



FEARLESS CITIES

South Yorkshire 2024

Reimagining Our Commons
Through Neighbourhood Care
Sheffield, 1st-3rd November 2024



Friday 1st November

**FEARLESS
CITIES**
South Yorkshire

Fearless Cities Conference

Fearless Cities has been programmed and coordinated by Opus, Citizen Network, Research for Action, The European Municipalist Network, Steve Rushton, Care Full, the Sheffield Social Enterprise Network, Democracy Network and Ctrl Shift Network.

The Conference has been supported by a huge number of individuals and organisations who have offered their time, energy and expertise and without whom this summit would not be possible but we would like to specifically acknowledge the below organisations and foundations who have made key contributions.

We would like to thank the South Yorkshire Sustainability Centre, the South Yorkshire Combined Mayoral Authority, Barry Amiel and Norman Melburn Trust, NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, NHS Sheffield, City of Doncaster Council, Neighbourhood Democracy Movement, Foundation Danielle Mitterrand, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Lankelly Chase & the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation.

Wordlife Presents: Building Anti-Racist Futures

The Workstation, Creative Lounge
7pm Doors, Event Runs 7:30pm-9.30pm
Part of the Pluto Press Reading Rooms Network

Featuring:

7:30-8:10pm: In Conversation with Désirée Reynolds and Josh Virasami – Author of A World Without Racism – Building Anti Racist Futures

A World Without Racism offers a set of clear-eyed, radical and accessible principles and strategies for building working-class power through anti-racist organising. The book features ten contributions from collectives such as Sisters Uncut, No More Exclusions, Tipping Point and Greater Manchester Tenants Union on subjects including: women's liberation, land and food struggles, healthcare and housing, culture, imperialism, policing, prisons and climate justice.

8:20-9:00pm: Poetry Performance from Dzifa Benson & Sarah Lasoye & Wemmy Ogunyankin

Monster by Dzifa Benson is a bold and lyrical exploration of the Black female body as a site of oppression and resistance. At its heart is a brilliantly imagined study of the world of Sarah Baartman, aka the Hottentot Venus, a Khoikhoi woman from South Africa who was displayed in freak shows in 19th-century Europe. In her multi-faceted, highly inventive title-sequence Dzifa Benson frames Baartman's voice within the social, political and legal structures of the day.

'This is an amazing collection, not only for a debut but for a poet at any stage. It's versatile and virtuosic, experimental and moving, complex and culturally important.' – Bernardine Evaristo

9:10-9:40pm: A Panel Discussion with local anti-racist activists and organisers

[Give Over Exhibition](#)

Saturday 2nd November

Sunday 3rd November

9:30-10:00am: Coffee/Tea & Pastries
10:00-11:00am: Opening Plenary

10:30am: Coffee and registrations

	Session One: 11:15am-12:45pm	Session Two: 2:00-3:30pm	Session Three: 3:45-5:15pm
Concourse Space			+ Make Your Own Party!
Workshop Room 1	● How to Run a Democratic Assembly	● Feminisation of Politics: Workshop	● How to build autonomous municipal power
Workshop Room 2	* Neighbourhoods of Care	▲ Nurturing a Culture of Commoning	▲ Commoning land and buildings: on how to gain assets in rural and urban spaces
Lecture Theatre 1	+ From Accountability Gap to Democratic Deficit: How Do We Rebuild Trust in Local Government?	● Building Resilient Communities Through Local Food Hubs	
Lecture Theatre 3	▲ Responding to the Multiple Crises in Food	● What could it mean to finance just neighbourhood & bioregional transitions?	● Combining our struggles for housing: Panel
Lecture Theatre 4		● Anti-racist cities: Where everyone is welcome	+ How can citizens and local government make the best use of data?
Lecture Theatre 5	▲ Constructive Conflict & Collaboration in Housing & Other Urban Commons	+ Rights to The City and Degrowth: Panel	● Let's walk towards the future! Radical walking tour
Lecture Theatre 6		* Building Neighbourhoods of Care	* Systems for Neighbourhoods of Care

	Session One: 11:00am-12:30pm	Session Two: 1:45-3:15pm
Concourse Space		
Workshop Room 1		● Movement multipliers: How through intersectional politics can social movements be bigger than the sum of our parts
Workshop Room 2	+ Take Back the City: How do we transfer power from politicians to citizens when it comes to local decisions?	* Rolling our Sleeves up to Build Neighbourhoods of Care
Lecture Theatre 1	▲ Offer and Needs Markets: Recognising Abundance for Stronger Communities	+ Relational Networks: Trust as a Foundation for Systemic Action
Lecture Theatre 3	▲ Taking a Bioregional Approach to Rivers and Trees	▲ Another Just Transition is Possible: Energy Communities
Lecture Theatre 4	▲ Building autonomy through a cooperative economy	+ The future is now: Public services run in the public interest
Lecture Theatre 5	● How to organise against the far-right: Film and Q&A	● Social Enterprising the Transitions Ahead
Lecture Theatre 6	* Organising for Neighbourhoods of Care	

3:30-5:00pm: Closing Plenary

* Neighbourhoods of Care
● Municipalist Futures
+ Rethinking Governance & Local Democracy
▲ Reimagining our Commons

Coffee/Tea & Pastries: 9:30–10:00am

Opening Plenary: 10:00–11:00am

Lecture Theatre 1

Our Opening Plenary will feature welcomes and introductions from the Fearless Cities organising and programming team, a short video message from Ada Colau (ex-mayor of Barcelona), an introduction to our strands and short reflections on how we might best explore the intersections between all the different movements for change in the room.

Session One: 11:15am–12:45pm

How to Run a Democratic Assembly

Workroom 1

Neighbourhood assemblies and other forms of meeting based on consensus decision-making are often the cornerstone of participatory democracy and municipalism. So how do they work? What tips can we share from different experiences, in Sheffield and beyond, of assemblies in practical terms? The aim of this assembly will be for participants to discuss, share skills and seek answers to these questions drawing on the experience of many movements. Featuring: Maria Francesca De Tullio (Naples Urban Commons), Shiri Shalmy (Cooperation Town), Eva Schonveld & Justin Kenrich (Grassroots to Global), Iona Soper (People's Plan for Glasgow / SANE).

Imagining Neighbourhoods of Care

In Partnership with Care Full and Citizen Network

Workroom 2

Join Citizen Network and Care Full to explore the concept of neighbourhoods of care. Our current model of care has become economically extractive, dehumanising and marginalising. Those with the closest relationship to care – disabled people, older people, families and unpaid carers – are left with little choice, say or control over their lives. We will present the initial model, and work with attendees to develop our idea of a neighbourhood of care. We'll use creative and collaborative methods to develop our neighbourhoods and

enable us to care for ourselves, one another and the planet. This will be framed by three stories of care from Glyn Butcher, Caroline Waugh and Ruth Hannan.

From Accountability Gap to Democratic Deficit – How Do We Rebuild Trust in Local Government?

Lecture Theatre 1

This session explores the current state of play when it comes to accountability in local government. As well as showing the accountability gaps when the public tries to engage with decision-making, we explore how the relationship between local authorities and those they represent could be truly generative in a way that enables trust and challenge. Councils are often spoken about in terms of doom curves, cliff edges and crises – yet these are not inevitable. There are alternative responses, structures and cultures. What does it take to get there? Featuring Mel Stevens (Centre for Governance and Scrutiny), Ruth Hubbard (It's Our City! and SOS Sheffield) and Gloria Dawson (Research for Action).

Constructive Conflict and Collaboration in Housing and Other Urban Commons

Lecture Theatre 5

This workshop will explore embodied approaches to cooperation and co-production as a way to redefine power relationships between citizens and decision-makers in housing and urban regeneration. Drawing on live examples and participants' experiences, the workshop will demonstrate how relational practices that build trust can support collective stewardship, management and ownership models in housing and urban development. This is for anyone interested in using and developing collaborative practice within any area of urban governance. The workshop will include presentations from practitioners working in community-led housing, community organising and academia, and people with lived experience of collaboration in social housing.

This will be followed by collaborative activities that will allow workshop participants to explore embodied and relational approaches to constructive conflict and collaboration. Featuring facilitators, Rowan Mackay (Community Led Housing London), Sib Trigg (Community Led Housing London), Yael Ariel (Sheffield Hallam University) and speakers Cynthia Mireku (Heads2gether Housing Cooperative) Dawn Carr (Legacy West Midlands), Harvinder Randhawa (Triangle Architects Ltd) and Stella Osan (Heads2gether Housing Cooperative).

Food systems movements in our municipalities: Identifying barriers in our cities and sharing methods of change

Lecture Theatre 3

We face many problems in our food systems, from lack of access to land to the dominance of supermarkets, to the numbers of households experiencing food insecurity. Many people and collectives are responding to these issues, but changing the system can sometimes feel intractable.

This workshop will look at the biggest problems we're facing in our municipal food systems, and share learnings for addressing them from our different places. A workshop for anyone interested in any aspect of food systems - growing, community kitchens, public health, or how your community can access affordable, nutritious food.

Session Two: 2:00–3:30pm

Feminisation of Politics – Workshop

Run in partnership with EMN FoP collective And Feminise Politics Now!

Workroom 1

How do we bring feminist principles into the hearts of our movements? This is what feminist-isation means. The Feministisation of Politics working collective will provide a space for people belonging to organisations invested in the principles of municipalism to reflect on the 'feministisation' of their practices, and to engage with practical work on the topic. The workshop aims to provide participants with tools, strategy and practices that participants can take back to their organisations to counter remaining patriarchal structures and behaviours in their political processes.

The workshop will discuss methodologies elaborated by Feministisation of Politics collective (FoP), a Europe-wide alliance of non-male persons active in different European municipalist movements. Some of the tools produced by FoP are already available online. They address the question of how feminist principles are integrated into concrete, practical, measures at individual and movement level: from tools for assemblies to practices of collaboration, distribution of resources, or the selection of applicable positions.

Nurturing a Culture of Commoning

Run in partnership with Coexist & Diverse Artists Network

Workroom 2

Over the last 18 months, Coexist has launched The Bristol Commons and fostered a dynamic commoning movement with over 75 organisations and 700 people involved so far. This workshop draws upon this journey and weaves some of their most important practices together as an experiential seminar focusing on how values and culture sit at the heart of commoning.

In this participatory workshop, facilitators from The Bristol Commons will explore principles, tools and strategies that they use to nurture a culture of commoning. By the end of the workshop, participants will have hopefully gained a clear understanding of these tools and strategies and begun to apply them to their own contexts. As we seek to create systemic change, it's vital that we nurture a 'culture of commoning' as an alternative to the individualistic, capitalist, industrial growth complex that has led our species into the polycrisis we find ourselves in today. Featuring Mose-Issie (Diverse Artists Network) and Daniel Balla (Coexist).

Rights to The City and Degrowth

Lecture Theatre 5

'The Right to the City' is a concept and slogan that emphasises the need for inclusivity, accessibility, and democracy in urban spaces. Degrowth asserts that to live in an ecologically sound and socially just world, we need to systematically rethink how we live - not least in cities. This session will include participants from social movements pushing for cities not based on consumption but on sharing. How can a healthy, vibrant city exist within an ecologically sound future? This workshop will offer the chance to flesh out real ways we can co-create a city together in terms of transport, public spaces and how we use resources. Featuring Nina Wallace & Krisztina Campbell - Degrowth London, Robbie Gillett, Adblock Bristol and Adfree Cities, Lucas Snaije, Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, Ellie Harrison, Get Glasgow Moving, Better Buses for Strathclyde and the Better Buses UK National Coalition & Giulia Massolino, Adesso Trieste.

What could it mean to finance just neighbourhood & bioregional transitions?

Lecture Theatre 3

Central to the challenges of just and regenerative transitions in place, is how financial capital can flow in 'right relationship' with communities, neighbourhoods and in service of life.

This panel will explore what this could look like incorporating learning from across the world. It will discuss how neighbourhoods, communities, civic organisations and local enterprises can collaborate in the governance and decision making of these new approaches.

At the forefront of this conversation is that transitions must address more than just high-growth sectors and isolated initiatives. That the need for a rapid transition towards bioregional foundational economies that emphasise equity, collaboration, justice, and ecological balance is urgent. Places around the world are living through unprecedented volatility, with escalating costs in energy, food, materials, and essential goods. This instability, driven by climate breakdown and global market geopolitics, is expected to intensify, worsening systemic inequalities.

What would it take for cities and neighbourhoods to fearlessly promote and pursue a just transition? Featuring Host: Richard Kirtley (Purple Shoots). Panel: Sonia Gayle (Chair of African Heritage Culture Forum, retired financial regulator and former Sheffield Race Equality Commissioner), Roz Davies (CEO, Green Estate), Leon Seefeld (Dark Matter Labs) and Raj Kalia (Dark Matter Labs).

Anti-racist cities: where everyone is welcome

Lecture Theatre 4

The legacy of British imperialism is still present in our cities, from everyday racism to immigration raids and historical monuments. How do we dismantle structural racism in our cities and local places? What do abolition and reparative justice look like on a city level? What does it mean to be anti-racist on a city level, and how do we organise towards a future without racism? Featuring Rob Cotterell, SADACCA, Rory Wells, IMAJIN Caring Communities, Rhany Slimane, Nous Sommes Montpellier/ La France Insoumise & Joshua Virasami.

Building Resilient Communities Through Local Food Hubs

In Partnership with Sheffield Social Enterprise Network and Food Works

Lecture Theatre 1

As communities face complex challenges—from climate change and economic instability to food insecurity and social inequality—local food hubs are emerging as vital structures for resilience. This session, led by Rene Meijer, CEO of Food Works, will explore the role of food hubs in strengthening community resilience by creating accessible, sustainable, and locally centred food systems. Using Food Works as a case study, the session will illustrate how local food hubs can foster social cohesion, reduce food waste, and provide equitable access to nutritious food, all while supporting the local economy.

The discussion will delve into the unique ways that food hubs contribute to resilience at both a community and systems level. Rene will explain how food hubs connect diverse stakeholders—farmers, community organisations, social enterprises, and citizens—to create a more inclusive and collaborative food network. By supporting local food producers, offering affordable produce, and minimising waste, food hubs not only address immediate food access needs but also create a foundation for long-term sustainability and economic stability. The session will highlight key initiatives, from surplus food redistribution to education on sustainable practices, and share insights on how these efforts empower communities to take ownership of their food systems.

Building Neighbourhoods of Care

In Partnership with Cafe Full and Citizen Network

Lecture Theatre 6

In session two we will bring together inspiring community leaders who are doing things differently in and with their communities to enable them to care for one another. Join Coffee Afrik, Keyring, Heeley Trust and Care Differently to explore the foundations we need to enable us to build neighbourhoods of care. Each speaker will give a short presentation taking you on a journey to understand how their organisations are enabling their communities differently. We'll then create space to build on these presentations with questions.

Session Three: 3:45–5.15pm

How To Build Autonomous Municipal Power

Workshop Room 1

How can we build autonomous power within and for our neighbourhoods? What tactics and strategies can we share? This will be the focus of this 90-minute assembly. We'll hear from a range of speakers from different movements who will give interventions (short speeches) of around five minutes. These

interventions will kickstart a participative discussion, including the chance to ask questions. Then another speaker will give another short intervention that will start another topic of broader debate among us all. Featuring Shiri Shalmy, Cooperation Town, Eva Schonveld & Justin Kenrich, Grassroots to Global and more.

Combining Our Struggles For Housing

Lecture Theatre 3

The goal of decent and affordable housing is a struggle the world over. Housing movements in the UK are the cornerstone of social movements and internationally have been one of the driving forces of municipalist movements. This session will hear from community-led housing practitioners, community organisers and others at the frontline of this challenge. It will explore practical steps to get to a world where everyone has a decent, safe and affordable home. Featuring Gloria Dawson, Research for Action, Yael Arbell, Researcher at CRESR, Sheffield Hallam University. Claude Hendrickson, Leeds Community Homes – Peter Tomson, WeCanMake & Henri Baptiste, Pathway Housing Solutions.

Let's walk towards the future! – Radical Walking Tour

Meet at Reception Desk

Walking School of Politics will run a collective walk in Sheffield during which we will present the concept and results of the first edition of the Walking School of Politics that we organised last spring (organised in and near Trieste in northern Italy). We will also do a brief demonstration of some of the methods used during the cammino.

How Can Citizens and Local Government Make The Best Use of Data?

Lecture Theatre 4

Data and access to information shape our democracy in many ways. This session will explore different ways in which technology interacts with democracy, be it through local authorities' actions or ways in which people can seek accountability through making data available. We will discuss the steps from transparency to accountability, and the possibilities and limitations of technology in helping citizens interact with local government. Featuring Julia Cushion (MySociety), Toni Ribas (Barcelona En Comú), Simon Morrow (Lambeth People's Audit) and Maria Francesca De Tullio (Council of Audit on Public Debt and Resources of the City of Naples).

Make Your Own Party!

Concourse Area (Near Reception Desk)

Make Your Own Party! This playful workshop invites people to make their own political party. Independent local parties have taken control of towns and cities across Europe. They have driven real radical change in municipalities. A specialist in these parties, Dr Jason Leman, will guide participants through key questions for your new political party: will it advocate for policies or for values of working? How will you tackle political inequality or will you ignore it? Will it be democratic and what does that even mean? And, most importantly, what will you call it? A light-hearted consideration of political change that will encourage respondents to consider the role of political parties in municipal politics.

Commoning land and buildings: on how to gain assets in rural and urban spaces

Run in partnership with Cooperation Hull

Workroom 2

The commons start with access to assets – the shared interests of the members of the community – and democratic governance over them. In this practical workshop we will welcome speakers who will explain their experience in gaining access to buildings and spaces where tenants, trustees and neighbourhoods can meet to take joint action for the common good, having fun and making a positive impact together. We will also talk about people who steward the land, developing and managing different assets to build local wellbeing. Featuring Roman Paluch (Cooperation Hull), Jess Steele (Hastings Commons) and Nnaemeka Ugochukwu (L14 Cooperative Society).

Systems for Neighbourhoods of Care

In Partnership with Cafe Full and Citizen Network

Lecture Theatre 6

There are many factors involved in creating neighbourhoods of care, and a key one is how we shape public services. Across the country many areas are developing different approaches to public services that enable them to be led by communities, unlock community wealth building and put those who actually use the services in the decision-making seat. Join Ctrl+Shift, Spindl, PFG Doncaster, Disability Rights UK, New Prospects and Barcelona & Comu to see how they're supporting citizens to do things differently in their local communities. Each speaker will have a short presentation taking you on a journey to understand how their organisations are enabling their communities differently. We will then create space to build on these presentations with questions.

Coffee & registrations: 10:30am

Session One: 11:00am–12:30pm

Offers and needs markets; recognising abundance for stronger communities – Emma Woods (Flourish Economics)

In partnership with Sheffield Social Enterprise Network

Lecture Theatre 1

How can radical sharing of our passions, knowledge, resources and needs create powerful, resilient communities with care, acceptance and vulnerability woven into their core?

Developed by the Post Growth Institute, Offers and Needs Markets (OANM) is a heartfelt and empowering experience that encourages us to rethink how and what we value when it comes to ourselves and others in our communities. In just 90 minutes, the OANM offers citizens time and space to reflect on their gifts and skills, listen in to their needs and recognise the collective abundance of their communities and neighbours.

Take Back the City – How do we transfer power from politicians to citizens when it comes to local decisions?

Workroom 2

In this interactive session, we'll explore how everyday citizens can build power to take back control of local political decisions. How could we get a city council to give over full control to a rolling citizens' assembly? Together we'll explore the big questions our movement is grappling with, from making participatory processes more visible to ensuring their recommendations are binding.

Through breakout discussions and a fishbowl exercise, we'll explore ideas and perspectives for making urban governance radically inclusive and genuinely impactful. Join us to build connections and take practical steps toward upgrading local democracy. Featuring Lachlan Ayles (Strategic Lead at Humanity Project), Rachel Oliver (Independent Director at Sortition Foundation), Eva Schonfeld (Co-Founder of Grassroots to Global) and Molly May Shelton (National Coordinator at Assemble).

Building autonomy through a cooperative economy

Run in partnership with A Commune in the North

Lecture Theatre 4

We can't build fearless cities without economic democracy. Co-operative housing and workplaces are one key way to achieve this. This session brings together co-operative projects including multi-part co-ops that combine housing, workplaces and community projects. We'll explore some of the barriers and opportunities to co-ops at the local government and municipal levels, and outline what we can do to make co-operation flourish in our towns and cities. Featuring Cath Muller (A Commune in the North), Tom Wragg (Stirchley Co-op Development) and Jo Taylor (Solidarity Economy Association).

How to organise against the far-right: film and Q&A

In partnership with the European Municipalist Network

Lecture Theatre 5

The aim of the session is to look at practical ways to challenge the far-right and explore how important it is to build both counterpower and alternatives against authoritarianism, the hard-right and the far-right. This session features a 30 minute documentary filmed in the Naples Urban Commons in late 2023. This is based on interviews with participants from across Europe involved in municipalism (connecting via the European Municipalist Network) who are challenging the far-right, racism and authoritarianism – some of whom will be on the panel for the film showing and discussion. Featuring: Teresa Lorena Machado, European Municipalist Network, David Pike, Trade Union Activist and Official, Shiri Shalmy, Cooperation Town.

Organising for Neighbourhoods of Care

In Partnership with Cafe Full and Citizen Network

Lecture Theatre 6

Join us on day two to be inspired and meet people who are creating change in their communities by building systems, spaces and communities that enable us to care for ourselves and one another. Speakers from Coalville CAN, Darnall Wellbeing, Sheffield Radical Mutual Aid and Unlimited Potential will explore how their communities are actively shaping their neighbourhoods of care. Each speaker will have a short presentation taking you on a journey to understand how their organisations are enabling their communities differently. We will then create space to build on these presentations with questions.

Taking a Bioregional Approach to Rivers and Trees

Lecture Theatre 3

From Rights of Nature advocates to communities fighting for water rights to those working on nature-based solutions across bioregions - increasingly, responses to the multiple ecological crises we face are being responded to innovatively and at scale. These responses are seen to have multiple benefits, not just for nature but also for building just transitions, increasing social justice, and resilience in human economic, social, and health systems.

This panel event will bring together a range of organisations and people working across this spectrum to share their work, what they've learned and how they are approaching these often complex and entangled issues. Featuring: Facilitator: Alban Krashi and Speakers: Lucy Gavaghan, H el ene Reinhard & Tim Newton.

Session Two: 1:45–3:15pm

Another Just Transition is Possible: Energy Communities

Lecture Theatre 3

The energy transition is urgent. Many people around the world are advocating that this requires not only a change in how low-carbon energy is resourced and distributed, but also a decrease in overall energy usage, alongside a democratisation of energy provision. Although many countries are attempting to embark on just transitions to a low-carbon economy, many are still reproducing the extractive colonial logics of the last century. These often privatise the gains and socialise the costs of extraction to some of the planet's most vulnerable populations. Such cost shifts create the so-called 'sacrificial zones' and produce resistance and conflicts over land use, health implications, water resources, and biodiversity protection.

This panel will hear from those working on alternatives including Energy Communities, who are embedding citizen governance and local authorities producing low-carbon energy, combating energy poverty and reducing energy and material use. We will think together about political strategies to challenge the current corporate model of energy transition. Featuring Toni Ribas (Barcelona en Com u), Rowan Mataram (Transnational Institute), Giulia Massolino (Adesso Trieste, Italy), Jayne Carrick (South Yorkshire Sustainability Centre) and Angelina Kussy (Opus Independents, moderator).

Relational Networks – Trust as a Foundation for Systemic Action

Run in partnership with CTRLShift

Lecture Theatre 1

CTRLShift is a collective impact network of organisations aiming to shift the centre of political and economic power away from central governments, individuals and international corporations, toward local community organisations, their networks and participatory local governments. We are in strong alignment with movements for environmental regeneration. CTRLShift's membership is open to anyone who resonates with this vision.

We have been supporting partners around the UK to implement projects with innovative ways of shifting local power. Projects work in a variety of ways in their local ecosystem. Most recently, this includes creating community covenants to engage with the local council, providing neighbourhood care, and embedding participatory budgeting in the solidarity economy.

These projects are all community led, creating networks of change, and implementing models which can be replicated elsewhere. To support their practice and learning journey, project leaders have been attending the CTRLShift Community of Practice (COP). This space is open to peers doing similar work, to learn from and support each other.

During this workshop, you will hear a bit about some of the projects, and then have a chance to reflect on and share the connections with your own work, in the spirit of co-learning, similar to our COP sessions.

The Future is Now: Public Services Run in the public interest

Lecture Theatre 4

After decades of privatisation and asset stripping, local authorities and community groups have started to turn the tide: public services and assets are being taken back under public ownership and control. Recent years have also seen the development of strategies for combining public ownership and the commons, for example through public-commons partnerships.

At the same time we have seen some important developments in transport, where public transport is returning to a truly public service through regulation and public ownership. We will hear from those leading this wave of change in public-commons partnerships and re-municipalisation. We will ask what

public and common ownership have in common, how they differ, and how they can be combined for a democratic economy. Featuring Ellie Harrison (Get Glasgow Moving), Keir Milburn (Abundance) and Margot Medkour (Fondation Danielle Mitterrand)

Rolling our Sleeves Up to Build Neighbourhoods of Care

In Partnership with Cafe Full and Citizen Network

Workshop Room 2

Join Citizen Network and Care Full to reflect on what we feel a neighbourhood of care needs. Simon Duffy will take attendees through our neighbourhood of care, showing a short film of our creative journey over the weekend shaping and developing our conceptual neighbourhood. We will explore how we can make this imagined future a reality.

Ruth Hannan will bring in the wider socioeconomic context that also needs to shift to enable a future where we can care for ourselves, one another and the planet. Attendees will be offered the opportunity to remain connected and continue to see how this bold idea develops. As communities face unprecedented social, economic, and environmental challenges, local social enterprises are emerging as powerful agents of systemic change.

Social Enterprising The Transitions Ahead

In partnership with Sheffield Social Enterprise Network

Lecture Theatre 5

Sheffield-based social entrepreneurs will explore how innovative, inclusive, and community-driven social enterprises are reimagining local systems to create resilient, just, and sustainable futures. The discussion will delve into how these enterprises are tackling key issues such as food insecurity, urban regeneration, and community wellbeing while addressing the core summit themes.

Panellists will share insights on leveraging cross-sector partnerships, adapting to crises, fostering inclusivity, and driving long-term systemic transitions in Sheffield and beyond. This session will offer a visionary yet practical look at the role of social enterprises in leading the way toward more equitable and sustainable local economies.

Movement Multipliers: how through intersectional politics can social movements be bigger than the sum of our parts - (Assembly)

Workshop Room 1

How do we co-create a better future in a world facing interrelated crises? How can social movements combine to be bigger than the sum of our parts? What tips can we share from different experiences from Sheffield and beyond? This assembly will hear from a range of movements grappling with, and coming up with answers to these questions. This will also be the opportunity to broaden out the discussion in the panel on Rights to the City and Degrowth - including other overarching themes where social movements can combine.

Featuring Emma River-Roberts - Working Class Climate Alliance, Iona Soper, People's Plan for Glasgow/ SANE, Mark Seddon - Sheffield Transformed, Lucas Snaije - Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, Robbie Gillett - Adblock Bristol and Adfree Cities, Nina Wallace & Krisztina Campbell - Degrowth London.

Closing Plenary 3.30-5:00pm

Lecture Theatre 1

Our closing session will attempt to bring all of the different threads and movements for change across the Fearless Cities summit back together. This will include a digital participation exercise with all members of the summit asking what they are leaving Fearless Cities with as well as creating the space to hear from individuals and organisations who have contributed to individual sessions throughout the conference to collectively think about next steps for our movements for change.

Festival of debate

22 April – 30 May 2025

The Festival of Debate is the largest grassroots politics festival in the UK. 2025 will mark our 10th year and will see our biggest festival yet featuring our usual mix of keynotes, panels, performances, workshops, assemblies and much more. The festival will reach over 8,000 people across 70 events and is programmed alongside a range of local, national and international organisations.

Open call for event submissions now live on our website: festivalofdebate.com

Join the conversation.

