Meeting Notes – Brighton & Hove Compass Coffee Morning – 27 September 2026
Screening of *The People's Emergency Briefing* film
Friends' Meeting House, Brighton

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The text is a transcript of a **Brighton & Hove Compass coffee morning which featured a screening of *The People's Emergency Briefing***. The overall focus is the **climate and nature emergency in the UK**, its effects on weather, food, health, national security and the economy, and the argument made by the film that urgent action is both necessary and possible. The meeting also includes announcements about local Compass activities and upcoming events.

1. Compass and local political activity

The Sussex group is working with the **Lewes Compass local chapter** ahead of the 2028 local elections. One aim is to establish more local Compass groups across Sussex, with Hastings mentioned as an early opportunity.

The group also announces several forthcoming meetings and activities, including:

- Lewes Labour Party event - discussion of the "Andy Burnham bounce".
- A Lewes event featuring **Caroline Lucas** and **Sue Goss,** a founder of Compass, focusing on cooperation between progressive parties.
- A Crossing Divides practice group designed to help people communicate with people who hold very different political views, particularly where conversations become stressful.
- Social event for Brighton-area Compass members.
- A national Compass AGM in London.
- A future coffee morning involving **Anthea Simmons**, founder of Common Ground Org, discussing political primaries and street conversations as methods of participatory democracy.

A recurring concern is the **fragmentation of progressive political parties and voters**. The discussion suggests that disagreement and division can prevent cooperation, while the group is interested in finding ways to communicate across political differences.

Summary

- **Compass/local political activity:** The opening discusses Compass's influence on progressive politics and upcoming local activity in Sussex, including building local groups, engaging with different political communities, and organising meetings and events.
- **Climate change is presented as an immediate emergency:** Scientists and other experts argue that climate change is accelerating, extreme weather is becoming more severe, and the UK is not adequately prepared. Flooding, heatwaves and wildfires are highlighted as existing risks rather than distant possibilities.
- **Rising greenhouse gases:** The briefing explains that atmospheric CO_2 has risen rapidly since industrialisation, moving far outside the relatively stable conditions in

which human civilisation developed. The speakers warn that continued fossil-fuel use could lead to substantially greater warming and increasingly unstable conditions.

- **Tipping points:** A major concern is the possibility of climate tipping points, particularly changes to the Atlantic Ocean's circulation. The transcript argues that such changes could dramatically affect Britain's climate, agriculture and water security.
- **Food security:** Climate change threatens harvests through extreme weather. The proposed responses include:
  - eating more plant-based food,
  - reducing food waste,
  - changing agricultural practices,
  - improving resilience,
  - and supporting farmers through the transition.
- **Health:** Climate change is described as a major public-health issue, affecting heat-related illness, air pollution, infectious diseases and the wider ability of the NHS and economy to function. The argument is that climate action could simultaneously produce health and economic benefits.
- **National security:** A former military officer describes climate change as a security threat because climate shocks can contribute to food insecurity, migration, instability and conflict. The discussion emphasises that climate-related emergencies are already placing demands on the military and emergency services.
- **Nature and biodiversity:** The UK is described as heavily depleted in biodiversity, with pollution, agricultural runoff and habitat loss damaging ecosystems. The speakers argue that nature should be treated as essential infrastructure because food, water, health and the economy depend on functioning ecosystems.
- **Economic arguments:** The economic speakers challenge the idea that climate action is inherently unaffordable. They argue that delaying the transition could be more expensive, while renewable energy, energy efficiency and reduced fossil-fuel dependence could lower costs and improve energy security.
- **Renewable energy:** Falling costs of solar, wind and batteries are presented as evidence that the transition to clean energy is increasingly practical. Renewables are also portrayed as reducing dependence on volatile fossil-fuel markets.
- **Overall message:** Although the briefing presents serious and potentially catastrophic risks, its central message is **not simply pessimistic**. Each expert identifies possible solutions, and the film repeatedly stresses that adaptation, clean energy, changes to food systems, nature restoration and political action could substantially improve the future.
- **Call to action:** The closing section argues that individual and community action is useful but insufficient on its own. It particularly calls for people to **contact their MPs**, encourage political action, attend local screenings and support a proposed **televised government emergency briefing on climate change**.

In one sentence: The transcript argues that climate change is already affecting Britain across weather, food, health, security, nature and the economy, but that rapid coordinated action—especially by government, alongside community and individual efforts—could reduce the risks and create significant social and economic benefits.