

# NET ZERO LIVING

**Rachel Brisley  
& Professor  
Lorraine  
Whitmarsh**

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# Webinar programme

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## Welcome and introductions

Trinh Tu, Managing Director, Public Affairs, Ipsos UK

## Presentation on Net Zero Living key findings

Rachel Brisley, Head of Energy and Environment, Public Affairs and Professor Lorraine Whitmarsh, Director, CAST

## Reflections from the Panel

Alex Sobel MP; Moira Nicolson, Cabinet Office; Philip Sellwood CBE, Sustainable Futures Expert

## Q&A



# Public support is essential for the transition to Net Zero...

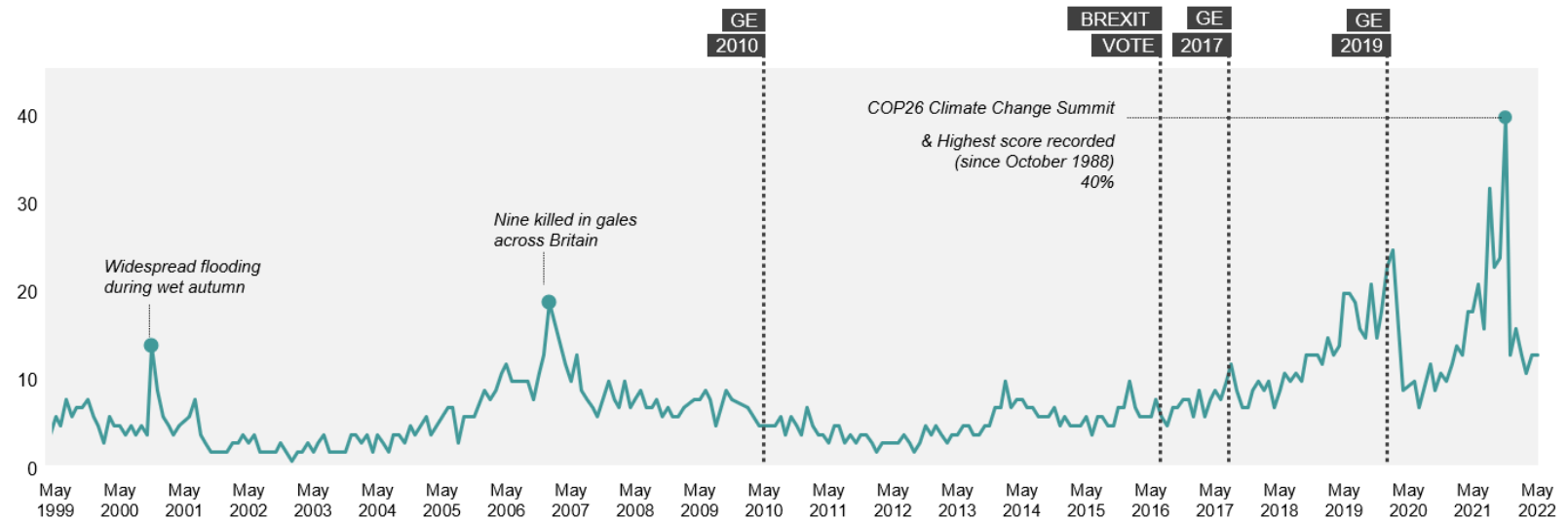
“If people understand **what is needed and why**, if they have options and **can be involved in decision-making processes**, they will support the transition to Net Zero. **Fairness is also fundamental to public support** and must be embedded throughout policy. Only a transition that is perceived as fair...will succeed.”

Climate Change Committee, Sixth Carbon Budget, 2020

## There is a sense of urgency among the public on climate change

### Pollution / Environment / Climate change

What do you see as the most/other important issues facing Britain today?



Base: representative sample of c. 1,000 British adults age 18+ each month, interviewed face-to-face in home  
N.B. April 2020 data onwards is collected by telephone; previous months are face-to-face

Source: Ipsos Issues Index

# Purpose of the study



Understand the public's views on potential climate change policies



Identify recommendations for policy makers to encourage greater take up of climate policy

# Approach

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Survey of **5,665** people across the UK conducted in **August 2021**

Each participant was **presented with 4 policies** from a collection of 8 policies and asked if they **supported or opposed** the policy

They were then asked if they would **still support** the policy taking potential **lifestyle and financial implications into account**





# Policies in focus

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**Frequent flyer levies**



**Changing product pricing to reflect how environmentally friendly products are**



**Phasing out the sale of gas / coal boilers**



**Electric vehicle subsidies**



**Increasing vegan / vegetarian options in public food provisioning**



**Ensuring access to sustainable pension funds**



**Low traffic neighbourhoods**



**Higher taxes on meat and dairy products**

# Framing the policies

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## Framings

- A **'neutral'** framing - describes the policy
- A **'climate change'** framing - identifies climate impact of the policy
- A **'lifestyle'** framing - presents some of the health, safety or general lifestyle impacts of the policy
- A **'financial'** framing - highlights the financial impact of the policy

### Example: Low traffic neighbourhoods

- Reduce the number of vehicles on the road
- Reduced number of vehicles results in reduced level of carbon emissions
- Reducing vehicles improves health – cleaner air, less traffic accidents
- Benefits local businesses as more people can access shops on foot

# Overall policy support

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**68%**



support  
frequent flyer  
levies

**62%**



support  
changing  
product pricing

**62%**



support  
phasing out  
the sale of coal  
/ gas boilers

**62%**



support  
electric vehicle  
subsidies

**56%**



support increasing  
vegan / vegetarian  
options

**55%**



ensuring access to  
sustainable  
pension funds

**53%**



support creating  
low traffic  
neighbourhoods

**47%**

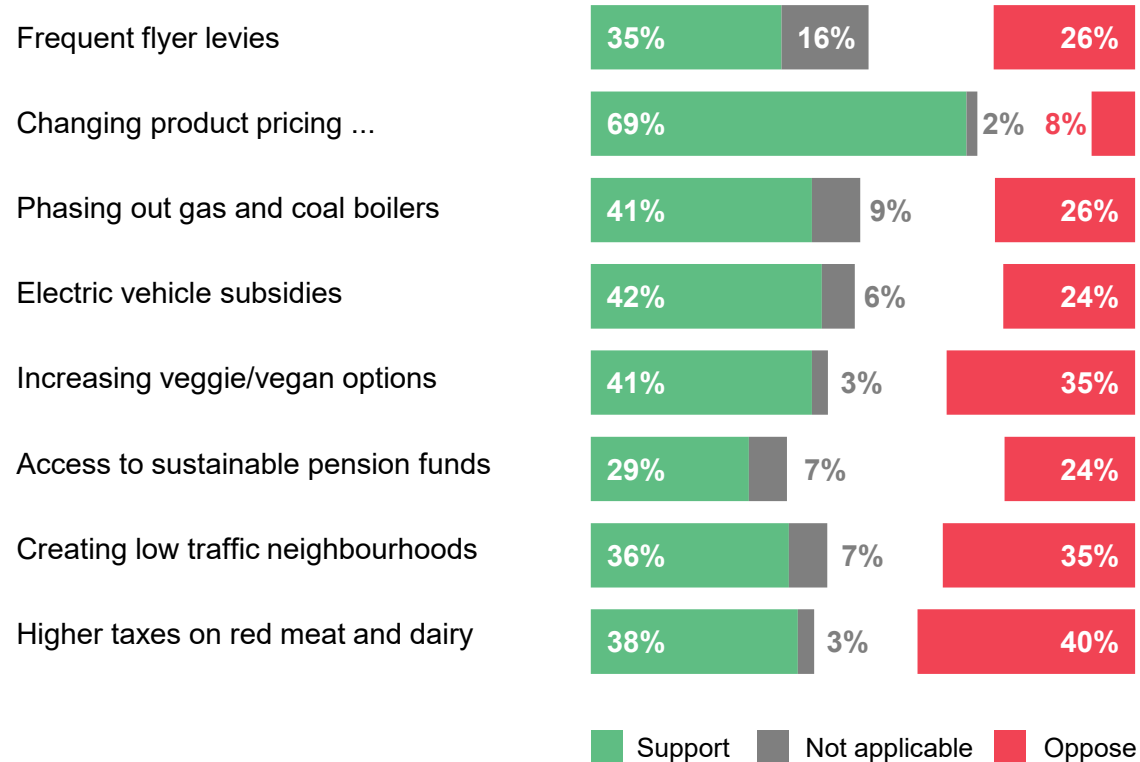


support  
higher taxes  
on meat and  
dairy

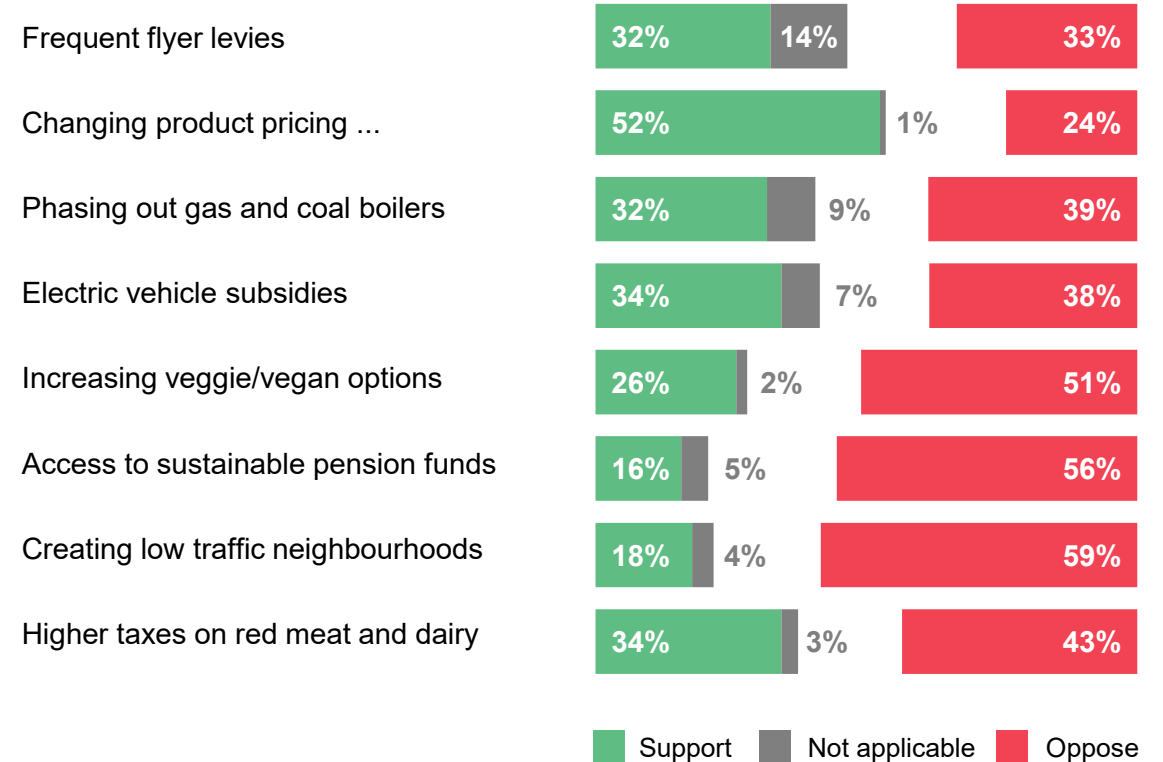
# Impact of trade offs

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## Lifestyle trade offs



## Financial trade offs



Q: If this policy meant that you personally... to what extent do you support or oppose it?

Source: Ipsos KnowledgePanel

Base: c. 2,830 UK adults aged 16+ per policy, 19-25 Aug 2021



# Where framing affected levels of support for a policy, this tended to be to do with lifestyle and economic co-benefits

## Financial framing boosted support for:



**Frequent flyer levies**



**Phasing out the sale of gas / coal boilers**



**Changing product pricing**



**Ensuring access to sustainable pensions**

## Lifestyle framing boosted support for:



**Electric vehicle subsidies**



**Changing product pricing**

# What would convince the public to support these policies?

## Most and least convincing arguments according to the public

■ Convincing ■ Not convincing



### Creating low traffic neighbourhoods

It will make these areas safer and reduce road traffic accidents

73%

24%

It will benefit local businesses, like shops and cafes

39%

56%



### Frequent flyer levies

It will be an essential action to address climate change

69%

26%

It will create jobs in local and UK tourist sectors

41%

53%



### Electric vehicle subsidies

It will improve air quality and cut health risks of air pollution in towns and cities

86%

12%

It will reduce motorists' bills by reducing the running costs of driving

53%

41%



### Phasing out the sale of gas/coal boilers

It will create jobs in the renewable heat sector

70%

25%

It will reduce householders' energy bills

50%

43%



# What would convince the public to support these policies (ctd)?

## Most and least convincing arguments according to the public

■ Convincing ■ Not convincing



### Changing product pricing to reflect how environmentally friendly products are

It will encourage people to buy more environmentally friendly products

74%

22%

It will create jobs in manufacturing and distribution

46%

45%



### Higher taxes on red meat and dairy products

It will benefit the health of people who change their eating habits as a result

62%

34%

It will generate improvements in animal welfare

43%

51%



### Ensuring access to sustainable pension funds

It will encourage people to invest in sustainable pensions

60%

30%

It will yield greater returns in the long run

40%

43%



### Increasing vegetarian and vegan food provisioning in public sector catering

It will create jobs in the vegetarian / vegan food sector

69%

27%

It will make vegetarian / vegan foods cheaper for everyone

48%

47%



# When it comes to the impact of net zero policies

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Some groups were perceived to be winners...

... and others as losers

People who would be positively affected



Higher income groups



White people



Young people

People who would be negatively affected



Lower income groups











People from ethnic minority groups



Older people

# How fair are these policies?

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<b>Frequent flyer levies</b>  <b>34%</b>	<b>Product pricing</b>  <b>34%</b>	<b>Phasing out sale of coal / gas boilers</b>  <b>32%</b>	<b>Electric vehicle subsidies</b>  <b>34%</b>
<b>Increasing vegan/vegetarian options in public food provisioning</b>  <b>38%</b>	<b>Ensuring access to sustainable pension funds</b>  <b>32%</b>	<b>Creating low traffic neighbourhoods</b>  <b>30%</b>	<b>Higher taxes on meat and dairy</b>  <b>29%</b>

...confident will give a fair outcome to those affected

# Some groups tend to be more confident in the policies' fairness than others

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**Younger people**



**Men**



**Left-of-centre  
political orientation**



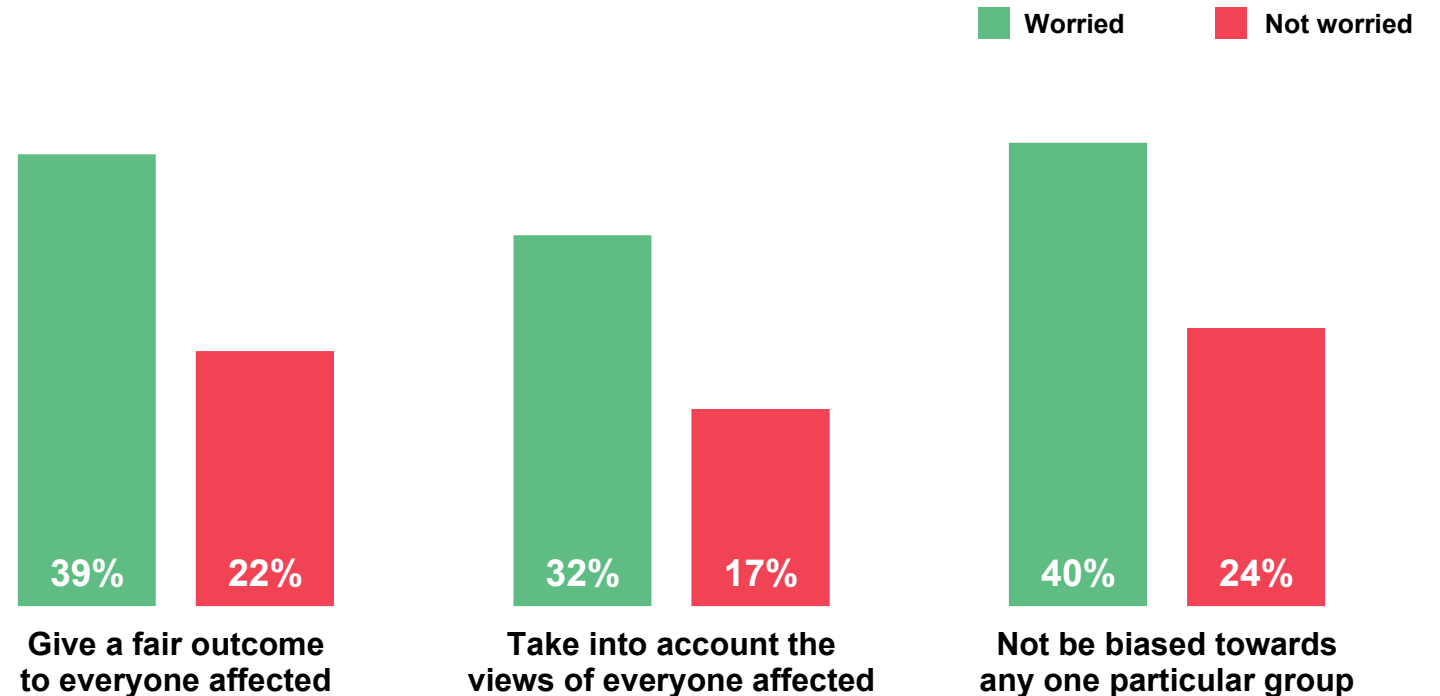
Generally, there was low confidence that net zero policies would be fair.

Higher taxes on meat and dairy products was seen as the least fair policy – across all measures of fairness

But increasing vegetarian / vegan options in public food provisioning was seen as fairer than other policies

Perceived fairness affects support for policies

## Confidence in fairness of higher taxes for red meat and dairy, by those who are more worried vs less worried about climate change



Source: Ipsos KnowledgePanel

Base: c. 2,830 UK adults aged 16+ per policy, 19-25 Aug 2021. NB: Don't know and prefer not to say responses not shown

# Implications for policymakers

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To support the transition to net zero, there is a need to raise awareness of the societal transformations needed to reach net zero, their benefits and the costs of inaction.



Public support for net zero policies is fragile and influenced by how these affect individuals personally.

Net zero policies **need to be affordable and fair to everyone** and **consider the views of those affected**.



Understanding the public's valid concerns about net zero policies and their implications is essential. Personal costs are important – and so are co-benefits.

Policy-makers should **minimise the cost** of such policy measures (**but be honest about them**) and **communicate the benefits** more strongly.



The more policy and brand decision-makers can engage people with the issue, the more likely they are to be supportive of net zero policies and to see these as fair. Communication on diet should be prioritised, and all messaging should be tailored to different groups.

**Consider fairness factors** in **design and communication** of net zero policies.



Consider who the influencers are.

**Engaging women** (who are more active) on these policy measures **could help influence others** around them to shift.

# Views from behavioural science

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It is crucial to both engage the public and remove behavioural barriers and friction



Engagement in **decision-making** about reaching net zero can create a **stronger sense of ownership** e.g. citizens' juries, online deliberative polling, citizens' assemblies.



**Popular engagement** and **vocal support** can be used successfully to achieve social change – and has been in the past e.g. treatment for HIV.



Engagement in **delivery of action** to reach net zero is important. **Communicating the effectiveness** of policies can increase support – by over 50%.



Multiple measures are needed to **remove barriers** to behaviour change. This includes making low-carbon choices the **easiest or the default**, which can shift behaviour.



**Economic incentives/disincentives** are critical to ensure green choices are for all.

# Thank you.

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Centre for Climate Change  
and Social Transformations



# Reflections from the panel

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## Alex Sobel

MP for Leeds North West and Chair of the Net Zero All-Party Parliamentary Group

## Moira Nicolson

Behavioural Science Lead at the Cabinet Office

## Philip Sellwood CBE

Former CEO, Chair, SID, NED and Trustee

