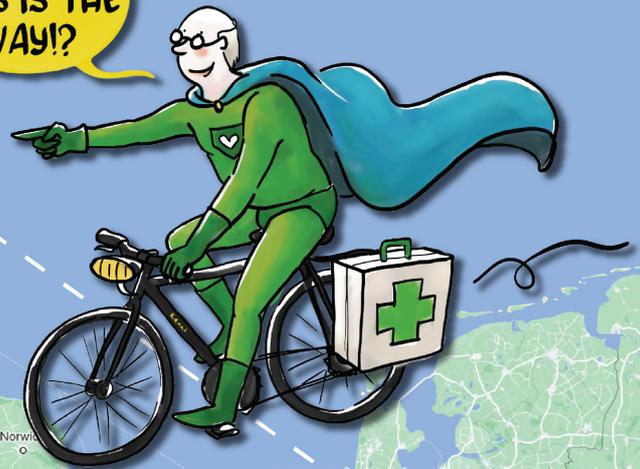


# Solfie's carbon low Road2Glasgow

MAYBE THIS IS THE WAY!?



Summer 2021 on the northern hemisphere. Large parts of the world are ablaze with natural disasters that are strongly connected to climate change. Yet a bunch of billionaires still put their spare change into their polluting space hobbies instead of questioning the destructive system that brought them the wealth and power to destroy even more.

And ordinary citizens? Many are still unaware of what's going on. Others know it all too well, but feel powerless in the sight of the gigantic challenges ahead. But we are still here and no matter how much is lost; there's always something left to save.

Solfie's Road2Glasgow is a road trip by bike towards the COP26 in Glasgow designed to empower ordinary people to find their inner superhero and put up a fight for what they love.

### How?

Inspired by the book First Aid For Climate Change by Anabella Meijer, we –a small band of creative environmental activists– searched and perhaps found our own inner superheroes and decided to embark on a quest towards the climate conference in Glasgow in November 2021. To make a point, we'll use slow travel and connect to local citizens who are also:

1. worried about the environment
2. worried about the inaction of so many others
3. wondering why governments aren't stepping up, and/or
4. just starting to wonder what all the fuss is about

We're just a small band of small people on bikes, but with us, we'll carry four books containing powerful ideas that could fundamentally change the way the wicked problem of sustainable happiness on a global level is approached.

### Books on bikes? Couldn't you just put it in a TikTok video?

Don't worry. Though there's too much to tell for a TikTok video, we've summarised the main ideas of these four books for you in a light-hearted one hour story that we are willing to present and defend wherever we go.



From left to right: Solfie, Noel and David during the first test ride: cycling 163 kilometres during the Climate Classic along the expected future coastline of the Netherlands. If humanity isn't able to get its act together pretty soon...

**Can simple ideas change the world?**

Ideas can be extremely powerful. Like the old idea that people are basically selfish and only looking out for their own self-interest. The entire economic system in the Western world is based on that simple assumption. So much so, that even in the face of Armageddon, business models decide which actions are taken and which aren't. And as long as it is profitable to cut corners, we'll never be able to protect what's valuable for future generations. Too much of value is defenceless. (after Lucebert)

**Survival of the kindest**

But in his brilliant book Human Kind, Dutch historian and philosopher Rutger Bregman challenges the myth that most people are basically selfish and ruthless. There's much more than a thin layer of civilisation that keeps us from hurting one another over resources. Bregman shows there's plenty of historic evidence that proves most people are mostly good. And they would do good too, once the systems allows them to.

**So most people are mostly good. But what about the system?**

Here's where Against Elections – A Case for Democracy by Belgian historian David Van Reybrouck offers a solution. Fortunately, most of the world's richest and most powerful countries are democracies. So once ordinary voters know what matters most, they would theoretically be able to form governments that could take care of the long-term interest of The Many, even against the short-term interests of –say– the powerful fossil fuel industry.

Unfortunately however, most democracies have winner-takes-all electoral systems that make it virtually impossible to elect people that aren't financially backed by The Few: powerful individuals, large corporations and special interest groups. A system known as Tweedism. Honest Mr. Smiths rarely make the ticket, let alone make it to Washington.

Enter the original but almost forgotten democratic system of sortitioning: randomly picking -say- ten, a hundred or a thousand citizens to duke it out with one another what direction to take on complex issues. Van Reybrouck has tested and proven that this system dating back from ancient Athens could work wonders today to restore democracy and have it reliably work for the long-term interest of We The People once more. No time-consuming, over-simplified and divisive elections or referenda needed to support a governing body that after all that time and energy still remains unable to make -or stick to- well-balanced decisions on how to move forward on complex issues.

**Measuring is knowing**

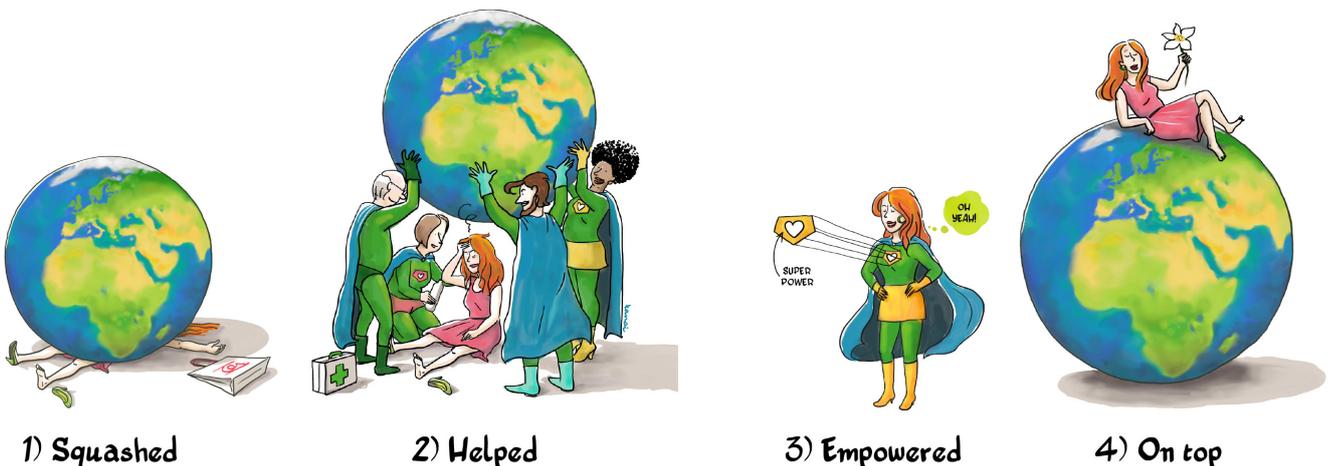
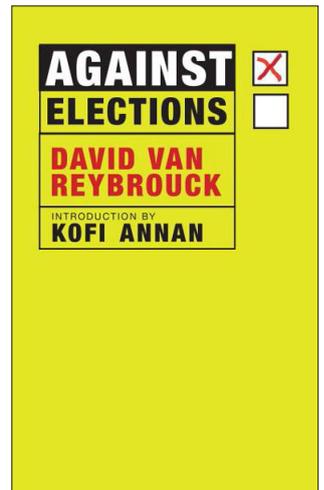
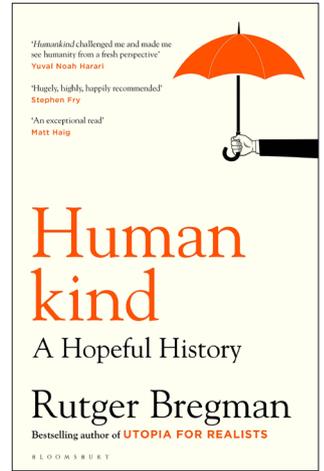
So what should such a governing body consisting of randomly selected citizens do first in order to protect the future? In the Netherlands, Babette Porcelijn -supported by CE Delft- has already started mapping out what matters most. Her book Hidden Impact is already an impressive and accessible roadmap for the Netherlands. It actually has a place on the bookshelf of our prime minister. With this delightful book as an example, it's as easy for MP's as well as for ordinary citizens to know which topics to tackle first.

**Ordinary citizens having serious positive impact? Is that even feasible?**

Well, that's where First Aid For Climate Change by Anabella Meijer and others comes in. This book artfully combines brutal honesty with an empowering message and helps ordinary people to find their superpowers and become part of the solution. It does so in an honest, fun and uplifting way.

Most messages around sustainability in general and climate change in particular lecture about why we MUST do something about it. Most people don't like being told what to do.

FAFCC brings a new and empowering approach: find out for yourself why you would WANT to do something about it. And how to best go about and do it.



## Changing the system? Changing people? Difficult! Shouldn't we all just buy Tesla's and solar panels?

Great though solar panels may be in converting the power of the sun into useful energy, the foundation of our inability to handle sustainability issues runs quite a bit deeper than that. For example, the issue with emitting carbon dioxide was already predicted by the Swedish physicist Svante Arrhenius in 1896. But in 2016 –well over a century later– a climate change denier was still able to become the leader of the most powerful country in the world and set back the clock on –among other things– preventing a climate catastrophe. So helped by the most powerful media mogul the world has ever seen. And also very much a climate change denier.

**MOST PEOPLE ARE MOSTLY GOOD. AND WOULD DO GOOD TOO.  
IF THE SYSTEM WOULD ONLY LET THEM...**

### Always look on the bright side

Climate change is a threat, but might also be a blessing in (very good) disguise. We're lucky to have such a relatively slow moving sustainability issue to practice on. So far, this first real life test proves that our abilities to govern our global society towards sustainable happiness are not up to the task. It's not even close. So no, Tesla's and solar panels won't do. We really need fundamentally new ideas on how to govern society beside relying on the invisible hand of free market economies and winner-takes-all electoral systems.

### What is Solfie's Road2Glasgow?

What better place to promote these powerful, honest, yet hopeful messages than at the coming climate conference in Glasgow (1-12 November 2021), where world leaders come together to discuss climate change?

What better country to bring these messages to, than the UK, where so many of the most powerful ideas about how to run society were developed and exported to the rest of the world. Some great ideas; some bad ideas; some wonderful ideas that are now outdated; and some prototypes that need adjustment.

What better way to bring these ideas than by a carbon low cycling adventure through the British countryside, going from town to town like minstrels of old? To further clarify the message, the cyclists will be dressed as green superheroes. The books will be carried in electric cargo bikes. One of these cargo bikes is Solfie, mostly powered by solar energy, who hasn't seen a socket since April despite cycling 3,000 kilometers through the hilliest part of the Netherlands. She's such a powerful and sunny character, that we named the trip after her.

### When?

The trip to Glasgow is scheduled to run from the 21st of October to arrival near the start of the conference on the 1st of November. The schedule and route of the road back is yet to be determined and might depend on how things go before and during the conference.

### How to bring attention to the message?

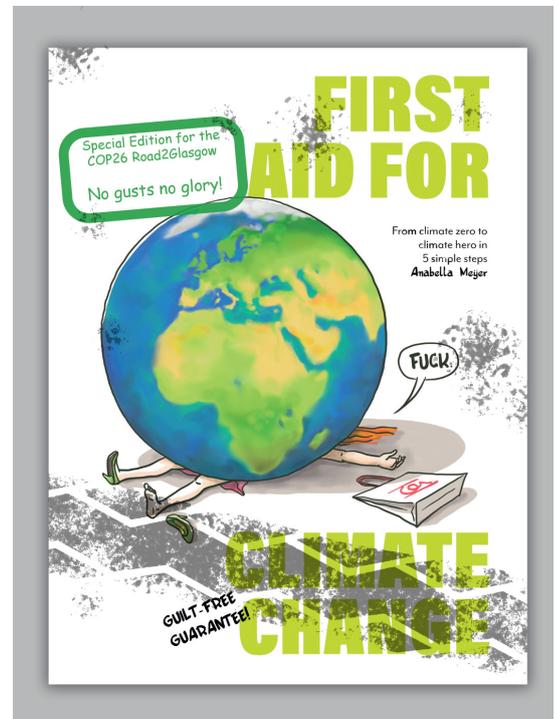
The following means will be applied:

- Social media attention through Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn
- Local organisations in the UK will be directly contacted, like:
- Book shops and libraries
- Cycle organisations
- Environmental organisations
- Local government
- Promotion of the book on town squares, in libraries, etc.
- Evening sessions during which the team will engage with local environmentalists or –better yet– people that have just started worrying about climate change
- Cycling enthusiasts and environmentalists in the Netherlands are being contacted for support
- Handing out copies to ambassadors in the field of sustainability

### Budget

The lion share of the budget should come from actual selling of books on the way. Some sponsors might be attracted, but care will be taken with notorious green washers. Sponsorships will always be under our own conditions, which include brutal honesty when necessary. We haven't sold out so far and we won't start now.

Sponsorships could well be in kind. For instance, the Accell-Group -known from brands like Babboe, Batavus, Carqon- has already promised to lend us electric cargo bikes to carry the books. Other people might offer us their couches to sleep on. A local environmental organisation might take it up for themselves to offer us a podium. And so on. By reducing the daily budget to a minimum and selling books on the way (within the limitations set by Brexit) the trip might be able to pay for itself.



An example of a Road2Glasgow Special edition. Including an autograph by Solfie herself. Perhaps even including battlescars from the rough ride.

## What does a day on the Road2Glasgow look like?

A typical traveling day could look like this:

7:00 Wake up and breakfast  
8:00 Cycling  
9:30 Morning stop at a local pub for a coffee break, engaging with locals and selling books.  
10:30 Cycling  
12:00 Stop at a town square, library, bookshop or likewise for lunch, signing session with an author, etc.  
13:30 Cycling  
15:00 Afternoon break at a local pub for a pint, engaging with locals and selling books.  
16:00 Cycling  
17:30 Arrival at place to stay for the night and dinner.  
20:00 Evening program with authors, comedy, etc. A fun evening with climate change as an excuse.  
The actual cyclists might be excused, depending on their energy level.

*NOTE: Roughly 6 hours of cycling in the Netherlands quite easily allows for 150 kilometres (90 miles) of cycling for reasonably trained cyclists. Because of the more challenging landscape in the UK, the daily routes have already been shortened considerably to an average of under 100 kilometres (60 miles) per day. Local cyclists are asked to determine the stages and act as guides to avoid wasting time on finding the way.*

## How to help?

At this point in time (early August 2021), all we have beside ideas and kick-ass books as starting points is our team and our spirit. We need help. What we are looking for is:

- Budget to cover the expenses.
- Launching customers that order books to support our trip. Regular books or Road2Glasgow Special Editions. Pre-orders for FAFCC at: <https://firstaidforclimate.com/preorder>
- Places to stay. Couch surfing while bike riding.
- Places to eat.
- Places to present the book and have signing sessions during the day.
- Places to present our roadshow and have meaningful discussions during the evening.
- Cycling enthusiasts that know the countryside, can draw out detailed routes that are safe, enjoyable, effective and efficient (in that order).
- Cycling enthusiasts that would like to test ride those routes.
- Cycling enthusiasts that would like to act as our guides, so we can avoid energy and time consuming mistakes.
- Locals that would like to help promote our tour and cheer us on.
- And generally anyone who would like to give us a push in the right direction (not over a cliff) or a leg up.
- And last but certainly not least: participants! People that would like to join us on our journey. Dutch, Belgian, British: anyone who can ride a(n) (electric) bike for an average of 100 kilometres (60 miles) per day towards Glasgow. All the way or part of the way: fine with us.
- Is 60 miles too much? Find a buddy to split the distance and take a ride in the support car.

## Do you have what it takes?

Beside cycling abilities, there's one other important selection criteria for participants: in general terms you need to agree to our mission. For instance, we're happy to talk to climate change deniers once in a while, but please not 24/7 during our tour. That will be too energy consuming.

## What's in it for the participants?

An adventure, fun, ideas, knowledge, network, making a little money by selling books and of course: doing your bit to save the planet. Win-win-win while having fun-fun-fun.

So are you in? Send us an email to sign up.

Just interested? Follow our mission on Facebook and Instagram: @SolfiesRoad2Glasgow.



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