

Exercising our democratic muscles – zoom event report

A second very stimulating conversation on living democracy happened on Sunday 2nd July. Key messages:

- withdrawing consent is only one of four stages in living democracy;
- these stages can / must happen in parallel.

The stages are:

- sowing the seeds of change, perhaps launching the idea that change is needed and possible;
- cultivating the change which is perhaps designing the alternative systems and institutions to carry the new system and the stories (narratives) to facilitate change happening;
- weeding the garden, which is withdrawing consent from the current institutions and policies while at the same time,
- stage four, putting the new systems and institutions into practice. The simultaneity in the process is crucial.

Much more depth and detail can be found in the video of the conversation, which is [uploaded here](#).

Consent to be governed, as with consent in many other aspects of our lives, has a long political tradition. Our consent to be governed is core to legitimising our government and the system of social institutions that is our society.

Withdrawing consent is how we delegitimise the system once it has stopped delivering for us its part of the social contract, such as action on existential threats, affordable housing, compassionate social security, universal health care and so on. When a government increases the coercive power over us, the people, such as by making peaceful protest illegal, it means taking care of us is no longer their primary concern.

Consent can be withdrawn piecemeal, in steps, as new parts of the alternative system come online.