What we did, what we learnt, and what we have made

Keele UNIVERSITY

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1) What we did: Different workshops

- Interdisciplinary Masters Curriculum series
- ‘Grand Challenge’ Conversations
- Research Skills – ‘Communicating 1-1 with confidence’
- ‘Appointments to Listen’
- Single discipline curriculum

- + Dissemination events as workshops – L&T conference

PGR	PGT	UG	Staff
6	49	32	5
Total:			**92**

Across: accounting, biology, bioscience, biomedical humanities, counselling and psychology, creative writing, environmental science, finance and management, media, natural science, nursing, philosophy, social and community psychology, sustainability, geography, geology

The workshop content

- The importance of listening
- The need for a different type of dialogue
- Understanding we have different perspectives
- Understanding where different world views/lenses come from
- Establishing ground rules/principles for effective dialogue
- The listening process
  - ‘Noise’/distractions/barriers/filters
  - Body language
  - Moving the conversation forwards/response
- Sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals
- 1-1 conversations (recorded…less emphasis on this later)

1) What we did (are doing): Evaluation

- Reflection
- Questionnaire as part of workshop
- Questionnaire ~2 months after workshop
- Interviews

Participant comments: Immediately after the workshop

mind expanding

interesting and educational

It helped me to explore ideas and come to conclusions I wouldn't have personally reached.

unique opportunity to consider how to have meaningful conversations. Why have I never done this?!

brilliant

open

people wouldn’t normally meet

different perspectives

new ideas

this workshop should be taken up by as many people as possible…

really enjoyed it, a unique initiative

refreshing

after the pre-lecture workshop everyone turned in to someone I would talk to

Participant comments: longer term reflections

What is the most important/striking thing that you took away from the experience?

- *How hard it is to be a good listener, even if you know in theory what to do. It's the practice that matters, and also the supporting conditions (right mood, right time, right place, feeling safe, etc)*
- *The importance of generating an active interest in what the other person is saying.*
- *That background has a strong influence on our approach and understanding of sustainability*
- *To not anticipate a response or form your answer before the other person has finished their point*

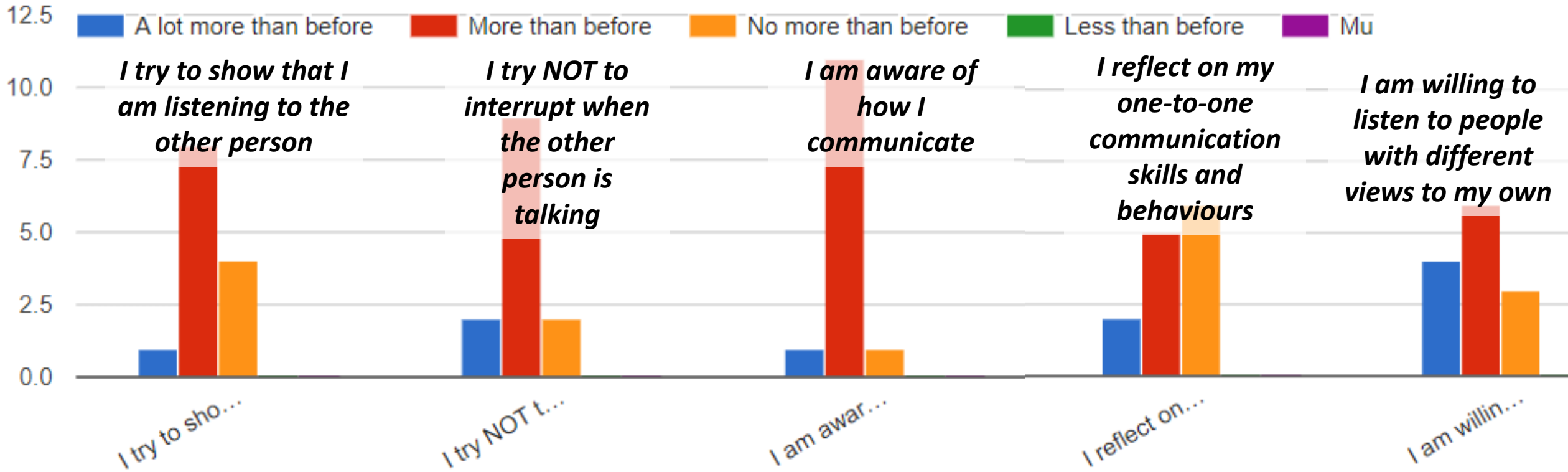
In what ways has taking part in the workshop affected your day-to-day communication?

Now I realise when I am about to interrupt when other people is talking.

I've tried to be more actively interested in what other people are saying!

I put more effort into internalising others' viewpoints and not being afraid of silence

12) As a result of taking part in the workshop, I find that in one-to-one conversations:



2) What we learnt

How do we create the right environment?

Explanatory Note:

After workshop 1 we banished PowerPoint!

Teaching/learning face-to-face communications is much more successful when the focus remains on people and dialogue, NOT technology and NOT broadcast.

Demonstrating the principles of open dialogue is also important – equality and inclusivity, a sense of a safe environment, hence our preference for everyone to be seated in a circle, and facilitation not to be too prescriptive.

A circle, no barriers

Movement, use of floor as an equaliser

Spaces to get into pairs uninterrupted

Space to move chairs in different configurations

Some tips…

- Need to ‘warm people up’ before 1-1 communication – group conversations to share different perspectives with everyone
- Need to ‘role model’ communication. You can’t teach 1-1 communication through 1-way transmission!
- Seated in a circle, ‘presenting’ while sitting (no PPT!)
- Knowing we are all ‘bad’ at listening helps relax people
- Encourage people to discuss communication in their own discipline
- Emphasising principles of equality and openness
- Emphasising the role of curiosity in conversation

But what about…?

Recruitment & Diversity

Need to be embedded – another ‘enhancement activity’

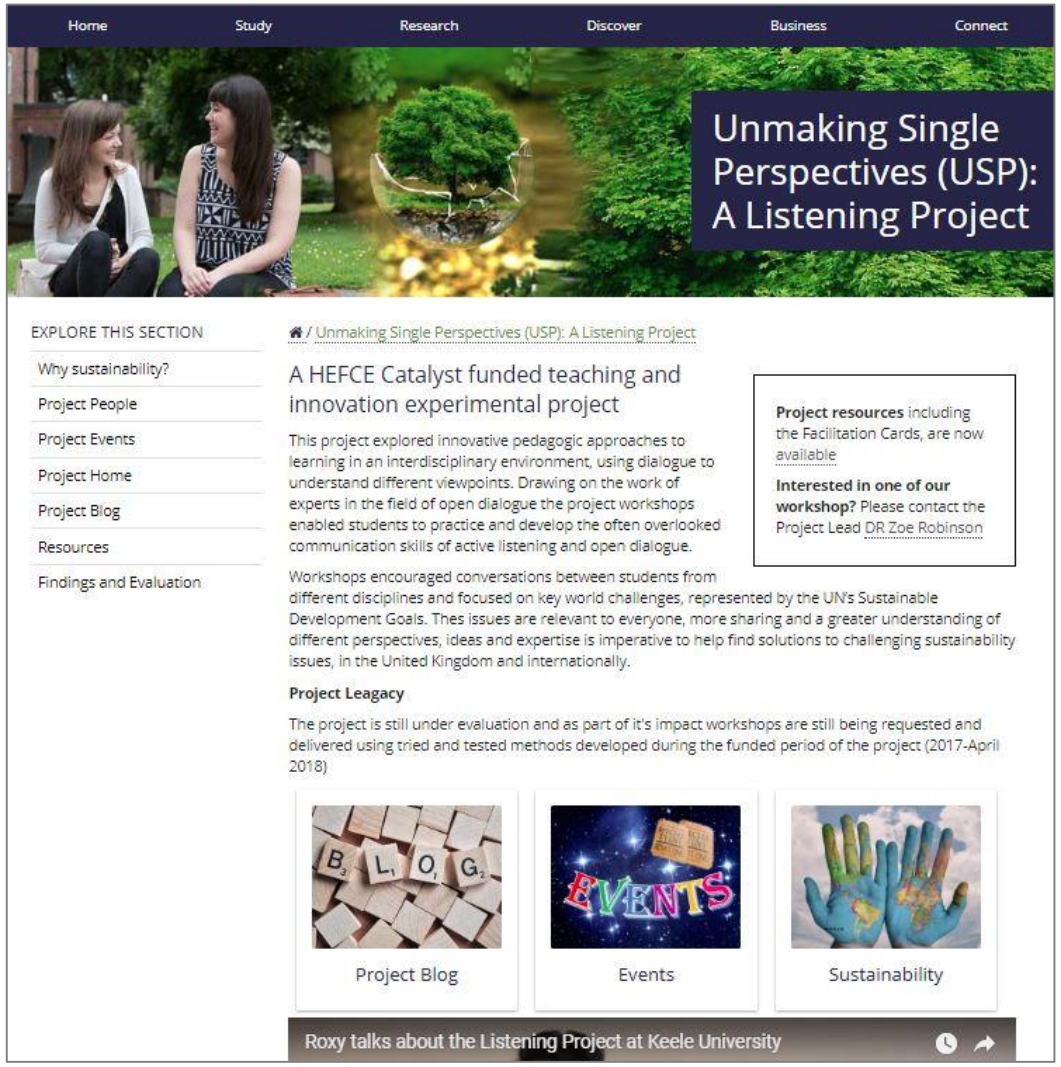
Ensure ‘different perspectives’

“I think it would be interesting if the mix of people could have been managed in a way to show clearly how perspectives were different between groups.”

“this workshop should be taken up by as many people as possible…”

A University project – but a bias in recruitment…

3) What we've made



- Resources available through our website:

  'Tapas' activities and stimuli

  - Facilitator 'scripts'
  - Sustainability resource cards
  - Recordings
  - Links and supporting information

www.keele.ac.uk/listeningproject/

Perspectives ACTIVITY Quote

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PERSPECTIVES QUOTE FOR DISCUSSION

Each of us views the world through different lenses …

"These lenses are constructed in our contexts - produced collectively in social interactions (in families, education, the media, religion, the government)"…

They "determine what we see as real, ideal, true, good and bad."

Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry (OSDE) – safe spaces for dialogue

Discussion points:

- What does this mean?
- In terms of the value of talking to others what does this teach us?

Open Dialogue SUMMARY

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OPEN DIALOGUE ACTIVITY: summary

Conditions that support 'meaningful' conversation

1. Respect – genuinely listening and considering your responses
2. Openness - no personal agenda, honest responses
3. Equality – non-judgmental, tolerant
4. Empathy – put yourself in the other persons shoes

and

Cognitive Effort – giving the speaker your full attention

Active listening ACTIVITY Barriers to Listening

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Active Listening: Barriers to listening

What stops us listening?

There many distractions, internal and external that make it difficult for us to stay focused on listening, physical noise is just one example.

- What often distracts you from really listening?
- Have a conversation (pairs or group) about what you think the main distractions are ('noise') that cause us to lose focus and stop listening.

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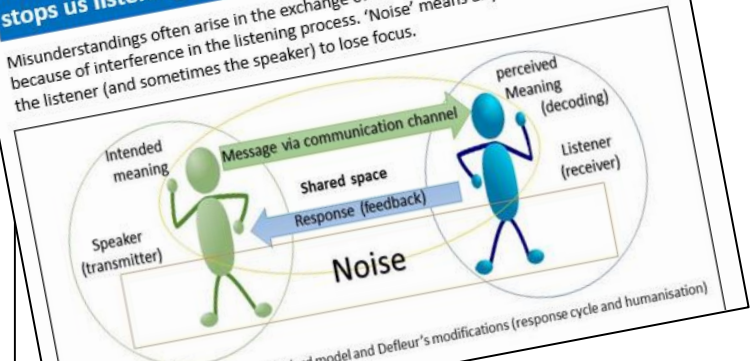
Active Listening: The communication process and what stops us listening and understanding

Misunderstandings often arise in the exchange of information, this is frequently because of interference in the listening process. 'Noise' means any barrier that causes the listener (and sometimes the speaker) to lose focus.



Based on Shannon and Weaver's standard model and Defleur's modifications (response cycle and humanisation)

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Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/

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Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/water-and-sanitation/

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Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/

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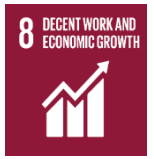

Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/economic-growth/

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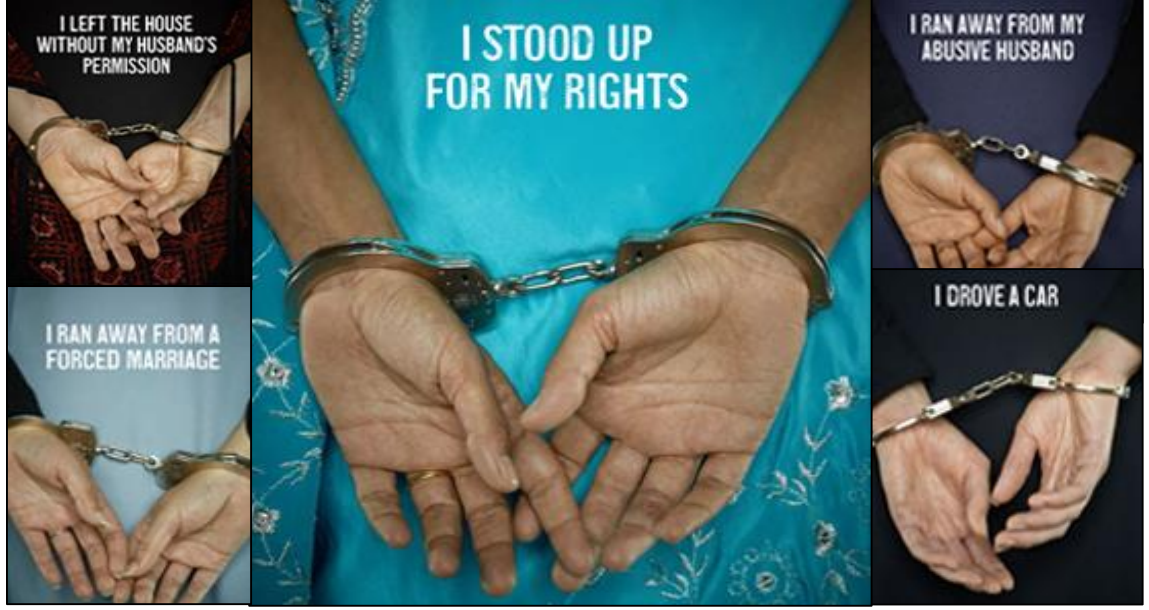
I LEFT THE HOUSE WITHOUT MY HUSBAND'S PERMISSION
I STOOD UP FOR MY RIGHTS
I RAN AWAY FROM MY ABUSIVE HUSBAND
I RAN AWAY FROM A FORCED MARRIAGE
I DROVE A CAR

homeless
jobless

LG
KODAK
ONE WAY
KYOCERA

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Goal 9:Industry, Innovation and Infrastrucutre

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/

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Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/

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Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/

Picture source: photo Wikipedia

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Picture source: Vimeo http://bit.ly/2jxWdNN

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Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-consumption-production/

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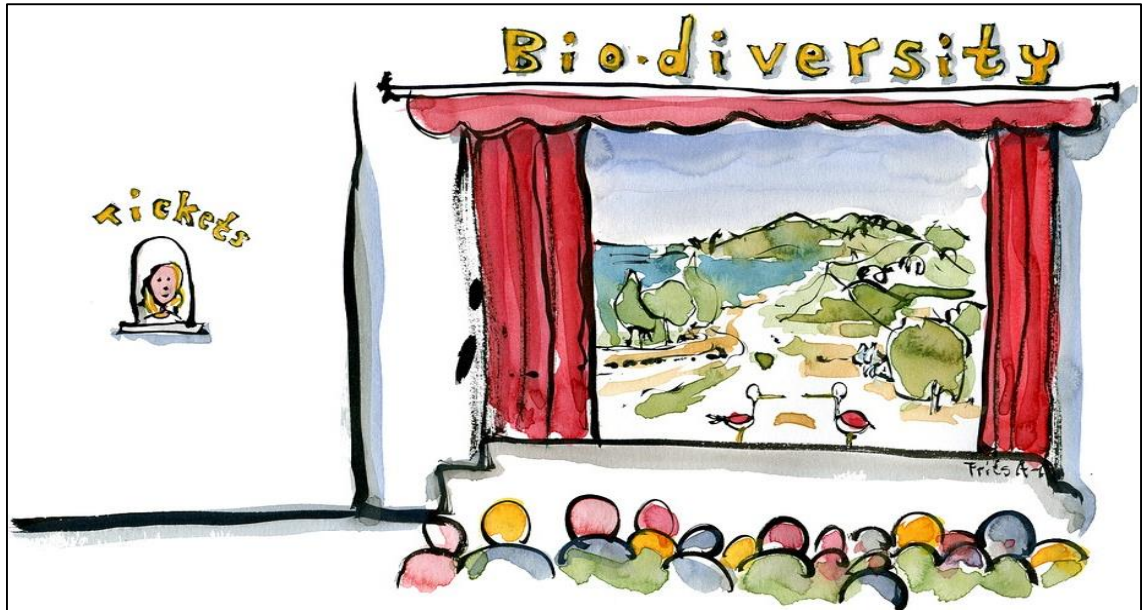
Hungry For Climate Action
TODAY'S MENU
Extreme Weather $
Less Food $
Higher Prices $
GROW
Oxfam
Oxfam


Bio-diversity
tickets

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Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/climate-change-2/

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Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/oceans/

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Goal 15: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/biodiversity/

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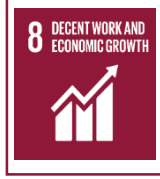

Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/economic-growth/

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Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/globalpartnerships/

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Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/energy/

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Goal 15: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss

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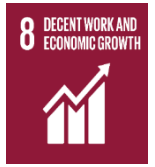

Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all

www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/economic-growth/

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Recordings

Find out more…

- Website: https://www.keele.ac.uk/listeningproject/
- Blog: https://usplisteningproject.wordpress.com/
- Twitter: @USPListenProj
- Facebook: Unmaking Single Perspectives - USP: A Listening Project

- Contact us if you would be interested in us working with your students
  - z.p.robinson@keele.ac.uk
  - c.appleton@keele.ac.uk

Final reflections

- Most impactful studies
- Much more aware of how I communicate
- I try to be a better listener