders, Orders of Reference or Schemes of Administration and Delegation. There is no requirement for councils to adopt a particular decision-making and scrutiny structure, it is a matter for each council to decide what is most appropriate for its particular circumstances.

OFFICERS

Councils can also delegate decision-making to officers of the council, and do so in their internal governance documents.

GLASGOW: THE FACTS

- Almost half (47%) of Glasgow's residents, 292,000 people, reside in the 20% of most deprived areas in Scotland. In contrast, nearly 27,000 people (4.4% of the population) live in the 10% of least deprived areas in Scotland (based on 2017 population estimates).
- 34% of all children in the city were estimated to be living in poverty in 2017.
- The distribution of child poverty and vulnerability to child poverty varies dramatically across Glasgow - 59% of children in one neighbourhood experiencing poverty compared to around 5% in the neighbourhoods with the lowest levels of child poverty.
- In 2016, 19% of children lived in workless households, 6.5% higher than the Scottish average
- In-work poverty in Scotland has been rising. 64% of working age adults in poverty live in a household where at least one person works (2015/16).

[Overview | The Glasgow Indicators Project \(www.understandingglasgow.com\)](http://www.understandingglasgow.com)

PREPPING YOUR HOUSEPARTY

PURPOSE OF THE HOUSE PARTIES

The Purpose of the house parties is to gather residents' experience of the city and contribute to the People's Plan being developed by SANE.

HOW TO USE THIS PACK

This pack is formatted to be as flexible as possible. We recognise that people have busy lives and that encouraging political discussion may be new to some. The pack therefore begins at the beginning. It is not meant to patronize or assume knowledge. It also includes avenues for feedback on your experience with the pack, which are gratefully appreciated and considered.

We know that finding out information can be difficult. We have chosen key information that we believe will help to answer some of the common questions raised. It is ok not to know all the answers! All the information is in handout format. These can be copied and handed out to people in your discussion.

WHO DO I INVITE?

No-one is asking you to change the world. Do not feel pressured into changing someone's mind. As long as they are aware of what the party is about and will stick to the group agreement that is fine. Keep invites informal. Suggested invites are at the back of the pack, appendix 1, but feel free to make your own or even drop friends a text. It's your Conversation 4 Change Houseparty, so do it your way.

HOW LONG SHOULD MY PARTY LAST?

It's your choice. Every party will be different, but having a couple of hours to discuss the issue will give your guests plenty time to share experiences as well as ask questions. It may be useful to be clear when the Conversation 4 Change discussion is over to avoid any disagreement afterwards, or plan for this within your group agreement.

WHAT'S A GROUP AGREEMENT?

A group agreement is a great way to remind people that sometimes talking about issues that are important to us can be frustrating, and that in order for us to feel safe enough we have to respect each other's right to hold our own opinion. Too often people's voices are not heard, or worse, some do not feel safe enough to express their opinion. We want Houseparties to be safe spaces to make sure everyone is heard. You may not think your party needs a group agreement and that's great. It may be helpful to have a copy of the group agreement on the table anyway. There may be areas you think we haven't covered. Feel free to make your own. We would love feedback on your group agreement process, so that we can feed back these practises to other sessions and our own work.

A suggested group agreement is;

ONE PERSON WILL SPEAK AT A TIME

Everyone has important points to make and in order for them to be heard one person should speak at a time. We should encourage people to speak. If someone doesn't feel comfortable about speaking, we are missing out on their ideas.

WHAT'S SAID IN THE ROOM, STAYS IN THE ROOM

People may share experiences and it is important that these examples are not discussed with anyone outside the group. It is also not helpful to be reminded of mistakes they may make. This is a space to try things out to think things through. People should not worry that it is something the rest of the group will talk about afterwards.

RESPECT ONE ANOTHER

We have all arrived at our opinions for reasons that are important to us. We may change our mind but it doesn't mean our original thoughts are not relevant. We need to respect one another's right to hold different opinions if we are to have a safe, meaningful discussion.

ONCE IT'S DONE, IT'S DONE.

Finally once you have all decided you have finished your discussion it's fine to stop, and move on to something more fun, or just end your evening. There is no specific time you need to get to, just take as long as you would like. Once the discussion is finished, just let it go. Making sure heated discussion is over is important to make sure any disagreements do not continue into either later in the evening or even on another day. This doesn't mean people can't chat about controversial topics, but the aim is to avoid any prolonged disagreements.

HOLDING YOUR HOUSE PARTY: INTRODUCTIONS

WHERE DO I START?

As with any party there will probably be people who have never met one another in attendance. Informal introductions are great, but injecting a bit of fun can help. Below are a couple of exercises that can help people relax and understand there is a purpose to the party. The aim of the house parties is to;

- Get people in Glasgow talking about their community.
- Encourage people to have a political discussion about their experiences.
- Gather information about people's experience of living and / or working in Glasgow.
- Learn about people's ideas/dreams/solutions for the issues Glasgow has.
- Invite people to further join with SANE/Enough or other groups in their community.

EXERCISE - INITIAL INTRODUCTION

AIM OF EXERCISE

To allow people to remember one another's names and share what they want for Scotland.

HOW TO DO IT

- People are asked to say their first name and say why they wanted to be part of the discussion.

EXERCISE – WHAT'S IN A NAME?

AIM OF EXERCISE

To get to know one another and begin to share information.

HOW TO DO IT

- People are asked to share their name, what they like to be known as (i.e. nicknames) and where their name came from, if they know.

HOLDING YOUR HOUSE PARTY: GETTING STARTED

SO HOW DO I START THE DISCUSSION?

The good news is everyone knows why they are at your party, so you are halfway there!

EXERCISE - BUT WHY?

AIM OF EXERCISE

Fun activity to think about how statements do not necessarily give you the full story.

HOW TO DO IT

- If a lot of people are attending, split into small groups or pairs
- Start off with a fun subject. This might be "running is good for you".
- Someone says the statement and others then question, "why?"
- The original speaker answers, without saying "just because". This answer is then questioned "but why" etc
- Continue this until the conversation runs out.
- Begin again but this time use the statement "One of the things that frustrates me about Glasgow City Council is...".
- Talk about how it felt and what people learned.

THINKING ABOUT GLASGOW

People have opinions on all aspects of their community. For the purposes of the Houseparty we would like everyone to focus on specific issues for Glasgow.

EXERCISE – GLASGOW QUIZ

AIM OF EXERCISE

The quiz can be used to introduce new information in a fun way and get people talking without too much pressure.

See appendix 2

EXERCISE – OUR EXPERIENCE OF LIVING IN GLASGOW

AIM OF EXERCISE

To give people the chance to share their experience of living in Glasgow, positive and negative.

HOW TO DO IT

- Begin by asking people to discuss in small groups (or in the whole group if everyone will get the chance to speak), to end this sentence, "my/our experience of Glasgow City Council is frustrating because....."
- If the group has been split, everyone feeds back to the whole group, and you can note people's experiences on paper.
- Then repeat with the sentence, "my/our experience of GCC would be great if ..."
- Again, note the suggestions of the group.
- Take some time to discuss what the group has found, what are the commonalities, what surprised them.

HOLDING YOUR HOUSE PARTY: FINISHING UP

FINISHING THE DISCUSSION

It is important that you finish the discussion before everyone leaves or moves on to more fun activities. Below are some exercises that will make it clear for everyone that this part of the evening is over. This does not mean that people can't still chat about the issues if they want to, but it is aimed to end any disagreements there may have been.

EXERCISE - ROUND ROBIN

AIM OF EXERCISE

To make sure everyone has had a chance to feedback what they have thought of the discussion.

HOW TO DO IT

- Each person shares one thing they have learned during the discussion.
- Party holder notes they down on feedback sheet.

EXERCISE - COMPLIMENTARY AFTERS

AIM OF EXERCISE

To encourage positive feelings at the end of the discussion.

HOW TO DO IT

- Cut out the compliment sheets, appendix 3, Before your party begins. You can photocopy as many as you wish depending in how many people are attending your party.
- Call out each person's name one at a time.
- All the other people choose a compliment they would like to give the person and put it face down in a pile in front of them.
- Continue this until each person has a pile. Only then can everyone read their compliments.

WELL DONE!!!

You have now held your House Party. Time to have some fun!

Thank you for creating a safe space for people to discuss issues that are important to them. We would love to hear how your party went, whether you followed this pack or not. We have included a feedback sheet for you and your guests and want to hear what you thought of the pack, but most of all we want to share your ideas with other people.

INVITATIONS FOR YOUR HOUSE PARTY

**You are invited to my
Conversation 4 Change House Party**

Time:

Date:

Venue:

RSVP: on

**You are invited to my
Conversation 4 Change House Party**

Time:

Date:

Venue:

RSVP: on

**You are invited to my
Conversation 4 Change House Party**

Time:

Date:

Venue:

RSVP: on

**You are invited to my
Conversation 4 Change House Party**

Time:

Date:

Venue:

RSVP: on

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN GLASGOW? QUIZ

Appendix 2



1. The aim of Glasgow City Council is to make Glasgow?

- a) A hunger-free city
- b) Better than Edinburgh
- c) A world class city which can compete with London, New York and Beijing where such cities have been described as being an 'urban centre that enjoys significant competitive advantages and that serves as a hub within a globalized economic system'

Answer: _____

2. Where is Glasgow in the list of most indebted UK councils?

- a) Dont be silly, it is a world class city and has no debts
- b) 126
- c) 5 with £1.4billion debts

Answer: _____

3. Glasgow has a City Deal funded by Scottish and UK Governments to the tune of £1.14billion. What has it achieved?

- a) Supported thousands back into employment?
- b) Greatly improved the local transport network (in terms of roads and public transport)?
- c) Delivered key regeneration and development projects?,
- d) Encouraged private sector investment into the area?
- e) Ultimately provide an enormous boost to the city region's economy
- f) Fallen into difficulties because as of 2020 there is a high risk that 'Projects fail to deliver the economic benefits and follow on private sector investments'

Answer: _____

4. There is a big complex being built on the south bank of the Clyde. Is it?

- a) New homes for homeless people
- b) A bus station for electric buses
- c) The Northern Europe hub of Barclays Bank

Answer: _____

5. How much public money has been given to Barclays Bank as part of its new development?

- a) Nothing – neither Glasgow City Council nor Scottish Enterprise agrees with helping international banks make profit
- b) This is not an issue - Barclays Bank has donated part of its profits to the city
- c) £12.75million

Answer: _____

6. Who owns St Enoch's Shopping Centre?

- a) Glasgow City Council
- b) A Glasgow based social enterprise
- c) BlackStone

Answer: _____

7. What is BlackStone?

- a) A UK workers cooperative
- b) A mining company
- c) A US multi-billion dollar American private equity alternative investment management firm accused of tax avoidance as part of the Paradise Papers leak

Answer: _____

8. The majority of bus services are run by First Bus Glasgow. How much profit did the company make in Glasgow during 2019?

- a) None, it runs at a loss
- b) None, its a workers cooperative and all income is ploughed back into the company
- c) £35million

Answer: _____

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON IN GLASGOW? QUIZ ANSWERS



1. The aim of Glasgow City Council is to make Glasgow?
- d) A world class city which can compete with London, New York and Beijing where such cities have been described as being an 'urban centre that enjoys significant competitive advantages and that serves as a hub within a globalized economic system'¹

Glasgow City Council has aspirations to make Glasgow a world class city. Whilst it maintains it would benefit everyone and reduce inequalities, cities which are viewed as world class are ones that have a substantial financial services sector where the main benefits go to large multinational companies rather than the local economy

2. Where is Glasgow in the list of most indebted UK councils?

- d) 5 with £1.4billion debts²

The answer to this is c). Many of the Council's debts are what is known as LOBO loans which require repayment over several decades. Other Councils have managed to have these loans restructured but this has not happened in Glasgow

3. Glasgow has a City Deal funded by Scottish and UK Governments to the tune of £1.14billion. What has it achieved?

- g) fallen into difficulties because as of 2020 there is a high risk that 'Projects fail to deliver the economic benefits and follow on private sector investments'^{3,4}

The City Deal is touted as having a major impact on the city – points a to e - are taken from its aims. A recent audit report presented to the Council highlights that these aims are largely unmet at present other than through capital projects which focus on roads and drains. Some of the physical improvements in the city centre have been funded by City Deal money

¹ <https://www.britannica.com/topic/global-city>

² <https://www.ifre.com/story/1528457/uk-council-debts-approach-100bn-as-borrowing-continues-unabated-lrv41nc1tf>

³ <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/viewDoc.asp?c=P62AFQDNDXT181UT81>

⁴ <http://www.glasgowcityregion.co.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=26555&p=0>

4. There is a big complex being built on the south bank of the Clyde. Is it?

d) The Northern Europe hub of Barclays Bank

The Barclays development is part of the commitment to the International Finance District. Other banks such as JP Morgan are also building new offices in the area. The Council is supporting this because of Q1 above

5. How much public money has been given to Barclays Bank as part of its new development?

d) £12.75million⁵

Barclays Bank made £1.3billion profit for the first 6 months year, much reduced from previous years because of money that had to be put aside for previous bad loans and mis-selling. It also invests heavily in the fossil fuel industry

6. Who owns St Enoch's Shopping Centre?

d) BlackStone

7. What is BlackStone?

d) A US multi-billion dollar American private equity alternative investment management firm accused of tax avoidance as part of the Paradise Papers leak⁶

Blackstone is estimated to be the largest private equity investment company, the means by which pension funds and private investors directly invest in companies. After the sub-prime mortgage scandal which led to the 2008 crash BlackStone bought out \$5.5billion worth of family homes before subsequently selling them at a profit

8. The majority of bus services are run by First Bus Glasgow. How much profit did the company make in Glasgow during 2019?

d) £35million

Yes, First Bus Glasgow, contributes about 55% of its overall profit, yet the fares in Glasgow are amongst the highest in the UK. Car ownership in Glasgow is amongst the lowest

⁵ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-business-44910560>

⁶ <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15646458.owners-of-glasgows-st-enoch-shopping-mall-accused-of-economic-fiction-after-paradise-papers-leak/#:~:text=It's%20founder%20and%20CEO%2C%20Stephen,stores%2C%20for%20around%20%2%A3190m.>

COMPLIMENTARY ENDINGS EXERCISE

You made sure you listened to others	You included others' ideas in the discussion
You brought lots of humour to the night	You made points I hadn't thought of
You said things I found really interesting	I enjoyed being in your company
You helped us to chat easily	You had lots of information that I found helpful
You helped the group to stay focussed	You encouraged others to speak
You were able to describe things that people had said so I could understand them better	You made me feel comfortable in the group
You were very passionate about the subject, making it exciting	You respected others' opinions, gently challenging things you disagreed with
You recognised when someone made a good point	You made sure we thought about how things affect everyone
You gave us information that we would not have had	You helped me to decide which way I would be voting

HOUSE PARTY FEEDBACK SHEET

Thank you for taking the time to complete this feedback sheet. All of your ideas will be passed onto people who run parties in the future.

1. What date was your party on? _____

Did you organise the party? Yes No

If yes, did you find any of the pack useful? Yes No

Which parts were most useful?

2. Did the conversation make you think about anything differently?

3. What one issue discussed tonight do you think is most important for people who live in Glasgow?

4. Would you run a Party in the future? Yes No

5. Do you have any other comments? Please include advice for anyone who may be thinking of running a party.