

Hello, my name is Louise Yellowlees and I am representing Saffron Walden Action on Climate change, SWACC (850 members)

I'm going to jump right in to see if I can put the decision you are making next Friday into the context of the climate crisis.

I'm sure you've heard a lot today about the horrific fires in Australia, the drought, the record breaking heat. Also the floods in Indonesia, Bangladesh, the flooding here in the UK last year, along with the dam at Whaley bridge. The wild fires in California last year. The list goes on and on.

But I don't want to talk about that, amazingly that's not the worst part of this crisis, these events are the warning signs of this emergency come.

In the next 25 years it is predicted that we will run out of fresh water with $\frac{2}{3}$ of the global population not having access to fresh water. It is predicted that in the future we may have wars over fresh water. Just imagine for a moment, turning on the tap and nothing comes out. Where exactly will you go in Saffron Walden for clean, fresh water? If there's not enough water, how will we grow enough food? Where will you get it if supermarkets are empty. And with rising sea levels there will not be enough land. It's predicted that 500,000 - 1 billion people will be displaced, will be refugees.

So, in the next 25 years; not enough water, not enough food, not enough land. Add to that the extra 2.8 billion more people predicted to be living on this planet earth and it paints a terrifying picture. And 25 years isn't very far away.

Now maybe you're thinking, 'But in the grand scheme of things, what's another couple of thousand flights, or a couple of million passengers? Compared to global emissions that's just a drop in the ocean.'

But that's like telling me and everyone from SWACC and every single person who makes an incredible effort every day to reduce their carbon footprint that what we're doing is completely pointless and irrelevant. It's like saying we might as well leave our massive, diesel cars running all day, leave the fridge door open, all the lights on, fly 100 times a year and eat meat all day because hey! in the grand scheme of things my emissions are just a drop in the ocean, right?'

Well that's not right. Every single choice that every single person makes every day matters. Because it changes the way you think, the way you view the world, the way you vote! Every action I take affects the people around me, and their choices in turn affect those around them and it goes on and on, it's a ripple effect. And these ripples are alive right now, rippling around the world.

And make no mistake, the decision you make on 24th January will create enormous ripples, whichever way you decide to go.

The people of SWACC are asking you to be brave. Be brave and allow yourself to make the decision you know to be right. With this 'No', you will inspire others, you'll be giving them the option to say 'No' to the other airport expansion plans coming up this year. And if we can all start saying 'No', maybe we can stop hurtling at full speed towards the edge of the cliff,

maybe we'll have time to slow down, stop, reassess and then start saying 'Yes' again whilst moving in a different direction.

Thank you