[Some Intro text that perhaps comes across or down the screen one message at a time - let me know what you think]

* Cities are being locked in to unsustainable and damaging practices
* Corporate greed, ecological destruction and inequality are all on the rise
* But something amazing and invisible is happening
* Urban innovators from all walks of life are unlocking the huge potential of real sustainability
* Lets take a journey through this great unlocking

*Then the text for four city systems*

*The Car-free City*

Urban life is shaped through lock in to fossil fuel-based transport. This is the car-based city. Almost all the modern ills of the contemporary city can be told through the automobile. Cars inflict so many multiple and complicated problems (pollution, road deaths, alienated streets, individualism, unequal access, debt, corporate control, consumerism) that a radical break is needed. Great faith is placed on new technologies such as semi-automated, driverless and hydrogen vehicles that could cut pollution and road deaths and create an efficient, rational transport utopia. But cities full with driverless cars will not stop the descent into alienated street life, status anxiety, debt and corporate controlled consumerism. Unlocking real change requires a radical break from the whole culture of the car.

The Car-free city points to a wealth of examples that are unlocking a very different approach to urban mobility. As we lock-down fossil fuel-based transport, we need to unlock the car-free city on a mass scale: cycle lanes, pedestrian routes, mass accessible rapid transport, renewed street life, car-lite urban design. Moreover, the very need for such intense mobility needs to be unpacked and precious urban space simply needs reallocating away from motorised vehicles on a huge scale. Unlocking the car-free city goes hand in hand with a shift in planning and zoning, eroding the need for mass, wasteful commuting from neighbourhood to central work zones. Central areas need to be dispersed, work more broadly distributed, and food, leisure and retail needs rescaling and decoupling from car use. Starting with the car is a great way towards the multiple steps to unlocking real change for sustainable cities.

*The Post-carbon City*

Cities are locked into an aging energy system unfit for the challenges ahead. Through their buildings, transport, producer and consumer services cities are vast energy users, with high energetic throughputs. All this results in localised pollution, dependence on fossil fuels and significant contributions to greenhouse gas emissions. While there is a push to decarbonise urban energy, it remains locked in to outdated centralised and privatised energy and fossil fuel sources. But under the surface there is a civic energy revolution forming. Distributed energy networks, local smart grids, micro generation all point to how cities can unlock a zero-carbon future.

This is a Post-carbon City agenda beyond the geopolitical age of oil, gas and coal. It’s not just a technical or infrastructure transition. It entails widespread change in cultural and social practices. The creation and provision of energy needs reconceptualising around a different set of values. In our energy bloated and incredibly unequal urban societies, demand reduction, curtailment and redistribution loom large. Energy re-municipalisation is on the agenda as cities pave the way to provide affordable green energy for their citizens. A civic energy revolution is rapidly travelling along the rocky road that lies ahead - taking on corporate energy giants, ensuring decarbonisation, localised green power and energy equality.

*The Bio City*

The very ecosystems that cities depend upon are being intensely degraded. The whole idea of cities as natural places is now deeply questionable. Given the biospheric, biodiversity and climatic threats ahead, urgent effort is required to focus on the lock-down of ecosystem degradation, resource depletion, and the commodification of natural resources. We urgently need to create climate safe and resilient cities, and in ways that ensure a new basis for human development. More fundamentally, there is a huge rift between the natural and the urban worlds. There needs to be a radical new human-nature deal based on equality, stewardship, ecological restoration and non-commodified relations.

This is the Bio City which unlocks emerging trends through a radical emerging approach to urban nature including urban rewilding, permaculture, biomimicry, biophilia, urban agriculture, continuous productive urban landscapes, and blue-green infrastructure. Only by deeply reconnecting with nature can we tackle the sustainability crisis ahead.

*The Common City*

The physical places we live give us a sense of place, sustain us and provide wellbeing and shelter. However, something is deeply amiss. Place making has been subject to abstract and alienated planning systems, scarred by bureaucracy, corporate greed and concentrated land ownership. Urban economies have increasingly become locked-in to fast money, volatile inward investment, domination by big brands, zero hours contracts and low pay,and poor skills. And to confound this, urban democracy and governance are intensely unequal and hierarchical. In the west, city governments are rarely governed beyond an established party political elite while city or metro mayors have done little to radically decentralise power to neighbourhoods. We live in deeply uncommon times.

The common city points to a fundamental shift in the way that place making, urban economies and democracy are undertaken. These come in many guises: novel forms of citizen led housing, community ownership, localised and solidarity economies, collaborative production, local currencies and civic finance. Moreover, radically new ways of doing democracy are being activated through experiments in popular assemblies, participatory budgets, citizens forums, distributed networks, coproduction, co-operatives, as well as civil disobedience and direct action that call attention to injustices.