



# Climate Change Adaptation Personas

Workshop Outline and Template

# Adaptation Scotland

supporting climate change resilience

Personas turn insights about real people into a fictional character, with backgrounds, goals, and values. Using personas can help people to see climate change impacts in relation to specific 'types' of characters, which can help generate a deeper understanding of their broader needs, underlying challenges they may face, and what might enable them to adapt.

This workshop outline and template can help you to create personas to encourage better understanding of climate change, its impacts and adaptation actions for your place.

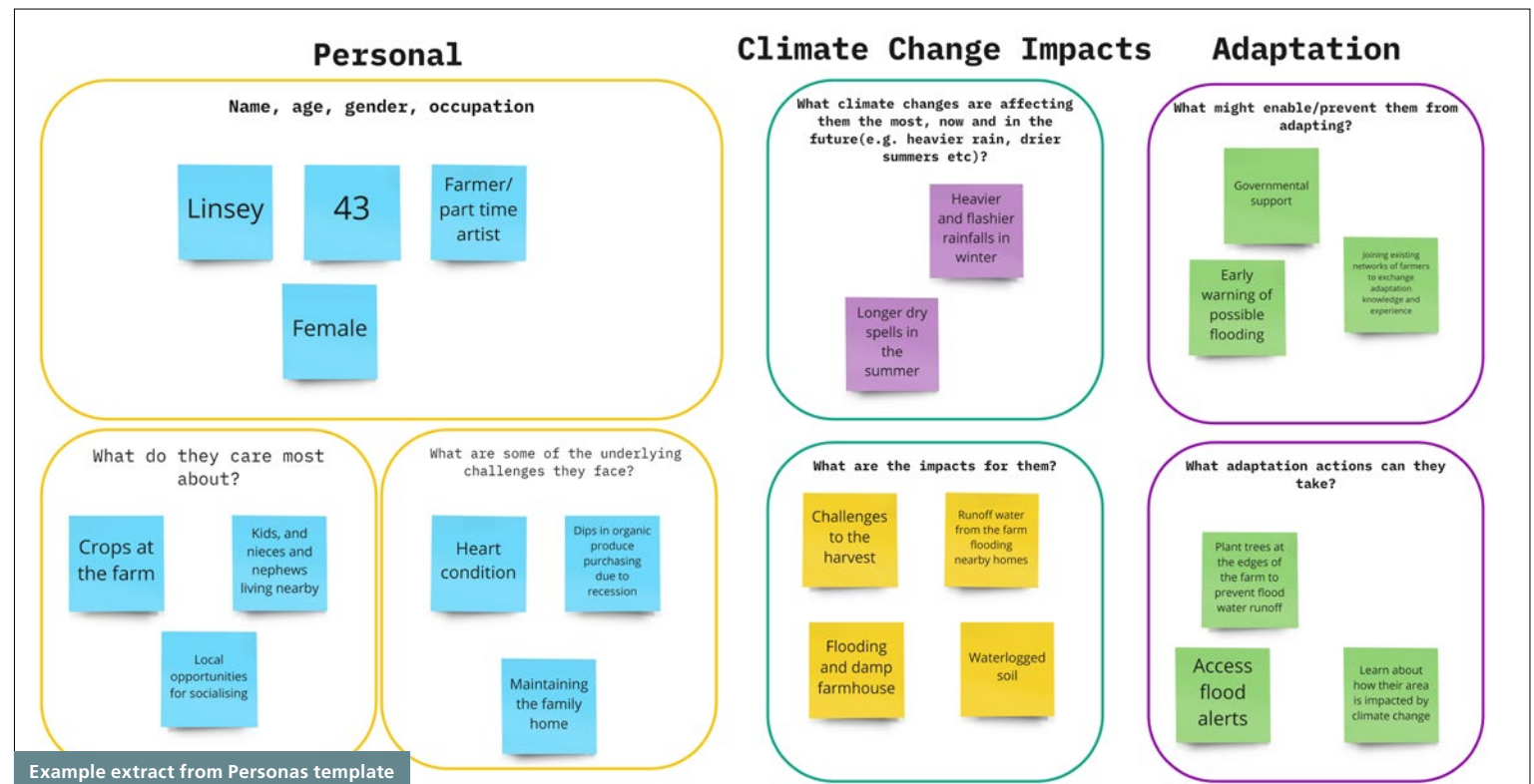
## Who is it for?

Anyone who wants to design and run creative and engaging conversations about climate change adaptation and develop a more nuanced understanding of how climate change impacts different people. This tool is especially helpful for understanding of climate change impacts on more vulnerable groups (such as women, disabled people, young people, the elderly, or non-human inhabitants of the area).

## What will you have as a result?

Co-designed personas that will help you put a 'face' to adaptation, better understand different experiences of climate change and to think from specific perspectives about its impacts and adaptation actions. It will also help you think about what structural barriers to adaptation there might be for people in your place, and to see

adaptation as an intersectional issue. Intersectional thinking acknowledges that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination or oppression. When thinking about adaptation actions it is important to consider how a person's different social categorisations (such as gender, race, class, physical ability) might overlap to create new or exacerbate existing vulnerabilities.



## Template

If you are running a digital session, an online whiteboard template like **this one** can be downloaded from the Miroverse Template Gallery, along with a suggested workshop outline. If you are new to using Miro, you can find out more **here**. If you are running a session in person, fill in the PDF version of the template.

## How to use it

### ► Preparation

Think carefully about who should take part in the session. As well as your project team you could also include others who are knowledgeable about different individuals, organisations and the politics of your place. You may need to provide some information about climate trends and projections (see for example our **Climate Projections for Scotland summary**), to help people think about what the impacts on the personas might be. You can also prepare some background information about your place (see for example **Council Area Profiles** from the National Records of Scotland for local authority based demographic

data, or use another local source of similar information). Explain to people in advance what the purpose and the outcomes of the session are, inviting them to think about stakeholders and potential personas beforehand.

### ► During the session

#### **Step 1 Creating a personas library (this step can also be carried out in advance through desk-research)**

Together with the session participants, brainstorm some potential personas that you feel represent the local population. You could think about:

- Which types of people are you trying to influence?
- Whose perspectives are important to communicate and frame adaptation?
- Who are some of the well-known and recognisable characters in the area?
- Who are the high and low income people in the area?

- What about non-human personas? Is there a local river, an animal, a forest or a plant that is special to your place?

The more diverse your personas library is, the richer a picture of local climate impacts you will get. Once you've got a good number of personas, pick a few (we suggest no more than 5) to develop them in detail. Diversity is your friend here.

#### **Step 2 Developing personas**

Use the template (one per persona) to build elements for each persona by answering the following questions:

- **Personal:** What is the name, age, gender, species and occupation of your persona? What do they care most about? What underlying challenges do they face?
- **Climate change impacts:** What climate changes (e.g. heavier rain, drier summers etc.) are affecting them the most now/in future? What are/might be the impacts of these changes be for them? You could use the **15 Key Consequences of Climate Change for Scotland** infographics to support your conversations.

- **Adaptation:** What might enable or prevent them from adapting? What adaptation actions can they take? What decisions can they influence to support adaptation on a place/regional/national level?

### ► After the session

Take the information you've captured and write this up into a short description which describes your persona. Depending on how you want to use them you could perhaps work with a local designer or artist to develop a visual representation.

Remember though that the *process* of developing personas is likely to be more important than the actual 'product' that is produced!

Refine and iterate these personas by discussing them with your community. Look at the enablers of adaptation – is there anything your group might choose to focus on and progress? Is there anything preventing your personas from adapting that you can address? Who is missing and is important to include into your analysis?

## Further reading / helpful resources

### Personas workshop outline and template

Case study: **Climate Ready Ken: what happens when a Community Development Trust initiates local efforts on climate resilience**

**Climate Projections for Scotland summary**

**15 Key Consequences of Climate Change for Scotland**

**Climate Ready Places interactive website**

**Personas** in Policy Methods Toolbox, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet of the New Zealand Government

**Personas method overview**, Interaction Design Foundation

**Design fiction, culture and climate change. Weaving together personas, collaboration and fabulous futures** [open access], 2017, Design Journal

**Your next persona will be non-human — tools for environment-centered designers**, 2020, Monika

Sznel via UX Collective

**Town centre living: ten principles of a caring place**, Architecture and Design Scotland

**Stakeholder and Power mapping – workshop outline and template**

**Participatory Mapping – a process to gather lived experience of climate impacts**

**Climate Impact Interviews – question set and recording template**

**Climate Adaptation Whirlwind – interactive power point presentation to introduce climate change adaptation**

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