

FRAMING THE ANTI-NUCLEAR MESSAGE USING WELSH VALUES

A handbook for activists

March 2017



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INTRODUCTION

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In March 2017, Beyond Nuclear conducted two workshops at the Green Nuclear-Free Wales conference for activists in Aberystwyth. The workshops were titled “Framing the anti-nuclear message using Welsh values.” We ran through some exercises together to reframe our messages using terms and imagery that we felt would resonate with the audiences we need to convince to oppose new nuclear build in Wales. We also identified messengers we thought would be most trusted by our target audiences.

Clearly, the Welsh language emerged as a priority value, but our workshop had to be conducted in English only. The observation I made then -- and reiterate here -- is that when creating messages and materials for Welsh-speaking audiences, it is preferable that these are written originally in Welsh by a native speaker and not translated from English. There are concepts and cultural values that often can only be expressed in one language and do not translate or resonate in another, either literally or idiomatically.

Time was short, therefore I have added some components, particularly in the communication tools section, that we were not able to cover in the workshops. Please feel free to expand on our work and add your own notes and ideas.

In a longer workshop, we would have come away with an end product -- maybe a paragraph or even a flier -- using the frames we identified and the phrases we created in the workshop exercises. Hopefully, you will find useful guides in these pages for the production of such materials for your campaigns.

As it is, this handbook is somewhat incomplete, and reflects only what we were able to get done together in the time available -- with a few extra thoughts thrown in by me here and there.

It was a stimulating, inspiring and thought-provoking day. I hope we can do it again, or that you prevail, and we won't have to!

*Linda Pentz Gunter, Beyond Nuclear
Takoma Park, Maryland, USA
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HOW WE TALK ABOUT NUCLEAR ENERGY

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Below is a composite list of some words and phrases the two workshop groups identified as those we typically use when talking publicly about nuclear energy and its detriments. It is by no means comprehensive but exemplifies a broad sample of the language we tend to adopt. This exercise was conducted to remind us that when we use broad terms -- and especially technical ones -- that tend to be fact based, we can lose our audience. This is not to say we should not be factually accurate. But if we don't reframe our messages in language using the values and imagery to which our audience can relate, this can hinder our ability to gain their attention, trust and empathy and, in turn, to reach and persuade them.

Expensive
Dangerous/Risk
Financial
Unnecessary/Alternatives
Not local
Irresponsible
Military industrial complex
Future generations/ future burden
Waste
Discharges
Terrorism/ terrorist target
Profits for the rich
The public pays
Not green
Baseload is in the past
Health/cancer/kills babies
Radiation
Meltdown/disaster/accident
Human error
Jobs
Environment
Proliferation
Transmission lines
Housing



WELSH VALUES

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On page five are the values the two workshops identified as best representing what is most precious about Wales, what people care deeply about, and what is therefore under threat from new nuclear power plant construction and operation. Interestingly, “landscape,” which was nominated as the top value in both workshops, also leads by a huge margin in focus groups conducted in Wales.

After identifying the key Welsh values, we listed words and phrases that might best evoke and communicate each value. Using this language can help us to stay away from jargon, build familiar images in the minds of our listeners, and appeal to their sense of identity. It is this kind of vocabulary that we need to incorporate into our anti-nuclear messages in order to win the trust and support of those living and working in Wales.

Although the workshops were focused on messaging, listening is also an important tactic. Ask lots of questions. Really *hear* what it is people believe, fear, hope for. Then frame your messages in the context of addressing those needs, values and beliefs.

As always, time constrained completion. Feel free to add to these compilations and to create your own categories and language, framing your message points by incorporating the values of the demographics you need to win over.



FRAMING WELSH VALUES

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We emphasized positive words that best reflect what is precious and in jeopardy if nuclear energy is again developed in Wales. A few of the negative words suggested are also included as they reinforce what could be lost. However, to be most effective, we recommend leading with an appeal to Welsh values rather than with fear. We did not get to the following values: Health, Spiritual, History. Feel free to complete these.

LANDSCAPE

Conservation
Heritage coast/Coastline
Pristine
Peacefulness/Relaxation
Contentment
Garden of Eden/Beauty
Identity
Ancient
Purity
Sea birds
Mountains and Sea
Safe
Connection
Archeological remains
Freedom
Tourism
Resonance
Loss
Blot/Scar/Poison

LAND

Farms /Agricultural/Sheep
Livelihood
Fresh water
Ownership
Independence
Loss
Contamination/Degraded

OPPORTUNITY

Clean future
Positive
Hopeful
Long-term jobs
Permanence
Indigenous creativity/ideas
Openness

Healthy
Diversity

FAMILY/COMMUNITY

Local knowledge/competence
Caring
Belonging
Family
Common ownership
Mutual trust
Think small
Past/Present/Future
Solidarity
Slow lifestyle
Low crime rates

LANGUAGE/CULTURE

Identity
Roots/Heritage
Music/Song
Poetry/ Art
Tradition
Connection to place
Evocation of landscape
Independence
Literature/Mabinogion

NON-CONFORMISM

Independence
Self-sufficiency
Culture of resistance
Defiance
Taking risks
Cooperative movement
Creating community spaces
Pacifism
They get the profits
Anti-democratic

AUDIENCES

MESSENGERS

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Below we listed the audiences we need to convince. We matched these with the messengers we thought they would most likely listen to and trust. But, we ran out of time and our lists have many gaps! Please add to the list, fill in the blanks, and remember to include Welsh speakers.

Schools/Youth	---->	Social media, David Attenborough, Instagram, videos, icons
Trade Unions	---->	Ex-nuclear workers, peers, farmers, firefighters' union
Job seekers	---->	Under-dogs, renewable energy representatives
Politicians/Councillors	---->	Moveable Assembly Members, Caroline Lucas, Greens
Political parties	---->	Scottish National Party, Greens
Media	---->	Scientists, "on side" political leaders, experts
Farmers/Landowners	---->	Peers who oppose nuclear, veterinarians, naturalists
Women/Mothers	---->	Doctors, health workers
The elderly	---->	Doctors, health workers
Artists	---->	Musicians, poets, other artists
Health workers	---->	Scientists, doctors, nurses
Celebrities	---->	Environmentalists, animal and wildlife advocates
Churches	---->	Conservationists, those who treasure "God's creation."
Anti-wind people	---->	
Tabloid readers	---->	Celebrities

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

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When communicating with audiences, it is important to remember what they may be asking. Reporters often want to know: "Why should I care?" Others might ask, "What's in it for me?" Politicians will consider how their stance could affect popularity and re-election prospects. Unions will want to know how their members benefit, etc. Adapt your materials to your audiences. Write in vivid, accessible language, not jargon, and include strong, positive visuals. Be accurate. If possible, mention the safer, cleaner alternatives to nuclear energy. Have your materials available on line and in print.

Suggested communications tools:

Pamphlets, fact sheets, handouts.
 Social media – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
 Videos – YouTube, Vimeo etc.
 Web sites. Keep frequently updated.
 Blogs and on-line news sites (contribute.)
 Emails and listserves.
 Specialist magazines.
 Guest opinion columns, letters to the editor. (Write often! Keep submitting!)
 Fliers and posters.
 Bumper stickers, pins, banners, t-shirts.
 Traditional media – newspapers, radio, television.
 (Build relationships with interested reporters.
 Always be factually accurate and easy to reach as reporters often need a quote right on deadline.
 Invite a friendly reporter to present to your group about what they are looking for in a good story.)
 Presentations, talks, lectures, debates, (don't be afraid to publicly challenge your opponents. Be armed with good values-based sound bites as well as the facts.)
 Parliamentary lobbying/briefings.
 Poetry slams and music events. (Sometimes it is better to embed your serious message within something that is enjoyable!)





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