

Tuesday
6 December 2022,
5.30pm- 7.00pm

**A CITY OF LONDON & BIRKBECK
ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON
THE UNSEEN INFLUENCES ON
CLIMATE, SUSTAINABILITY AND
RESOURCES**



Birkbeck
University of London



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CLO B01, Clore Management Centre, 27 Torrington Square, London WC1E 7JL

Itinerary	
5.30pm	<p>Welcome and Introduction <i>Professor David Latchman, Vice-Chancellor, Birkbeck, University of London</i></p>
5.35pm	<p>Main drivers and key issues that Investment Managers are considering with respect to Climate Change and Sustainability <i>Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney (Chairman), Investment Director at Rathbones</i></p>
5.45pm	<p>Environmental Sustainability and Fiscal sustainability - <i>Professor Ron Smith, Birkbeck, University of London</i></p> <p>Some argue that environmental sustainability is unaffordable, inconsistent with fiscal sustainability, because the public expenditures required to offset climate change imply an exploding national debt. The UK national debt rose from zero in 1694 to almost 200% of GDP in 1816, then declined to 28% in 1913, rising to 260% in 1946 and falling to 22% in 1990. It is now back up to 100% of GDP. I examine the factors that determine fiscal sustainability and government solvency and their implications for financing environmental sustainability.</p>
6.00pm	<p>Cultural Heritage is not always what you think -<i>Dr Esther Breithoff, Birkbeck, University of London</i></p> <p>We tend to look at heritage as something that is inherently good and positively valued. But what about the kinds of toxic and dangerous inheritances that people have to involuntarily live with on a daily basis? Taking the example of unexploded ordinance and climate change in Laos, this talk will discuss how the physical legacies of armed conflict provide an impediment to sustainable development but also point to innovative and creative ways of living in a polluted world.</p>
6.15pm	<p>Environmental Science Diplomacy - Science Engagement with North Korea – <i>Professor James Hammond, Birkbeck, University of London</i></p> <p>What would happen if a large volcano erupted on the border of China and North Korea? Just over 1000 years ago exactly this happened at Mount Paektu and more recently unrest on the volcano refocused attention to the region. It is an example of how environmental hazards and their associated risks do not respect national borders or geopolitical tensions. It shows that international collaboration is essential to understand and mitigate against these events, especially in the face of the increased frequency of environmental disasters due to a changing climate.</p>
6.30pm	<p>Energy Transitions: Lessons from the Past for the Future - <i>Professor Frank Trentmann, Birkbeck, University of London</i></p> <p>Phasing out fossil fuels is the great challenge of our times, but it is not the first time that societies have gone through energy transitions. In this talk, I will focus on the twists and turns of earlier transitions in twentieth-century Britain and the lessons they hold for us today. The switch from coal to gas and electricity was neither smooth nor linear but conditioned by people's home life, daily practices and cultures of comfort. If we want to advance sustainability, we need to focus more on the dynamics of demand than we currently do.</p>
6.45pm	<p>Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney and Panel discussion with the audience</p>
7.00pm	<p>Drinks Reception held in the Clore Suite</p>



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Professor David Latchman, Vice Chancellor Birkbeck, University of London



Professor David Latchman is Vice Chancellor of Birkbeck and he took up this appointment in 2003. He has also been Professor of Genetics at University College London since 1999. David was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in 2010 for his services to higher education. Since his appointment, Professor Latchman has been an advocate of lifelong learning, in a system that focuses on funding school leavers' degrees over others.

Alderman Robert Hughes-Penney (Chairman), Investment Director at Rathbones

Robert is an Investment Director at Rathbones, one of the UK's leading wealth and investment management businesses, where he manages segregated global multi-asset investment portfolios for a range of clients. He served as a director of

the company and was and a member of the Executive & Management Committees for 12 years. He is on the Boards of the Chartered Institute for Securities & Investment and the Impact Investing Institute and spent four years as a Non-Executive Director of the impact investment company, Investing for Good. Robert is an Alderman in the City of London, having previously spent eight years as a Common Councilman during which he chaired the Corporation's Investment Committee. He is also a Past Master of the Guild of Investment Managers (2019-20) and is an Advisor to the Centre for Enterprise, Markets & Ethics, Oxford.

Professor Ron Smith, Birkbeck, University of London

[Ron](#) is Professor of Economics in Department of Economics, Mathematics and Statistics. Awarded the 2011 Lewis Fry Richardson lifetime achievement award for contributions to the scientific study of militarised conflict by the European Consortium of Political Research.

Ron is Fellow of the International Association for Applied Econometrics. On the editorial boards of Defence and Peace Economics, Journal of Peace Research, Journal of Conflict Resolution. Military Economics: the interaction of power and money, Palgrave 2009 was shortlisted for the 2010 Duke of Westminster's Medal for Military Literature.



Dr Esther Breithoff, UKRI Future Leader Fellow, Senior Lecturer in Contemporary Archaeology and Heritage, Birkbeck, University of London

[Esther](#) is a UKRI Future Leaders Fellow and Senior Lecturer in Contemporary Archaeology and Heritage in the Department of History, Classics and Archaeology at Birkbeck, University of London. Her research spans the fields of Contemporary Archaeology and Critical Heritage Studies and has ranged across a number of different topics –including war, natural and cultural heritage, nuclear and petroleum industries, dictatorships and biobanking –but traces a common set of interests in the relationships between conflicts, resources, recycling and rights across the human/non-human divide in the Anthropocene era.

Professor James Hammond, Birkbeck, University of London

[James](#) is a Professor of Geophysics at Birkbeck, University of London. His research uses seismology to image inside the Earth, with a focus on imaging and understanding how rocks melt and how this melt migrates and is stored in the Earth's crust and mantle. He conducts large field projects, working in volcanic regions of East-Africa, Chile, China and the Korean Peninsula. James has recently led projects to study Mount Paektu, a volcano

that straddles the China-Democratic People's Republic of Korea border.

This project, an example of how science and diplomacy can work together, led to the development of the Mount Paektu Research Centre of which James is Director.

Professor Frank Trentmann, Birkbeck, University of London

[Frank](#) is a professor in the Department of History, Classics and Archaeology where he is a specialist in the history of consumption.

Frank has written about consumer culture; everyday life; water and the modern city; free trade and fair trade; and energy. He has been the principal investigator of the AHRC project "Material Cultures of Energy" (2014-17) and a member of the EPSRC–ESRC research centre DEMAND (Dynamics of Energy, Mobility and Demand).

