

## *We can do it!*

A highly motivating talk by Jules Petty – further reflections on the talk described by Jane Williams in her report.

What do these countries have in common? Iceland, Norway, Albania, Costa Rica, Uruguay and Paraguay?

The talk by Jules Petty (Village Hall 26/10/23) was an inspiring sharing of messages that we can and are making to tackle climate change when we get started.

Jules talked about changes that are happening in people's psychology and with reference to childhood stories told us how unexpected and sudden progress can be when we get started.

I have been trying to decide whether to buy an electric car (EV). There are so many rumours that they are little better than petrol cars. However, reflecting on the talk, I realise that when you buy such technology you are paying for research into sustainability. This research is leading to vast improvements. Did you know that the batteries we have now (lithium-ion) are 2000 times more efficient than those we had 20 years ago? Or that newly invented (sodium-ion) batteries are better still, cheaper and much more sustainable? (Cars being produced by Yiwei in China since 28 December 2023) This is what happens when people invest in technology!

I've been demoralized by the thought that growing populations will negate progress in carbon emissions. Fifteen years ago, I taught that the world's population would grow to 11.5 billion. Jules showed us how it now looks like the maximum will be 9 billion (we currently have 8 billion). Japan's population is 125 million. By 2050 it will have shrunk to 106 million. 105 of the world's 200+ countries have a static or falling population. This is happening in lower income countries too – Bangladesh which had seven children per family in 1970 now has 2.2, almost at the point of population stability. The problem we are beginning to face is a shortage of people, young people first.

In the face of the great crises of climate and nature, it is clear that people care! Across the world small scale initiatives are springing up. Jules talked about groups such as those in Woodham Walter, Danbury, Manningtree, Wivenhoe and Tollesbury, all making their villages more sustainable. Our local groups are actively supported by Maldon District Council who consider climate change in every decision they make.

Here we have Wickham Bishops Biodiversity Project where people have made and put up bird and bat boxes and bug houses, planted trees, encouraged wild flowers, supported Maypole Forest Garden, and are looking at two large areas on the edge of the village to rewild.

So, changes are happening! And did you know? Those six countries of Iceland, Norway, Uruguay, Paraguay, Costa Rica and Albania are all 100% renewable when it comes to their national electricity supply ... and more will be joining them soon!

John Le Sève