

Transcript of 'Designing Sustainability into Your Business'

Season 2, Episode 34, Transforming Tomorrow

[Theme music]

Paul: Hello and welcome to Transforming Tomorrow, the podcast from the Pentland Centre for Sustainability in Business. I'm Paul Turner.

Jan: And I'm Professor Jan Bebbington.

Today it's the first of our local heroes, and we'll be speaking to Steve Parkman, a graphic designer from 42 Creative about how they're prioritising sustainability in their work with us.

[Theme music]

Paul: If you ran a business, Jan, do you think you would consider lots of things sustainability-wise in how you operate that business, and all the logistics and everything like that?

Jan: I really hope I would. But of course, there's also a lot of tensions and conflicts and trade-offs that you'd need to make when running a business.

So, I guess I'd try to figure out the things that could be done sooner or later. It's a, a timeline, but also, you know, the cost and the trade-off, um, with, with the benefit that comes from it. I should imagine it's a really tricky sort of set of judgements to have to make.

Paul: Thankfully for all of us, you don't run a business, you do run a research centre.

Um, when it comes to making decisions for the research centre, are you having to consider sustainability issues there as well?

Jan: Absolutely. 'Cause when you've got sustainability in business, in your title, if you're doing unsustainable things, yeah, people will, quite rightly pull you up short and fast.

So, for example, um, when we are, um, on food offerings, we will always be vegetarian and vegan. For transportation, I mean, I, I do go on planes

occasionally, but only in very specific circumstances. So there's all sorts of things that you got to think about.

In some ways, we're also massively protected and supported by Lancaster University. If it's low carbon, we can be low carbon too.

Paul: Yeah. And when it comes to transport, I was very disappointed you turned down my proposal for when we went to Malaysia a little while ago, not to cycle there. [Jan laughs]

But it was your decision and there we go.

Jan: It was what it was.

Paul: It was what it was. We had to go on the plane. It was very annoying that we didn't get to cycle or take a pedalo, but that might, yeah, the Suez Canal would've been interesting, we'd have managed it.

The reason I talk to you about local businesses is 'cause today we're bringing in someone who is gonna be the first of our local heroes. Someone who works in a business in the region here around Lancaster, and whose business has a very positive attitude towards sustainability.

Jan: I love the idea of local hero podcasts. Great idea.

Paul: Yes. We're not necessarily gonna be doing them one after the other in a short series here, but we are gonna be featuring them, dispersing them through the series over the remainder of series two into series three. If Jan hasn't had enough of me, series 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10... [Jan laughs]

You'll have retired at some point in that spell, Jan. But you know, it's something that we're gonna be including in here.

So we're gonna be starting off today with our first local hero. It's someone I work with quite a lot actually in my other job when it comes to producing materials that promote the research engagement work here in Lancaster University Management School.

We're joined by Steve Parkman. He is the owner of 42 Creative - we'll find out why it's called 42 at some point as well, I'm sure, 'cause that's something I want to know - and that's a design agency that operates from South Cumbria.

He works with the Pentland Centre and before there was Transforming Tomorrow the podcast, there was Transforming Tomorrow, the magazine, the brochure, and Steve helped us produce that.

Steve is also part of a company that's part of the University's carbon reduction plan suppliers. Steve, welcome to the studio.

Steve: Hello. Thank you for inviting me, both.

Paul: We've given you a bit of a buildup here, Steve...

Steve: [laughs] ...you have...

Paul: ...we, we want to find out a little bit then about yourself. Tell us about yourself, your background. What led you to become a graphic designer?

Steve: Well, I'm a bit disturbed by the word hero initially because I would've worn me cape if I'd known. [Jan laughs]

I'm Steve. I'm from South Wales, and I went to a Welsh-speaking school. I kind of knew early on in my time at school that I wanted to be in something creative. But we were talking early eighties here, and very early eighties, and it is quite difficult to know what is about.

I mean, these days we're bombarded with stuff on social media and everything. Everyone knows what everything is. I didn't know anything really.

So one day my art teacher was critiquing a piece of my work and said, oh, you'd make a good graphic designer. And I thought, oh, that sounds interesting. I'll have a look that up.

So off I went down to Cardiff Central Library. And looked at graphic designer. And during that I found a guy called Herb Lubalin, who's a New York graphic designer, mainly in the 1960s. And I saw two pieces of work that made me think, I wish I'd done that. And that was it. I thought, I'm gonna be a graphic designer.

So, um, it was around about the time as well where, um, Neville Brody was designing The Face magazine. I dunno if you came across the Face magazine?

Paul: Jan?

Jan: No... [laughs]

Paul: I was gonna say it's probably more, it sounds like if this was early eighties, I was gonna be, um, three, four years old, er not necessarily...

Jan: ...well, I was old enough, but I'm not here, so...

Steve: Well, he, he was known for breaking all the rules of typography, and I thought I want some of that as well. So graphic design was clearly the thing.

So once I knew that, I went off and did a foundation course. I then went to Leicester Polytechnic, De Montfort University as it is now, and studied graphics for three years.

After leaving, uh, university, I went down to London. I had a job in, as a art director, in a recruitment advertising agency. And winning numerous awards, which is, I'm quite proud of, including the Oscars of the industry, The BRA Awards, I won Ad of the Year, so I was really pleased with that.

Paul: BRA.

Steve: BRA, yeah.

Paul: What does that stand for?

Steve: Uh. British Recruitment Advertising awards.

Paul: Obviously.

Steve: Yes. [laughs] Uh, and then after eight years in London, worked at a couple of agencies. I moved north up to Cumbria. I met my wife in London, and she was from Kendal. So, uh, that seemed a natural progression. Now you can only do so long in London, I think, and that you need, you need a change.

Uh, so I, I lived in Kendal, worked as a creative director in Manchester for a year. Then moved fully to Kendal and worked at a couple of agencies, before setting up 42 Creative. And that's me in a nutshell, really.

Jan: And why is it called 42 Creative? [everyone laughs] Because I was thinking maybe it's latitude and I think, no, it's not latitude and...

Steve: ...no...

Jan: ...so, yeah...

Steve: ...so I'd like to say it was my age, but clearly it's not.

Jan: [laughs] It was at one stage though.

Steve: It was at one stage, yeah. It would be nice if...

Paul: ...everyone's been 42 at one stage, or will be at one stage.

Steve: Yeah, I should have called it 42, 43, 44 each year and changed it. I didn't think of that. So.

Paul: There'd have been lots of accusations of tax dodging I think, if you were to change the, uh, the company name every year.

Steve: Uh, 42 Creative is the ultimate answer to Life, the Universe and Everything.

Jan: I did hope that that was the case. [laughs] I'm now very happy.

Steve: So I take it you're both familiar with Hitchhiker's Guide to The Galaxy...

Paul: ...Douglas Adams has a lot to answer for...

Steve: ...he does, yeah.

Paul: Yes. Yeah, yeah.

Steve: But in a nutshell, the hyperintelligent beings, the mice, um, built a super computer called Deep Thought to come up with the ultimate answer, and it took seven and a half million years for it to come up, the answer 42.

But nobody really knew what the question was. So they then had to build an even bigger computer, which turned out to be Earth, and it goes on from there. So...

Jan: ...that's, that's...

Steve: ...so we, we, we like to see ourselves as the ultimate solution.

Jan: Yeah, oh no, that's, that's lovely and creative in its own right.

Steve: Can I give the credit to my wife? [everyone laughs]

Jan: Yeah. If you, if you have to, now is the time to do it publicly. I, I encourage that.

Paul: When it comes then to graphic design, print, the areas you work in, what sustainability issues are you coming across?

Steve: Quite a lot really. Um, it's, it's changed the role quite significantly. Uh, previously, you know, you, you would take a brief off a customer, design a job and execute it to that demographic, get response, that would be it.

Now you have to consider more the customer's perspective and how they want to be perceived. So certainly someone like you, Jan, then the way we execute a project in terms of print or digital, uh, we're very careful in the materials we use and that sort of thing, to make sure that we're not harming your brand by shoving 10,000 leaflets out there.

So that's, that's the big thing. Um, I mean, when I started out, we, we didn't have computers, I had a layout pad and a marker pen, and it was a lot simpler. These days, you know, everything goes via print or digital, and there are many ways to go wrong in that route.

And you have to be very careful that, you're as sustainable as you can be. And, and, and print, you know, print had a lot of bad press over the years, especially recently with a lot of large utility companies, banks, encouraging people to go paintless, er, paperless, save a tree, you know, let's save the world, go paperless.

Whereas it's greenwashing, it's, it's about saving money and they should just say that, which is fine. Um, but paper is probably the most sustainable or one of the most sustainable products on the planet, if it's managed correctly.

Paul: When it comes to this, then how do you address it within your business? What are you doing within your business specifically? Um, to be more sustainable.

Steve: Um, well, there's two sides to, there's two sides of our business. There's the design side. And then there's, what do we do with that design once we've achieved it, which as I've just said, it is either print or digital.

On the design side, we can control it. We have a solar array. I don't like to say we're fully off grid, but we're not far off it. In December, January, we start at nighttime, and we leave at nighttime. And we probably haven't put enough charge on the battery to sustain those bits. But other than that, I mean, at the moment, I dunno what to do with it all. We've just got loads of the stuff if you want. [laughs]

Paul: Just brought some in a suitcase today. [everyone laughs] Spare energy, anyone want some?

Jan: Well, the sunshine does it for you.

Steve: The, the other side of the business is the print and the digital, which is a lot harder. But we work quite closely with our printer. Our printer also has a solar array, so he estimates that about 50% of his energy comes from solar.

Um, all our paper is FSC rated. Um, FSC is the, uh, Forestry Stewardship Council. So they manage the forests where, uh, all the paper comes from, or the wood comes from.

Uh, and an interesting point that, between 2005 and 2020 European forests grew by a staggering 58,390 square kilometres, which is larger than the size of Switzerland. So, it is sustainable as long as we manage it correctly.

Further down the line, you've then got the production of the paper, which uses a lot of water, et cetera, et cetera. Um, but there are two schemes that we're part of, the Carbon Capture Scheme and the World Land Trust, and what they do is, uh, we pay a little bit more per ton of paper, but they offset the production and the transportation against planting trees in the UK.

Digital is a little bit more tricky, but we use a supplier who has a green server. So, um, a lot of your projects are hosted on our green server, um, which is solar-powered. Um, but a lot of digital work isn't. And there's a lot of data out there that's just churning away 24/7, waiting for people to access it.

Jan: Mmm. So, what I really like about that is that in, in your landscape, there's partners that are either certifying where the timber from or ways of joining up and bringing together people to do better things in collaboration with each other.

And, that seems to be, that's important when you're a small business to be able to plug into these other, um, schemes and groups of people doing great things.

Steve: Yeah. Yeah, it is definitely. And, and I think a lot of people want to do it. Um, the difficult bit is the cost. I mean, obviously there's, there can be a cost in implication.

Recycled paper, for example. A lot of our work is educating our customers. So recycled paper, it's quite often requested until they see the cost of it. And also recycled paper is, you know, the, the energy used to create it, certainly for litho printing, it's fine for packaging, and then it goes to egg cartons and to cat litter, wherever. Um, but that first thing, the, the processes to make it printable.

So yeah, it's quite challenging, but also you can only recycle paper two point something times before the fibres become too short, and you have to introduce virgin sustainable paper. So you can't have recycled paper without virgin sustainable paper. The two go hand in hand. And there's no evidence that recycled paper is actually greener than sustainable paper. So, there's a lot of education goes on in the process now that we didn't have originally as designers. We just made nice designs.

Jan: So when it comes to print media and ink, is that on a sustainability trajectory as well?

Steve: It is definitely, yes. I mean, going back to when I started out, there was no such thing as this. And I hate to think how much spray mount and magic marker fumes I've inhaled over the years.

Um, and ink was the same. Ink was quite toxic. Um, but now all reputable printers, in fact probably all printers, used vegetable-based inks. Which are far better for the environment.

And in fact, printers go a lot further than that. They're, the plates they make for the presses, they're all recycled. Uh, there's very little waste these days in print itself.

Paul: So, why did you want to adopt these practices then, Steve? You, you say, you say there is sometimes there's the greater expense there, so that it's not obviously been done as a money saving measure. What, what was driving you towards this move?

Steve: We do it in our day-to-day lives anyway. I mean, we're a small business, it's a husband-and-wife team. We always had a belief in, in this way of going, and so why not do it in your business as well?

We can probably make more of a difference in our business, certainly in how we present to our customers and the work that you produce. Therefore, um, it just makes more, far more sense.

Paul: Do you find there's a demand from customers then? Do you find that more customers, the more time goes on, want stuff to be able to be proven as more sustainable?

Steve: Definitely. Yeah. I don't think there's a customer who doesn't at the moment. I think they're obviously fulfilling their own sustainability values and policies.

Paul: And, and how hard is it then to be sustainability-oriented as a small business?

Steve: Uh, I think the processes are there. The, the problem is the cost. So quite often a client will come to us and want A, B, and C. We quote A, B, and C, and then they go for option D because they can't afford A, B, and C.

Um, and which is fair enough because at the end of the day, uh, and us as a small business as well, we, we've got to make money and our priority has to be our day job, which is designing and running the business.

The aside to that is, you know, trying to be sustainable. We can't do that in our office hours. We're not big enough to have somebody who can come in and sort that for us. Um, we have to do it over a coffee in the morning before we start work.

The positive side is we can make change a lot quicker than bigger businesses can, so we can decide over a coffee and implement it by 10 o'clock and it's, there's no, there's no delay, as such.

Jan: And if we move from the customers to this, your suppliers, are you able to have those conversations with your suppliers and they understand what you're asking for and have a solution for you?

Steve: Yeah, I mean, our suppliers are very carefully chosen and you know, I've been in the business quite a long time now, and I've been able to build those relationships.

So we do try to work with businesses that have the same values as we have. Um, so we work with, uh, a company, a print company, MTP, I already mentioned they have a 50% solar array. Talking to Alice at MTP, we often talk about papers, and Steve at MTP, uh, they get quite excited by that.

Um, in terms of the digital side, we work with a company called Designworks and all their stuff is hosted on green servers. Uh, which is a big point of difference that our customers particularly like.

Paul: And then you also work with bigger organisations such as ourselves here at the University. And I mentioned at the very start, you 're one of the University's carbon reduction plan suppliers.

First of all, what does that mean? And then what have you done to achieve that? And did you do that specifically to become a carbon reduction plan supplier?

Steve: Initially it means we are endeavouring to be net zero, uh, as is the University, and we want to work along that path with you. So, it does help drive us on.

Uh, we've actually engaged with a company called Green Small Business, another Kendal company, uh, and they're helping us with our plan, which marries into the net positive direction that the University's going, um, to help us give us action plans to move forward.

Jan: Yes. So, the University is, you know, a large, um, economic, you know, player in this region. And so, I mean, I don't want you to, you know, diss the university [laughs] because we're a part of the university as well...

Paul: We have jobs, we have salaries...

Jan: ...indeed...

Paul: ...please be careful...

Jan: ...indeed. So how does the university, through this carbon reduction plan suppliers, do they help you with that in terms of helping you build your capability to join them on that journey together?

Steve: Yeah, it's a two-way thing. It's, it's not, nobody dictates to us or, or us to them.

Um, obviously we've got a lot of knowledge in our print and digital side, um, which hopefully our knowledge can be shared with the university and then passed on.

Um, vice versa, they're very helpful in setting goals as well and helping us achieve those goals going forward.

Jan: So is there, is there a wee hotspot going on up in Kendal with, with like 'green businesses are us', or 'sustainability businesses are us' in Kendal?

Is there quite a bit of action?

Steve: Um, I haven't really thought about it, but we live in, you know a very rural area. Most of us are out on the fells at the weekends. Uh, we, we hang around in the same cafes. It's a small place. So you tend to migrate, I guess, to the same people. Most of the people I've dealt with for years. So we probably have similar values, I would've thought. And that's the reason why.

Jan: Yeah, that's nice. That's sort of a business ecosystem then, isn't it? It's not just...

Steve: ...yeah, yeah, it is...

Jan: ...a single, single business. It's people.

Steve: Yeah, there's, there's a nice little cafe called No Hands Rest, which is a climbing cafe, which I didn't know that was a climbing term at the time. But apparently, resting with no hands, it makes sense.

Uh, and they hold regular evenings on sustainability and carbon footprint and things like that, and it's, it's a great environment.

Paul: Are you seeing it then with other businesses, not necessarily those that you have professional relationships with, but with other businesses in the area that you maybe encounter or on a formal, informal basis that there is that drive among these small companies for sustainability?

Steve: There is to an extent, but as we mentioned earlier, we have to make a profit. We have to make a living. And it has to be tempered with that, sadly. Uh, but yeah, the people I circle with, and certainly my smaller customers as well, all drive that way.

Jan: Yeah. And I suppose what's quite interesting about that is that, um, is that sort of banding together and feeling in common purpose.

Uh, at various times I, in cities I've lived in, there's sort of been like Thursday night, once a month, green drinks, um, which I, I suppose is quite, you know, excludes people who don't drink, although you can drink anything you like, but people used to get together in professional groups and sort of chat about what their employers were doing and what could happen, et cetera.

So I think in that respect, some buddies to go along with, um, a plan is always quite a nice one. And that, you know, that, that sort of community spirit and community support, even if you're not necessarily in a business relationship,

you can see, well this is, you know, normal, or if we pick up Nick Barter's phrase, this is future normal.

This is what normal is going to be. And we can, we can push to that at, at the right time without, you know, collapsing your financials at the same time.

Steve: I think you're spot on there, the word 'normal'. Um, we don't see ourselves as being necessarily 'sustainable'. It's what we do.

Jan: Yeah, I like that.

Steve: And, and the people I deal with, that's what they do.

So yeah, I regularly meet for coffees with people and conversations invariably turn to, in fact, um, I met with someone this week and he, he made it back from Manchester Airport Power after picking his daughter up with eight miles left on his electric vehicle.

[everyone laughs]

Jan: That feels a wee bit tight.

Steve: [laughing] It was.

Paul: I'm not sure I'd enjoy that trip home. [everyone laughs] The, the way they're fine on the way home off the last 10, 15 miles. Am I just about to stop in the middle of nowhere?

Um, Steve, what has been some of the most inspiring sustainability in business publication you've been involved with designing printing in recent years, then?

Steve: Well, you're gonna hate me for saying this, but there's two projects which is 54 Degrees, which we do with you, Paul, and Transforming Tomorrow.

Jan: I like this guest.

Paul: I'm involved with both of them, so it's me. I am the inspiration.

[everyone laughs]

Jan: We clearly like this guest, particularly Paul.

Steve: It's, it's an interesting process, when you design something. I deliberately, initially, don't read the article. I read the heading, I read the sound first, and then I look for imagery to go with that because if it doesn't work at that stage, then it's not gonna work at all.

We then read further into it, to back it up, to make sure the imaging we're choosing is correct. And some of the articles have really, you know, touched us a bit. So there was one, and it was a while back now, and I don't remember what the article was, um, but there was a mention about sustainable pensions, and I didn't know a sustainable pension was even a thing. I just had a pension.

So we contacted our financial advisor and we now have sustainable pensions, which are, you know, not just ethical in terms of not dealing with oil, but dealing with companies who have modern slavery policies and things like that.

And, uh, we feel a lot more comfort... it's not doing very well, but we do feel a lot more comfortable with having it.

[everyone laughs]

Jan: I don't think anyone's...

Paul: ...you feel more comfortable now, but when it comes to retirement...

[laughter]

Jan: Unfortunately, I don't think anyone's pension's doing very well currently.

Steve: No, they haven't. No, no. I'm hoping that sustainable pensions will be something that's become more popular, and those businesses are gonna thrive over the coming years as well, so hopefully, we'll, we'll sit on the back of that.

Paul: Yeah. I think I know the, uh, article you're referring to, it was a lot about, um, ESG investing...

Steve: ...it was...

Paul: ...sustainable investing, and such like this and the, the trends that there are in the markets and such. Yeah, no, that's interesting to see how that's actually, you've read the article within the publication of 54 Degrees and then applied it to your own life.

Jan: Well, I've often thought people that do your kind of job, but also Ffion as well, because you get to hear such a wide variety of what goes on in the world must be, you know, on, on some levels, some of them will undoubtedly be boring to you, but on other levels you get to see a wee snippet of all sorts of things.

Steve: Yeah, it's quite interesting actually, 'cause our, I mean, we do a lot of work in the higher education sector, but we do, because of where we're based, a lot of work in the tourism and hospitality sector as well...

Jan: ...yeah...

Steve: ...and watching the hotels and guest houses and how they're trying to be sustainable. And the larger attractions. I mean, uh, we've got Ullswater Steamers and Ravenglass Railway in, uh, I think Ravenglass Railway now run completely smokeless coal and things like that. But end of the day it's a steam railway. Yeah, it has to be a steam railway otherwise people wouldn't go to this. They have quite a hard battle ,and watching them and what they try to achieve is quite encouraging.

Jan: That's very cool.

And, we really like you producing, Transforming Tomorrow, 'cause it's, 'cause it's got a different feel and fit and we are just trying to communicate in a different kind of way about what, what the world's like, so we really appreciate your, your design of that because we have the idea, but until we see it on the page, it can't sort of, you know, jump out at us and make us feel like people would read this.

Steve: That's very kind of you to say, but I think our job is to make things readable.

Jan: Yeah...

Steve: I mean the goal of graphic designer everyone thinks is to make things look pretty. It's not. The goal of graphic designer is to make things look readable to the target audience. And we break the page down into elements.

So headline, image, subheading, logo, and we make, hopefully, make you read it in the order we want you to read the page.

Jan: Well, I'm gonna...

Steve: ...if it, if it looks pretty as well, then that's a bonus.

Jan: Yeah. Well, I think I'm gonna have to go back and read some of the stuff you're designed for us to see how you take my hand without me even knowing it, and make me do what you want to do.

[Steve laughs]

Paul: What, what worries me is I've been involved in the production processes of these alongside you, and you should have read them before now, but it would appear not!

[laughter]

Jan: No, I mean, read them with new eyes.

Paul: Okay, alright.

Well, Steve, thank you very much for joining us here today. It's been a really good conversation.

Thank you.

Steve: Oh, diolch yn fawr iawn.

[Theme music]

Paul: Having listened to Steve, and spoken to Steve, Jan, do you feel in a better position to start up this small business and be more sustainable with it?

Jan: I think it's hard work and it's, it's really interesting that he, you know, talked about how they've, you know, built up elements over time, but also that they rely on other people in their, um, their supplying environment to be able to do that, but also that big job of educating the customer, who might have the wrong end of a stick when it comes to things that they think are more sustainable. I think it's, um, yeah, good on 'em, but it's tough work.

Paul: And obviously not just the customer thinking what may or may not be more sustainable, but then realising that sometimes in order to be more sustainable, yes, there is a bit of an extra cost and have they got the capacity to do that because as Steve says, for him and for lots of other businesses, whether it be suppliers, partners, or just other businesses he comes across, profit is still key. You can't run a business that is not making a profit 'cause that business won't last for everyone.

Jan: Yeah. And it's not even like he's an SME, he's a micro business. You know, the two people making all of that happen.

So I, I honestly, um, given the kind of work that we've done with him, I thought there was loads more people in, in the, the company. So, it's really impressive.

Paul: Yeah, a really small business. But considering so many different elements of it, and obviously striving with purpose to be more sustainable. Not just

stumbling along and finding himself being more sustainable with what their company's doing, but finding ways to be more sustainable with great deliberation.

Jan: Yes. And now one of the things that really he, he spoke about, which I really picked up on, 'cause I know that we're gonna be talking about this in, uh, season three, um, talking about green servers and the fact that digital isn't, isn't sustain, isn't a, you know, an area where this wouldn't also be considered.

So that was quite, quite interesting to hear about.

Paul: It's something actually that I spoke to Steve about five years ago when we first started doing digital versions of the 54 Degrees Magazine, which Steve mentioned, which comes out of the Management School and highlights the research here.

And we'd already, before that point, had ways of looking at the paper being sustainably sourced and the, the efforts that Steve had there. But we wanted to make sure if we were gonna have this online, what's the carbon footprint of it going to be when it's online?

Steve was working with a supplier so that, where they stored the data, so that it was done in a more sustainable way. He talked about the solar power that's there, not just for digital, but then his print option as well, and with their own design studio.

So it's really interesting to see how they're considering it across all the mediums. Because it might be easy to think, oh, if you're working with print, that's where all your efforts are going in with sustainability. But no, Steve's got them with his own design work and design studio, and with where they're storing digital products that they're producing.

Jan: That's pretty, that's amazing. I also like the feeling that, um, that there might be a sort of a local ecosystem of other small businesses who are on the same kind of journey and have the same kind of attitudes, and there's a chance and a space for people to share that knowledge and to feel inspired by each other.

Paul: Yeah, and I think Steve just about managed to avoid the feeling of there being some kind of survivalist cult near Kendal [Jan laughs] when he talked about going off-grid and being in Cumbria and having all of these people who

meet up for green drinks, which again, I, I, at first I wondered if that was the colour of the drinks and it was like some kind of, of Soylent Green solution.

But no, the, the fact that you've got businesses who obviously have similar attitudes, the business owners, the people who are making these decisions, you know, working in a similar pathway. And it's good to see that Steve's finding that businesses are naturally coming to this as well.

They're not always being forced. Some of them will be being forced to do it by market circumstance, but a lot of them are coming to these decisions naturally.

Jan: Yeah. And that's inspiring in itself.

Paul: Next week, Jan, I think we're gonna go from Kendal to India.

Jan: That's a... big shift, but a good shift.

Paul: Yeah. We're not going to be pedalling on a bicycle, we're not going to be walking, we're not going to be swimming. We're going to be using the wonders of digital technology to speak to someone who's out there.

We're going to be talking to a guy called Sreevas, who's from the University of Glasgow, and we're gonna be talking to him about how he beat us to an award.

Jan: [laughs] I'm sure that we will, we like him already, but I'm sure we'll like him more and will forgive him for pipping us at the post.

Paul: Yeah, we'll also talk to him about things like entrepreneurship in India, and, um, SDGs and sustainability. But, yeah, mainly how he pipped us to an award.

Jan: [laughs] That's what you're talking about.

Paul: Yes. [joking] I'll be very angry with him.

[Theme music]

Paul: Until then, thank you very much for listening. I'm Paul Turner.

Jan: And I'm Professor Jan Bebbington.

[Theme music]