

That was kind of you

I have just had a long chat with [REDACTED] and we have a project idea that he will brief you about.....

SIR IAN BLATCHFORD
DIRECTOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

From: [REDACTED]@uk.bp.com>
Sent: 31 July 2019 15:00
To: Ian Blatchford <Ian.Blatchford@ScienceMuseum.ac.uk>
Subject: RE: Science Museum Group and Climate Change

Thanks. Just wanted to check in advance.

bp@uk.bp.com

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From: Ian Blatchford <Ian.Blatchford@ScienceMuseum.ac.uk>
Sent: 31 July 2019 14:58
To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@uk.bp.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@uk.bp.com)>
Subject: Re: Science Museum Group and Climate Change

You can use the whole thing

Sent from my iPhone

On 31 Jul 2019, at 14:47, [REDACTED]@uk.bp.com> wrote:

Ian, please can I reference your note in our internal staff briefing or just what read out in the debate (below)?

"I am very sceptical about the trite argument that such sponsorships are greenwashing. It would be much better for the oil companies to seek a quiet life by not sponsoring high profile institutions, because working with us exposes them to exceptional scrutiny."

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[\[REDACTED\]@uk.bp.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@uk.bp.com)

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From: Ian Blatchford <Ian.Blatchford@ScienceMuseum.ac.uk>
Sent: 31 July 2019 12:06
To: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@uk.bp.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@uk.bp.com)>
Subject: RE: Science Museum Group and Climate Change

Great I will watch it

SIR IAN BLATCHFORD
DIRECTOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@uk.bp.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@uk.bp.com)>
Sent: 31 July 2019 11:52
To: Ian Blatchford <Ian.Blatchford@ScienceMuseum.ac.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@uk.bp.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@uk.bp.com)>; [REDACTED] <[\[REDACTED\]@uk.bp.com](mailto:[REDACTED]@uk.bp.com)>
Subject: RE: Science Museum Group and Climate Change

You came up several times in the debate today Ian, which was a very fair and balanced discussion of the key arguments on both sides. I really hope this is the point at which the debate becomes more engaged and sensible – today was a great start with really respectful discussion of a wide range of positions. [REDACTED] and I both spoke with some of the participants and I think that much of the issue is a failure of the industry to engage properly over recent years over the actions we are actually taking on the energy transition.

You can see the full debate at [REDACTED]

I think you'll find particularly interesting and relevant the question of skills-based representation on trustee boards and the framework for ethical decision-making. I'm pretty much entirely in agreement with the points there – it's an existing requirement of trustee boards but the suspicion remains that boards don't take that seriously. The points you make below about [REDACTED] are important and need to be more widely known.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

to water supplies and we were prescient in doing so. Only last week, the international press was reporting major water shortages in India, and there was an anxious debate in France with their press raising great concern about how the country can sustain its countryside and agriculture as a water crisis looms.

There has been media chatter about national museums, a Trustee at the British Museum resigning in protest at their acceptance of BP sponsorship, amongst a range of issues, and on 17 July Tate deciding to 'declare' a climate emergency. Interestingly, whilst the latter was praised on social media by some in the environmental movement, it received barely any mainstream press coverage. I have a theory about why that was, and will say more about that below.

In this context, right now seems like the perfect time to update you on what the Science Museum Group is doing to reduce its carbon emissions and say a little more about our own relationship with the energy companies.

What are WE doing?

You might be surprised to learn that we have cut our emissions by far more than any other national museum, and with quiet efficiency have been innovative and clear-sighted.

Whilst I normally relish trumpeting our achievements, I think it is more difficult to sing our praises when it comes to carbon emissions, partly because the majority of our vast audience simply – and rightly – expects us to do this, as a decent commitment to our changing climate. The Tate announcement got such limited coverage, perhaps because press releases that are more statement than substance do not always play well with a jaded media. Also, as it happens, I am far from sure that declaring a climate emergency is the best course of action and it is not one that I would recommend for our Group. I prefer action, not words.

It is much more important to me that YOU know what has been done so far, and that you play a greater part in reducing our emissions.

In September 2018 we appointed [REDACTED] as Sustainability [REDACTED], after a very competitive internal process. She was due to spend a year in the role, but it will now be two years because of the excellent work she has been doing. She has been reporting regularly to the Group Executive and in June she presented a fascinating paper to the Board of Trustees. I attach a summary of her Board report and I think it is ESSENTIAL READING for all of us. In addition to the actions it outlines, over the next few years across the Group there are science festivals, exhibitions and new galleries where sustainability should have a clear voice.

Through energy efficiencies and renewal of electricity procurement, we have cut our emissions by 69% since 2011/12 and we all adore the solar farm at the National Collections Centre which covers 88 acres and feeds 50GWH into the national grid – almost four times what we use as an organisation. And we have done all this despite expanding the size of the Group over the same period. By any measure, we should be proud of this.

I am also delighted to report that our former colleague Chris Rapley, Professor of Climate Science at UCL, has agreed to join the Science Museum Advisory Board. I am in regular contact with Chris, who is so generous in his advice about the latest scientific evidence.

What about the oil companies?

We have long-standing relationships with several energy companies, such as BP, Shell and Equinor and some campaigners are urging national museums to sever all links.

This has been the subject of regular review by the Group Executive and the Board of Trustees and the clear view has been that such an act would be unwise. The major energy companies have the capital, geography, people and logistics to be major players in finding the solutions and demonising them is seriously unproductive. I discuss these issues regularly with vital sister organisations like the Natural History Museum and their team take the same view.

Whilst the global economy remains carbon intensive, the energy companies conduct extensive research into a wide range of new technologies to reduce our dependence, including carbon capture, fuel efficiency and alternative energy. They are also major funders of world class research at British universities and also invest in crucial scenario planning.

You may have read in the press that major investors have decided to withdraw their funds from oil companies, but you will find less coverage about the major organisations who feel that continuing to work with and engage with them is a more strategic and honest approach. The Church of England, with its vast investment portfolio, has publicly stated it will continue to invest but will consider withdrawing in around five years if those companies have not shown a sufficient shift in priorities. There is another organisation much closer to us that also favours engagement: the Wellcome Trust. Its investments fund vital medical research, but financial returns alone do not suffice for such a deeply ethical foundation. Their Board and senior team take the same view as us: engage, debate, challenge energy companies, because walking away is the easy and fruitless option.

We also achieve moral and public good with their support. The ground-breaking Atmosphere Gallery (visited by 5.4 million people since it opened in December 2010, and a gallery that was publicly praised by Al Gore) would never have been possible without support from Shell, and thanks to support from Equinor for Wonderlab, thousands of young people, from very diverse backgrounds, are inspired to be the scientists and engineers of the future. The same is true of BP sponsorship of The Academy. Those young visitors will be the scientific innovators *and environmental protestors* of the future.

I am very sceptical about the trite argument that such sponsorships are greenwashing. It would be much better for the oil companies to seek a quiet life by not sponsoring high profile institutions, because working with us exposes them to exceptional scrutiny.

Also, our visitors can make their own minds up. We get vanishingly few complaints from them about these sponsors.

However, this does NOT mean that we will work with *any* energy company. We undertake due diligence on all prospective sponsors and we need to be convinced that their actions and values align with our mission and objectives as outlined in *Inspiring Futures*.

Finally, it is absolutely vital to remember that in all such partnerships WE retain editorial control. In 2016 the Art Not Oil Coalition published a report claiming that Shell had interfered with our exhibition programme, and they spread this story more widely in the media. I wrote a firm response for the Chair of the Ethics Committee at the Museums Association. I pointed out that the campaigners had very conveniently not told the whole truth, because whilst Shell has made some comment on a proposed project, at *our* invitation, we had not adopted any of their suggestions because of our independent concerns.

Apologies for such a long email, but I wanted to address some vital issues when they happen to be ultra-topical.

We have a proud record of dramatic cuts in our carbon emissions and we think carefully and honestly about sponsorship too.

Meanwhile, enjoy the summer!

Yours,

Ian

SIR IAN BLATCHFORD
DIRECTOR & CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

[REDACTED]

Science Museum Group
Exhibition Road, London SW7 2DD

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