



House of Commons
Environmental Audit
Committee

Learning the Sustainability Lesson

Tenth Report of Session 2002–03

Volume I



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Sustainability Lesson**

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The Environmental Audit Committee

The Environmental Audit Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to consider to what extent the policies and programmes of government departments and non-departmental public bodies contribute to environmental protection and sustainable development; to audit their performance against such targets as may be set for them by Her Majesty's Ministers; and to report thereon to the House.

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References

In the footnotes of this Report, references to oral evidence are indicated by 'Q' followed by the question number. References to written evidence are indicated by page number as in 'Ev12'.

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Conclusions and recommendations

1. Learning is a key driver for sustainable change. However, the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development does not set out a clear vision of the contribution which learning can make to achieving the Government's sustainable development goals. We recommend that the Government rectifies this omission during the forthcoming review of the strategy. (Paragraph 15)

Developing a strategic approach

2. We commend the Sustainable Development Education Panel (SDEP) for its achievements over its five year appointment. It is essential that the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) builds upon the Panel's work to ensure that the momentum is not squandered. (Paragraph 23)
3. We welcome the Secretary of State for Education and Skills' statement confirming the DfES as the lead department for delivering and promoting Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). (Paragraph 32)
4. The DfES has failed to demonstrate any clear vision or strategic thinking relating to ESD. We have been struck by how much has been achieved, despite this policy vacuum, by a range of committed organisations and individual "champions", acting on their own initiative, across the spectrum of lifelong learning. This wealth of activity has flourished despite, rather than because of, DfES. (Paragraph 33)
5. The enthusiasm and body of expertise which already exists within the field of ESD would now benefit from an overall strategic framework. We recommend that DfES develops such a framework which puts ESD firmly within the core education agenda, provides direction and impetus to existing initiatives, identifies and builds upon existing good practice, and prevents any unnecessary duplication of effort and resources. (Paragraph 34)
6. We are astonished that DfES has the audacity to offer less than two weeks for comment on its draft action plan for sustainable development. This is not the "full consultation" that was promised, nor is it in line with Cabinet Office guidelines on consultation. The truncated consultation denies key stakeholders the opportunity to contribute fully to the development of the action plan and will effectively prevent the Department from benefiting from the experience and expertise which already exists. (Paragraph 40)
7. We recommend that DfES launches a full twelve week consultation on its action plan in line with Cabinet Guidelines, after the next Sounding Board meeting in September 2003. (Paragraph 41)

8. We support the development of a stand alone strategy for ESD which builds upon the draft presented by the SDEP and is subject to public consultation. (Paragraph 43)
9. We are concerned that the Secretary of State for Education and Skills has chosen to incorporate the Panel's ESD strategy into one action plan which sets out measures for the delivery of objectives relating to *both* environmental management and ESD policy. We recognise the importance of reflecting sustainable development principles in both departmental operations and policy but we believe that this approach is inherently risky: the Department will need to take particular care to ensure that ESD in educational policy receive the profile it deserves. (Paragraph 44)
10. We are surprised that the Teacher Training Agency has been omitted from the membership of the Sounding Board which is developing the DfES action plan on sustainable development. We recommend that DfES' extends membership to include this key stakeholder. (Paragraph 46)
11. The DfES has yet to confirm the existence of the Sounding Board beyond the development of the action plan. Effective implementation of the plan will be dependent upon the continued engagement with stakeholders. If the Sounding Board is to be discontinued we recommend DfES put in place an alternative mechanism for stakeholder involvement. (Paragraph 47)
12. We recommend that DfES incorporates appropriate responsibilities for ESD within the remit of each of its Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs). This should become a matter of routine when new agencies and delivery partners are established. (Paragraph 49)
13. In exerting a leadership role on ESD, DfES will need to be sensitive to DEFRA's legitimate role in promoting sustainable development and co-ordinate its efforts closely. It will also need to consider the implications of the withdrawal of the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme for those NGOs on whom it might rely to effect change. (Paragraph 51)
14. We do not believe that a strategic approach to ESD would necessarily require significant new resources. It can be achieved by realigning current priorities to integrate ESD into existing work. We recommend that the DfES reviews its current range of ESD initiatives and seeks to rationalise them into a more cohesive programme, concentrating on those approaches which have delivered results. (Paragraph 52)
15. DfES has developed a range of guidance on building design in educational establishments. It now needs to take an active role in promoting this guidance and monitoring and evaluating the extent to which it is being adopted. (Paragraph 57)

Formal Education

16. We believe that it is important that schools have the freedom to establish ESD learning programmes which suit their individual ethos and ways of working. However, their activity could be better supported by a national framework. We recommend that the DfES develops a National School Standard for ESD akin to that used for Healthy Schools. (Paragraph 63)
17. We recognise *Eco-schools* as a valuable initiative in the promotion of ESD. However, we would not like to see DfES follow the example of the Scottish Executive and promote Eco-Schools, almost exclusively, as the key ESD model. (Paragraph 64)
18. Although ESD is integrated into the National Curriculum, it is a theme which schools are expected to develop “across the curriculum”. As past experience with Citizenship has shown, this requires strong leadership within schools. We recommend that the DfES evaluates the opportunities for integrating ESD more effectively and explicitly into the existing framework of Citizenship teaching. (Paragraph 77)
19. We welcome Ofsted’s initiative to investigate current ESD activities in school. We recommend that the Secretary of State requests Ofsted to include ESD in its inspection framework, encompassing ESD both in the curriculum and the learning environment. (Paragraph 84)
20. We are pleased to note the recent efforts by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) to identify the opportunities which it can provide to further the ESD knowledge and practice of newly trained teachers and teacher trainers. (Paragraph 85)
21. We recommend that DfES takes account of any implications for Continuing Professional Development which are highlighted by the Teacher Training Agency’s current work to support ESD in different subject areas. (Paragraph 89)
22. We urge the DfES and Teacher Training Agency to maximise the potential of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority’s (QCA) ESD web resource and encourage its use in the context of initial teacher training and continuing professional development. However, this website does not obviate the need to continue to develop a more comprehensive range of ESD support for teachers. (Paragraph 91)

Further and Higher Education

23. We are disappointed at the dismal response shown by the Government and the majority of Further and Higher Education institutions (FHEIs) to the Toyne Report and its review. (Paragraph 111)
24. We recommend that DfES and the Higher Education Funding Councils carefully evaluate the findings of Forum for the Future’s Higher Education Partnership for

Sustainability (HEPS) report and consider how they can best support and promote ESD in Higher Education Institutions both through strategic guidance and changes to funding criteria. (Paragraph 112)

25. There is little evidence that ESD is being effectively integrated into higher and further education syllabuses. The DfES should assess the adequacy of the range of guidance available to FHEIs relating to the integration of ESD and strengthen this as necessary. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) should evaluate whether its funding mechanisms for both teaching and research sufficiently support cross-curricula activities such as ESD. (Paragraph 113)

The post-16 learning and skills sector

26. We welcome the range of pilot projects which have been supported by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA) to explore a range of approaches to ESD. We also welcome the willingness of the two organisations to work together in this manner. It is now important to build on the experience of these initiatives and develop a coherent and focused programme of activity. (Paragraph 119)
27. We welcome the LSDA's intention to use its involvement with the new Leadership College and Sector Skills Councils for teachers to integrate education for sustainable development into its programmes from the start. These developments represent an important opportunity to embed ESD into the activities of key players in the learning and skills sector and cannot be missed. (Paragraph 121)

Informal public education

28. DEFRA's two major awareness raising campaigns relating to sustainability to date have been less than half-hearted and ill-focussed. We believe that the funding of any further large-scale, general awareness campaigns would not provide value for money. To stimulate the behavioural change required we recommend the Government funds and develops a coherent, long-term, targeted approach to promoting sustainable development which focuses on specific, priority issues such as waste and energy use. (Paragraph 136)
29. We welcome DEFRA's plans to consider replacing the general awareness raising approach of its *Are You Doing Your Bit?* campaign with a more targeted approach. Any new initiative should be fully funded to completion, subject to monitoring and evaluation, and protected from resource leakage. (Paragraph 137)
30. Future mass media campaigns should concentrate on reinforcing positive behaviour through incentives, rewards or reassurance and be supported with a range of practical opportunities for behavioural change at both individual and institutional levels. (Paragraph 138)

31. We welcome DEFRA's initiative to develop a new communications strategy for sustainable development. (Paragraph 144)
32. Education will be a priority communications area in the strategy and DfES should actively contribute to its development. (Paragraph 145)
33. Although DEFRA is the lead department for awareness raising of sustainable development, it is a cross-Government responsibility and all departments should be actively seeking to contribute to this review and the promotion of the final outcome. We look to the Cabinet Sub-Committee of Green Ministers (ENV (G)) to ensure this. (Paragraph 146)
34. We are aware that a number of departments are participating in a review of their sustainable development communications by FUTERRA. We will draw upon this work in the course of our ongoing scrutiny of the "greening government" initiative. We recommend that all Departments, even those who have not participated in this exercise, draw upon its findings in shaping their communications response to sustainable development. (Paragraph 147)
35. We welcome the recent announcement by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and DfES to collaborate more closely through their work with museums. The two departments have a key role to play in promoting ESD through informal learning channels. (Paragraph 154)
36. DCMS has offered to support DfES in developing the lifelong and informal dimensions of its Sustainable Development Action Plan. We recommend that DfES draws upon DCMS' experience in this area. (Paragraph 155)
37. We were impressed by the EcoTeams programme run by Global Action Plan which is successfully promoting behavioural change at household level. We recommend that the Government funds the expansion of this programme to operate on a trial basis across diverse communities, with a full evaluation of the resulting costs and benefits both in qualitative and quantitative terms. (Paragraph 163)
38. We welcome the commitment, in the recent Skills White Paper, to make sustainable development a priority theme across the Skills for Business Network in relation to its work on generic and cross-sector skills. However, we are disappointed that the Government chose to present its future skills policy so visibly and exclusively within the narrow context of economic competitiveness rather than against the wider backdrop of sustainable development. The White Paper will be a key point of reference across the employment and education sectors and the Government has missed an important opportunity to embed sustainable development as a guiding principle. (Paragraph 175)
39. We recommend that DfES works with the trades unions to maximise the potential for promoting and incentivising education for sustainable development

through the mechanism of the Union Learning Representatives and the Union Learning Fund. (Paragraph 183)

40. The development of standards and qualifications for sustainable development is at an early stage for both the professions and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The DfES should convene a standing conference of all those responsible for developing qualifications in this area to facilitate a co-ordinated approach. (Paragraph 192)

Monitoring and evaluating progress

41. We recommend that DfES commissions research into effective indicators for ESD to support the monitoring and evaluation of its proposed sustainable development action plan. The forthcoming review of the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development, and its associated indicators, provides an opportunity to revise current indicators. (Paragraph 195)
42. We recommend that QCA and Ofsted undertake joint, qualitative research on the benefits of ESD in the light of the findings of Ofsted's recent investigation of ESD in schools. (Paragraph 200)
43. We acknowledge the substantial contribution made by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Global Environmental Change Programme. There is now a clear need for new basic and applied research to support the design, implementation and evaluation of formal and informal education for sustainable development. We recommend that the ESRC investigates the viability of such a programme. (Paragraph 204)

Introduction

“We will put concern for the environment at the heart of policy-making, so that it is not an add-on extra but informs the whole of government, from housing and energy policy through to global warming and international agreements.”

Labour Party Manifesto, General Election 1997

1. The House of Commons Environmental Audit Committee was established to monitor how far the Government was succeeding in its undertaking to put the environment, and more broadly sustainable development, at the heart of policy and operations. Time and again, during previous inquiries, we have demonstrated that Government policies and initiatives designed to promote sustainable development will have little lasting impact if the majority of citizens and organisations remain unengaged and unimpressed by the sustainable development agenda.¹

2. Many people regularly express concern over issues which are closely aligned to sustainable development such as energy, waste, transport, pollution and poverty. However, this “latent sympathy”² does not automatically translate into concrete action or support for the policies aimed to remedy these problems. It is this ‘value-action’ gap, well-documented and widely acknowledged,³ which needs to be bridged if progress towards sustainable development is to be made. We set out to examine how far the Government was addressing this ‘gap’ through education, both informal and formal.

3. The World Summit on Sustainable Development highlighted learning as a powerful agent of change, ‘critical’ to promoting sustainable development, and advocated that sustainable development be integrated into education systems at all levels.⁴

4. In 1998 the Government established a Sustainable Development Education Panel (SDEP) to consider education for sustainable development (ESD) in England,⁵ The SDEP set out the following vision of ESD:

“Education for sustainable development is about the learning needed to maintain and improve our quality of life and the quality of life of generations to come. It is about equipping individuals, communities, groups, businesses and government to live and act sustainably; as well as giving them an understanding of the environmental, social and economic issues involved. It is about preparing for the

¹ See for example, Fifth Report from the Environmental Audit Committee, Session 2001-02, on *A sustainable energy strategy? Renewables and the PIU Review*, HC582-I, para 60, and the Second Report, Session 1997-98, *The Greening Government Initiative*, para 63.

² Q153.

³ For example, see Blake, J. 1999. Overcoming the ‘value-action gap’ in environmental policy: tensions between national policy and local experience. *Local Environment*, 4, 257-278.

⁴ The World Summit on Sustainable Development—Plan of Implementation, 5 September 2002, paras 109,114 and p114.

⁵ The term ‘education for sustainable development’ (ESD) is not universally popular. Some dislike the implication that there is a tangible end point, called sustainable development, which educational efforts can be directed towards or that ESD is a discreet sector. The latter may mean that those involved in teaching well-established, traditional subjects such as Chemistry or History, may fail to see the relevance of ESD to their curriculum. We acknowledge these concerns. However, the term ESD now has policy currency and the use of SDEP’s definition avoids these pitfalls. It is for those seeking to promote ESD to address those potential barriers.

world in which we will live in the next century, and making sure that we are not found wanting”.⁶

5. The SDEP identified seven key concepts of ESD which need to be learnt, understood and experienced either through formal or informal education.⁷

- Interdependence – of society, economy and the natural environment, from local to global (ie chain reactions, multiple causes and multiple effects, trade-offs)
- Citizenship and stewardship (rights and responsibilities, participation and co-operation)
- Needs and rights of future generations
- Diversity (cultural, social, economic and biological)
- Quality of life, equity and justice
- Sustainable change (development and carrying capacity)
- Uncertainty and precaution in action.

6. There is little dissent that these concepts encompass the range of thinking required to engage with the multi-faceted issues, such as climate change, which sustainable development embraces. An understanding of some or all of the concepts is not uncommon; they provide the basis for many other life skills and are consistent with what many would consider a good all-round education, providing the foundation for personal and professional development. They also fit well with the Government’s citizenship agenda. Thus, no radical overhaul of educational values, learning mechanisms, or core objectives is required to provide learning which facilitates sustainable development. In fact, ESD is likely to reinforce and promote key learning objectives and offers a new and invigorating way of approaching existing curricula and thinking about the world around us.⁸

Our inquiry

7. We specifically chose to conduct our inquiry at this time because ESD is at a crucial juncture. The UN has agreed that 2005-2015 will be the decade of education for sustainable development and the DfES is developing an action plan for sustainable development. The work of the SDEP came to an end in March 2003 just as a number of key education initiatives and reforms were coming on stream. These include the Skills Strategy, further education and training reforms,⁹ and the review of the 14-19 curriculum.¹⁰ Together with newly established bodies, such as the Learning and Skills Councils and Sector Skills

⁶ Sustainable Development Education Panel, First Annual Report 1998, DETR, January 1999, p30.

⁷ *Ibid*, p.37.

⁸ A briefing paper prepared for the Teacher Training Agency acknowledges that “ESD has considerable potential to improve the quality of teaching and learning and can focus on the interests and concerns of the young.”. Ev175-6.

⁹ *Success for All – Reforming Further Education and Training*, Discussion document, DfES, June 2002.

¹⁰ See *14-19: Opportunity and Excellence*, DfES, January 2003.

Councils, and the new Citizenship agenda, these add-up to a significant opportunity to integrate education for sustainable development. It is a “tide that must be caught”.¹¹

8. To frame our inquiry, we initially asked how far bridging the ‘value-action’ gap was merely a case of making people more aware of the issues. However, we quickly found an emerging consensus that the current level of public awareness already provides an adequate foundation from which to attempt the leap over the value-action gap.¹² We therefore concentrated our inquiry on the opportunities available to Government to equip individuals with the *skills* and motivation to put sustainability into practice both through formal education and informal learning channels.

9. All government departments have a role in promoting sustainable development whilst the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has lead responsibility for promoting awareness for sustainable development. We concentrated our inquiry on the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and its associated bodies because the department has responsibility for formal education, skills and youth services and thereby has the core education tools at its disposal. We examined how far the DfES is promoting and facilitating an educational system which fosters ESD.

10. We have concentrated on educational policy and not sought to investigate how far educational institutions are seeking to ‘green’ their own operations. However, we fully acknowledge the importance of exemplar activity—practicing what you teach—in reinforcing ESD principles and teaching in the learning environment.

11. We are grateful to our special advisers, Professor Jacquie Burgess, University College, London¹³ and Libby Grundy MBE, Director of the Council for Environmental Education (CEE)¹⁴ for their assistance in this inquiry. We would also like to thank Penney Poyzer, Global Action Plan’s EcoTeams Co-ordinator, and Nottinghamshire County Council for an enlightening day in Nottingham, as well as the staff and students at Hampstead Comprehensive, Cricklewood and the Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College who illustrated how ESD can provide an inspiring context for learning.

¹¹ Sir Geoffrey Holland, former Chairman of the Sustainable Development Education Panel, speaking at the Council for Environmental Education conference, *Planning for Sustainability Environmental Education in Action*, Bristol, 11 April 2003.

¹²See: Harrison, C.M., Burgess, J. and Filius, P. (1996). *Rationalising environmental responsibilities: a comparison of lay publics in the UK and the Netherlands*, *Global Environmental Change*, 6 (3), 215-234. Burgess, J., Harrison, C.M. and Filius, P. (1998). *Environmental communication and the cultural politics of environmental citizenship*. *Environment and Planning, A*, 30, 1445-1460.

¹³Also Chair or the Board of Trustees for of Global Action Plan.

¹⁴ Member of the Government’s Sustainable Development Education Panel (1998-2003).

Setting a framework for Education for Sustainable Development

Is there an overall vision for ESD?

12. The UK Sustainable Development Strategy states that to meet the challenges of sustainable development society needs “a skilled and adaptable labour force and a flexible labour market” and that “public involvement is essential for a truly sustainable community”.¹⁵

13. The latest annual review of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy recognises the particular contribution of education in promoting the strategy’s aims:

“Education is needed to ensure that each new generation can learn from our experiences and understand sustainable development. For sustainable development to become a reality, individuals, communities, businesses and Government need to develop the skills and commitment to live and behave sustainably, together with the vision and understanding of why it is necessary to do so”.¹⁶

14. These statements, however positive, fall short of providing a guiding vision for Government departments to work to.

15. Learning is a key driver for sustainable change. However, the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development does not set out a clear vision of the contribution which learning can make to achieving the Government’s sustainable development goals. We recommend that the Government rectifies this omission during the forthcoming review of the strategy.

Developing a strategic approach

16. ESD needs to be co-ordinated across Government Departments and within other agencies as it is relevant to and contributes to a number of other policy goals relating to urban regeneration, social cohesion and citizenship. ESD is also fundamental to achieving a number of Government strategies including the Biodiversity Strategy,¹⁷ the Climate Change Programme,¹⁸ and national and regional waste strategies.

The Government Sustainable Development Education Panel

17. In 1995 the then Secretaries of State for Education and Employment and the Environment hosted a conference on environmental education from which emerged an idea to run a series of conferences on ESD policy development. It was later decided that a

¹⁵ *A better quality of life: A strategy for sustainable development for the UK*, Cm 4345, Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, 1999, paras 6.22 and 7.87.

¹⁶ *Achieving a better quality of life: Review of progress towards sustainable development – Government Annual Report 2002*, DEFRA, February 2003, para 2.13.

¹⁷ *Working with the Grain of Nature: a biodiversity strategy for England*, DEFRA, October 2002.

¹⁸ *Climate change: The UK Programme*, Cm 4913, DETR, November 2000.

panel would be more effective and the intention to establish one was announced in “The Government’s Strategy for Environmental Education in England and Wales”, a leaflet produced by the Department for Education and Employment (now DfES) and the Department for the Environment (now DEFRA).¹⁹

18. The Government SDEP was established in February 1998 for a five year period. It was co-sponsored by, and reported directly to, DEFRA and DfES Ministers. Its aim was to consider ESD in its broadest sense to make practical recommendations for action in England.²⁰ It was disbanded on 1 March 2003 after its quinquennial review which recommended that DfES and DEFRA took forward ESD with an alternative stakeholder process (discussed further in paras 35-44).²¹

19. The review recognised that the Panel had raised the profile of ESD and had produced a “rich, diverse and widely welcomed suite of proposals and recommendations”.²² However, the review also noted that there was some evidence that Government departments, associated agencies and external bodies, beyond the sponsor departments, had been less prepared to take forward SDEP’s recommendations (DCMS being a notable exception).

20. The Development Education Association (DEA) suggests that the Panel’s work “did not have champions of sufficient seniority and influence within education”.²³ In addition, although a joint DfES/DEFRA secretariat supported the Panel, in practice DEFRA took the lead. Panel members have praised the quality of DEFRA’s support but noted that this contributed to the impression that ESD was primarily about environmental issues and not a priority for education.²⁴

21. During its existence, the SDEP delivered 60 recommendations in 25 publications. Over 70% of these recommendations have been partially or wholly achieved and the actions taken are summarised in the Panel’s final annual report.²⁵ The Panel influenced and engaged a broad range of sectors during its appointment but highlighted informal learning and ESD in the workplace as key areas for further work.²⁶

22. We have not sought to duplicate the work of the Panel or rehearse their arguments but have used their work as a platform for further action and analysis. We have drawn largely on their thoughtful and focussed reports and sought to highlight outstanding areas for further action.

23. We commend the Sustainable Development Education Panel for its achievements over its five year appointment. It is essential that the DfES builds upon the Panel’s work to ensure that the momentum is not squandered.

¹⁹ Ev70, para 31.

²⁰ The Welsh Assembly Government’s Education for Sustainable Development Panel was established in May 2001. See Ev350, para 2.

²¹ *A Sustained Lesson – Reviewing England’s Sustainable Development Education Panel*, DfES/DEFRA/, February 2003, para 88.

²² *Ibid*, para 78.

²³ Ev198, para 3.0.

²⁴ See for example, Ev198, para 3.0.

²⁵ *Understanding, Conviction and Commitment: The Fifth Annual Report of the Sustainable Development Education Panel*, DEFRA, March 2003.

²⁶ *Ibid*, paras 84 and 96.

The role of the Department for Education and Skills

24. DfES is the lead department for ESD. It also has an important role in establishing a workforce equipped with the skills to enable employers to meet the challenges that sustainable development presents. Both these aspects of the Department's responsibilities have been acknowledged by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills.²⁷ He told us that if DfES did not lead on ESD it would "not really happen".²⁸

25. In practice, DfES has yet to convey any sense that it sees ESD as an integral part of its core functions or that it has recognised the potential which ESD offers for innovative learning opportunities. The department has been widely criticised for failing to provide leadership on ESD.²⁹ Despite its co-sponsorship of the SDEP, the Panel has not been mentioned in any of the last three DfES departmental reports and all the Panel's publications over the last five years have been hosted on DEFRA's website.

26. There has been a range of initiatives and pilot projects relating to ESD in areas for which the DfES has responsibility. For example, the curriculum, promoting the outdoor classroom (Growing Schools), and post-16 learning.³⁰ These examples however do not appear to be the result of a coherent or co-ordinated attempt by the department to provide a strategic framework for ESD across the educational spectrum. Instead, it appears to have favoured short-term, 'quick-fix' measures.³¹

27. There is a significant level of activity on ESD taking place across other Government departments (eg DEFRA, DCMS and DfID), statutory agencies (eg English Nature, the Countryside Agency, the Environment Agency), local and regional government³² and national and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), The Groundwork Trust, WWF and Global Action Plan (GAP). Trade associations, trade unions and professions have also been exploring the opportunities for ESD.

28. The absence of strategic leadership limits the effectiveness and efficiency of these initiatives and prevents them developing into a coherent programme. As the RSPB argued, there is "substantial evidence of gaps in provision, and overlap and duplication in delivery".³³ The Geographical Association (GA), suggests that this is often because teachers, local government officers, NGOs, employers etc have lacked the understanding and/or the infrastructural support to realise such integration.³⁴ The GA feels that the lack of a strategic framework has led to the development of parallel, unconnected life-long learning and sustainable development initiatives in some local authorities. There is also uncertainty within schools and NGOs regarding funding mechanisms and funding priorities between

²⁷ Q195.

²⁸ Q198.

²⁹ See for example, Ev223-232, Ev197-199, Ev275-78, Ev147, para 3.1.2.

³⁰ Details are provided in Ev 68-93.

³¹ Ev277, para 6.

³² Yorkshire and Humberside has incorporated a Regional Sustainable Development Education Strategy for 2001-2010 in its regional framework. Worcestershire County Council has a county ESD strategy (see Ev313).

³³ Ev276, para 3.1.

³⁴ The Environmental Education Advisers' Association notes that the number of LEA officers and advisers with responsibility for ESD have dropped drastically in the last few years. See Ev313.

environmental education, development education, sustainable development and inclusion.³⁵

29. We are concerned that the Secretary of State's responses to our specific questions on ESD were consistently framed around operational, 'greening government' issues, such as school transport and estates management, rather than educational policy. It is important that the DfES' response to sustainable development is evident in *both* its educational policies and its operations, not least because the approaching UN decade on ESD will bring added pressure on Governments to deliver on both fronts.

30. Jonathon Porritt, the Chairman of the Sustainable Development Commission, told us that he thought that DfES had rather "struggled" with the concept of sustainable development in general. He added:

"I am still not really sure that it is something that the Department for Education would quite know how to promote at the moment because I do not think it has a handle... on what education for sustainable development in the UK might really mean".³⁶

31. Commendably, the Secretary of State, Rt hon. Charles Clarke MP, reacted quickly to these comments and called a meeting with Mr Porritt to discuss where the Department's weaknesses lay and how the Department might address them.³⁷ He subsequently accepted the charge that the Department as a whole was not demonstrating sufficient commitment to sustainable development.³⁸ He felt that the Department could helpfully review the areas where it had direct control such as 'house keeping' and school transport and then turn its attention to those areas such as the curriculum where it was only "tangentially responsible". To its credit, the Department has recently established a sustainable development section on its website which sets DfES' policies and initiatives in the context of the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development.³⁹

32. We welcome the Secretary of State for Education and Skills' statement confirming the DfES as the lead department for delivering and promoting ESD.

33. The DfES has failed to demonstrate any clear vision or strategic thinking relating to ESD. We have been struck by how much has been achieved, despite this policy vacuum, by a range of committed organisations and individual "champions", acting on their own initiative, across the spectrum of lifelong learning. This wealth of activity has flourished despite, rather than because of, DfES.

34. The enthusiasm and body of expertise which already exists within the field of ESD would now benefit from an overall strategic framework. We recommend that DfES develops such a framework which puts ESD firmly within the core education agenda,

³⁵ Ev239, para 3.2.1.

³⁶ Oral evidence from Jonathon Porritt, Chairman of the UK Sustainable Development commission, 12 February 2003, Q161, in relation to HC98, *World Summit on Sustainable Development: From Rhetoric to Reality*. Report yet to be published.

³⁷ Q194.

³⁸ Q194.

³⁹ www.dfes.gov.uk/sd/action.shtml.

provides direction and impetus to existing initiatives, identifies and builds upon existing good practice, and prevents any unnecessary duplication of effort and resources.

A strategy for ESD

35. At the request of Ministers, the final act of the SDEP was to deliver a draft strategy for ESD in England. The Department reluctantly made this document public, following pressure from both the SDEP and ourselves.⁴⁰

36. In March, we were told that the draft strategy would form the basis for an action plan, after it had been redrafted by a ‘Sounding Board’ formed from relevant sectors and a Whitehall Steering Group.⁴¹ The action plan would then be subject to a full consultation in the summer.

37. The Sounding Board met for the first time on 30 June 2003 to discuss “emerging thinking” on an action plan for England relating to Sustainable Development in Education and Skills.⁴² DfES describes this plan as containing “many actions that reflect” the SDEP’s recommendations.⁴³ This is clearly more than just a redrafting of the Panel’s draft strategy. Indeed, the Secretary of State has decided that the plan should address both DfES’ environmental management responsibilities (eg estate management and operations) and ESD policy.

38. The draft action plan was placed on the DfES’ website on 7 July 2003, inviting comments by 18 July 2003 allowing less than two weeks with no indication of whether this was the only opportunity to offer views or an initial phase of consultation. Cabinet Office guidelines specify twelve weeks as the standard minimum period for a consultation and advise that consultation documents should “describe any earlier, parallel and planned later consultation”.⁴⁴

39. The ‘Sounding Board’ is scheduled to meet again in September to make final revisions in the light of the consultation responses.

40. We are astonished that DfES has the audacity to offer less than two weeks for comment on its draft action plan for sustainable development. This is not the “full consultation” that was promised, nor is it in line with Cabinet Office guidelines on consultation. The truncated consultation denies key stakeholders the opportunity to contribute fully to the development of the action plan and will effectively prevent the Department from benefiting from the experience and expertise which already exists.

⁴⁰ *Learning to Last – The Government’s Sustainable Development Education Strategy for England*. Draft presented to Ministers by the Sustainable Development Education Panel, February 2003, see www.defra.gov.uk/environment/sustainable/educpanel.

⁴¹ Letter of 12 March 2003 to John Horam MP from The Rt.Hon Michael Meacher MP, the Minister for Environment and Agri-Environment.

⁴² Draft sustainable development action plan for Education and Skills, DfES, July 2003. See www.dfes.gov.uk/sd/action.shtml.

⁴³ *Ibid*, p1.

⁴⁴ *Code of Practice on Written Consultation*, Cabinet Office, November 2000, Criterion 1, para 3.

41. **We recommend that DfES launches a full twelve week consultation on its action plan in line with Cabinet Guidelines, after the next Sounding Board meeting in September 2003.**

42. There is widespread demand for an overarching strategy for ESD within the educational sector and from those promoting sustainable development more generally.

43. **We support the development of a stand alone strategy for ESD which builds upon the draft presented by the SDEP and is subject to public consultation.**

44. **We are concerned that the Secretary of State for Education and Skills has chosen to incorporate the Panel's ESD strategy into one action plan which sets out measures for the delivery of objectives relating to *both* environmental management and ESD policy. We recognise the importance of reflecting sustainable development principles in both departmental operations and policy but we believe that this approach is inherently risky: the Department will need to take particular care to ensure that ESD in educational policy receive the profile it deserves.**

Implementation

45. The main centre of ESD activity within the Department has traditionally been within the geography section of the curriculum division. This allocation of responsibility has not facilitated a strategic approach to ESD across all aspects of lifelong learning. We are therefore pleased to note that the action plan is being dealt with at a corporate level within DfES.⁴⁵ Even so, the draft action plan gives little indication of the funding or infrastructure that will be provided for implementation and evaluation.

46. The implementation of the action plan will require a co-ordinated response across DfES' delivery partners. The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted), the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) in particular have vital roles to play in enabling and reviewing change. All of these bodies, except the TTA, have been included in the membership of the Sounding Board which has been convened to comment on the development of the action plan. **We are surprised that the TTA has been omitted from the membership of the Sounding Board which is developing the DfES action plan on sustainable development. We recommend that DfES extends membership to include this key stakeholder.**

47. **The DfES has yet to confirm the existence of the Sounding Board beyond the development of the action plan. Effective implementation of the plan will be dependent upon the continued engagement with stakeholders. If the Sounding Board is to be discontinued we recommend DfES put in place an alternative mechanism for stakeholder involvement.**

48. Many aspects of DfES' education agenda are delivered through other agencies. These organisations need a clear strategic steer from DfES to enable them to play their full part in ESD. The quinquennial review for the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority took place last year but did not result in any change to its remit which dates from 1997 and does not

⁴⁵ By the Corporate Communications Division (Whitehall Regulations Team).

include any specific requirement relating to sustainable development. However, the Department is currently finalising a memorandum of understanding with the QCA⁴⁶ who maintain that a lack of remit has not stopped them acknowledging sustainable development as significant.⁴⁷ We believe that it is important that responsibilities for ESD are clearly defined and that DfES sets sustainable development firmly within the remits of all its delivery partners, as has already been done for the LSC.

49. We recommend that DfES incorporates appropriate responsibilities for ESD within the remit of each of its Non-Departmental Public Bodies. This should become a matter of routine when new agencies and delivery partners are established.

50. A range of NGOs have established ESD initiatives, many of which have received funding through either DEFRA's Environmental Action Fund or through the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme. DEFRA has traditionally led Government support for ESD within the NGO sector.⁴⁸ However, the RSPB suggests that the Environmental Action Fund should now operate under the umbrella of the DfES strategy for ESD and that its ESD components should be managed by DfES.⁴⁹

51. In exerting a leadership role on ESD, DfES will need to be sensitive to DEFRA's legitimate role in promoting sustainable development and co-ordinate its efforts closely. It will also need to consider the implications of the withdrawal of the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme for those NGOs on whom it might rely to effect change.

52. We do not believe that a strategic approach to ESD would necessarily require significant new resources. It can be achieved by realigning current priorities to integrate ESD into existing work. We recommend that the DfES reviews its current range of ESD initiatives and seeks to rationalise them into a more cohesive programme, concentrating on those approaches which have delivered results.

Leading by example

53. Capital investment in schools has increased significantly in recent years. In 1996-97 it was £683 million and is now running at some £3 billion for 2002-03 and is due to rise to an annual rate of over £5 billion by 2005-06. David Milliband MP, Schools Standards Minister recently announced the DfES' building plans for providing 21st Century school facilities for every secondary pupil in the next 10-15 years as part of its *Building Schools for the Future* initiative.⁵⁰ This extensive programme of building and refurbishment provides an opportunity to incorporate sustainability considerations.

⁴⁶ Q281.

⁴⁷ Q282.

⁴⁸ Third Report from the Environmental Audit Committee, Session 2001-02, on *UK Preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development*, HC 616-II, Ev 161.

⁴⁹ Ev278, para 7.1.

⁵⁰ DfES Press Release, *Consultation go-ahead to build schools of the future*, 26 June 2003.

54. The consideration of sustainability in design is consistent with the requirements of the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate,⁵¹ which applies to all departments, and can also reinforce ESD learning through practical examples.

55. Local Education Authority (LEA) Asset Management Plans include a Suitability Assessment which considers the environmental conditions in schools. The Asset Management Plans appraisal guidance for 2001-2002 sets a number of performance standards relating to sustainability including a requirement to consider “providing sustainable and energy-efficient buildings” that are consistent with the Government’s UK strategy for sustainable development.⁵²

56. DfES has recognised that “sustainability of building development and construction” is likely to be a significant driver for change in school building design.⁵³ DfES’ Classrooms of the Future initiative aims to challenge the current thinking on school building design. Twelve local authorities are developing pilot projects focusing on the creation of innovative learning environments to inspire children to achieve more. The lessons learned from these pilots will shape new design guidance.

57. DfES has developed a range of guidance on building design in educational establishments. It now needs to take an active role in promoting this guidance and monitoring and evaluating the extent to which it is being adopted.

Are we using all the channels?

58. To flourish and endure, ESD needs to be reinforced and supported by the physical infrastructures, social institutions and cultural processes which people encounter in everyday life whether at school, work or home.

Formal education

At school

59. There is a vast range of ESD initiatives and resources for schools to draw upon, offered by a spectrum of agencies, NGOs and charities such as RSPB, WWF, Centre for Research, Education and Training in Energy (CREATE), Peace Child⁵⁴ and *envision*. Though welcome, these initiatives need to be effectively co-ordinated and targeted so that schools are not deluged with an unfocussed and bewildering array of ESD activity. The RSPB has already counted seventeen different schools packages on “improving your school grounds for wildlife”.⁵⁵

⁵¹ *Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate*, DEFRA, September 2002.

⁵² Ev85, para 56.

⁵³ *Classrooms of the Future*, DfES, February 2003, p5.

⁵⁴ *Be the Change*, Sustainable Schools Programme (England) sponsored by DEFRA. See www.peacechild.org.

⁵⁵ Ev276, para 3.1.

60. The joint DfES/Department of Health Healthy Schools initiative⁵⁶ uses a National Standard to co-ordinate its activities. This standard forms the basis of regional and local programmes and allows local initiatives and priorities to develop within an overall national framework.

61. The closest model in the ESD arena is the *Eco-schools* programme. This is a Europe-wide programme run by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE) and operated by ENCAMS (Environmental Campaigns Ltd) in the UK. *Eco-schools* provides a structured process to support schools to manage their environmental impact and make improvements to lessen any adverse impact. Schools are awarded a Green Flag award, renewable every two years, and permanent *Eco-schools* status if they receive the award four times. Currently over 457 schools have a Green Flag award and eighteen of these have permanent *Eco-schools* status.⁵⁷

62. The Scottish Executive uses participation in *Eco-schools* to measure progress against one of its National Priorities for Education (NPs). NP4 is “to work with parents to teach pupils respect for self and one another and their interdependence with other members of their neighbourhood and society and to teach them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society”.⁵⁸ One of the associated performance measures and quality indicators used to monitor the delivery of NP4 is the percentage of schools participating in the *Eco-Schools* Award or similar accredited environmental award.⁵⁹

63. We believe that it is important that schools have the freedom to establish ESD learning programmes which suit their individual ethos and ways of working. However, their activity could be better supported by a national framework. We recommend that the DfES develops a National School Standard for ESD akin to that used for Healthy Schools.

64. We recognise *Eco-schools* as a valuable initiative in the promotion of ESD. However, we would not like to see DfES follow the example of the Scottish Executive and promote *Eco-Schools*, almost exclusively, as the key ESD model.

ESD and the National Curriculum

65. The review of the National Curriculum in September 2000 provided a key opportunity to incorporate ESD in both general guidance and specific requirements. Largely through the influence of the SDEP, the National Curriculum now states that pupils should “develop awareness and understanding of, and respect for, the environments in which they live, and secure their commitment to sustainable development at a personal, national and global

⁵⁶ The Healthy Schools Initiative was launched in May 1998. This was in response to the White Paper, *Excellence in Schools*, which committed the Government to helping all schools become healthy schools, and the Green Paper *Our Healthier Nation* which identified schools as a key setting for implementing the Government’s health strategy. The Initiative aims to raise the awareness of children, teachers, governors, parents, and the wider community about the opportunities that exist in schools for improving health.

⁵⁷ Ev235, Annex 2.

⁵⁸ www.nationalpriorities.org.uk.

⁵⁹ Ev236, Annex 3.

level”.⁶⁰ This overarching theme is supported by explicit, statutory requirements for ESD within Geography, Science, Citizenship and design and technology.

66. The National Curriculum describes Geography as “the focus within the curriculum for understanding and resolving issues about the environment and sustainable development” and also as “an important link between the natural and the social sciences”.⁶¹

67. Geography has come to be seen as ESD’s natural home and this is reflected in the positioning of ESD responsibilities in DfES, Ofsted and QCA. However, there is some debate as to the correct approach to ESD within schools. There are those who advocate ESD as a separate subject and those who want to see it effectively integrated across the curriculum. Some geographers have expressed concern that too much emphasis is being placed on teaching values and attitudes to the extent that the subject has become “less rigorous, less demanding and less interesting” as a whole.⁶² Others see it as an opportunity to revitalise the subject and ensure its place in the curriculum.⁶³

A cross-cutting theme?

68. The QCA is in charge of developing the school curriculum. It views ESD as “an approach to the whole curriculum and management of a school, not a new subject”. As ESD has its roots in environmental and development education, the QCA maintains that many of the building blocks of ESD are already present in every school”.⁶⁴

69. Eight of the National Curriculum individual subject handbooks contain a statement about how that subject might promote ESD. The QCA has also issued support guidance which provides case studies and examples of how ESD can be developed through every subject in the curriculum. However, the QCA accepts that it is difficult to be prescriptive across the curriculum. ESD can provide a context for teaching subjects such as Mathematics and English for example, but it is one of many competing contexts.⁶⁵

70. The QCA acknowledges that the history of the cross-curricula theme is not one that has been “littered by success”.⁶⁶ Ofsted told us that not one cross-cutting theme has ever been successful.⁶⁷ Without a clear lead within the management team of a school, and a school policy, cross-curricula themes can often be dealt with in a superficial way to try and accommodate the latest Government priority and fail to deliver genuine change. Without clear ownership, a cross-cutting theme such as sustainability, has no natural home or baseline and can be easily lost.

71. The QCA now prefers to talk about ‘learning across the curriculum’ rather than labelling issues such as gender, thinking skills, employability, and ESD, as cross-curricular

⁶⁰ *Sustainable Development Education Panel – Second annual report 1999*, DETR, April 2000, para 5.

⁶¹ Ev238, para 3.1.1.

⁶² Alex Standish, *Constructing a value map*, 12 November 2002 (www.spiked-online.com). This study was also picked up in the press. See David Harrison, *Children being brainwashed by new geography lessons*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, 24 November 2002.

⁶³ Ev238-241, Q295-6.

⁶⁴ www.nc.uk.net/esd/index.html.

⁶⁵ Q289.

⁶⁶ Q290.

⁶⁷ Q110.

themes which carry a historical baggage of prescription and failure. It is now accepted that a more successful thematic approach is one which employs a range of learning opportunities, i.e. a mix of specific teaching, general events and a broad understanding of how each subject contributes to it. This was the approach adopted by the QCA when it developed the citizenship agenda. However, strong leadership is still required within the management team of the school to join up these learning opportunities to form a coherent programme.

Citizenship and ESD

72. Citizenship is a new aspect of the curriculum for pupils at all stages of compulsory education and for young adults in post-16 learning, training and work.⁶⁸ It seeks to provide opportunities for children and young people to learn about their rights and responsibilities, government and democracy, communities and identity.

73. Citizenship was originally part of a framework of non-statutory, cross curricular themes when the national curriculum was established in 1999. QCA has reported that very few schools gave it time and attention because it lacked status with schools, teachers and pupils.⁶⁹ However, the Government has since made a concerted effort to relaunch citizenship giving it a much higher profile. DfES made available £12m in 2000-01 and £15m in 2001-02 to support the introduction of citizenship in schools.⁷⁰ Citizenship was made statutory for those aged between 11 and 16 in 2002 and is linked to personal, health and social development Education (PSHE).⁷¹ It was the first national curriculum subject for which schemes of work were available in advance of its introduction.

74. Citizenship and ESD overlap significantly. However, ESD was not effectively integrated into the citizenship agenda as it was being developed, as it had already been incorporated into other areas of the curriculum. Nor were the links between the two areas made explicit. Both Ofsted and QCA have acknowledged that there are opportunities to link the two.⁷² The QCA describes them as “very natural companions” as both link with curricula and school management.⁷³ Ofsted particularly recognises that the active involvement of pupils in the stewardship of their environment and involvement in the decision-making process provides practical experience of citizenship on a micro-scale.⁷⁴

75. However, ESD has not benefited from the strategic approach and resources which have been applied to citizenship. In addition, pupils are required to continue with citizenship after 14, unlike geography. As geography has been given the curriculum focus for ESD this means that a key thread of ESD teaching may be lost post-14, if schools are not encouraged to take a more holistic approach to ESD.

⁶⁸ Citizenship was introduced into the national curriculum in August 2002 and was the first new subject to be introduced since information and communications technology (ICT) and design technology (D&T) were created in 1995.

⁶⁹ *Monitoring citizenship and PSHE 2001-2002*, QCA, 2002. See www.qca.org.uk/ca/subjects/citizenship.

⁷⁰ http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/_module/citizenship/.

⁷¹ Citizenship is preceded at key stages 1&2 (ages 5-11) by a joint non-statutory framework for PSHE and citizenship. It is also complemented at key stages 3&4 by a non-statutory framework for PSHE.

⁷² Q123, and Ev90, Annex B.

⁷³ Q298.

⁷⁴ Ev90, para 3.

76. QCA has recognised that schools have limited time or resources for the variety of personal development aspects of the curriculum that are encouraged and has been looking at how far a single framework might be developed to incorporate all these different requirements. The current review of the 14-19 curriculum provides an opportunity to investigate the possibility of a more holistic approach, including aspects of ESD.

77. Although ESD is integrated into the National Curriculum, it is a theme which schools are expected to develop “across the curriculum”. As past experience with citizenship has shown, this requires strong leadership within schools. We recommend that the DfES evaluates the opportunities for integrating ESD more effectively and explicitly into the existing framework of citizenship teaching.

Inspecting for ESD

78. The TTA and QCA acknowledge that many teachers do not consider ESD as an overall priority and certainly not a priority for their own subject teaching.⁷⁵ The QCA believes that teachers are still largely unfamiliar with ESD, despite its incorporation in the National Curriculum. The constant drive to raise educational standards (narrowly defined as academic outcomes) does not always sit easily with efforts to develop a more rounded curriculum.

79. The mainstreaming of ESD is not aided by the fact that it is not *directly* inspected by the Office of Standards for Education (Ofsted). The SDEP recommended that ESD should be included in the Ofsted inspection framework. This has not happened but inspectors do inspect and report on ESD where they encounter it. Ofsted told us that ESD hardly features in their inspection evidence but it is not clear whether this is because schools do not see it as an important aspect of the curriculum or because it is not a strong feature of Ofsted’s inspection framework.⁷⁶ English Nature suggests that without Ofsted inspection ESD will “continue to be a fringe activity”.⁷⁷

80. As with the curriculum, there is a raft of competing demands for inclusion in Ofsted’s inspection framework which is reviewed regularly. Encouragingly, the DfES’ draft action plan for sustainable development states that the department is “taking advice from Ofsted about the place of inspection” in reinforcing the sustainability objectives of its plan.⁷⁸

81. Estyn, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales, has already incorporated ESD into its common inspection framework.⁷⁹ This means that schools in Wales will soon be assessed on the standard of understanding and awareness of sustainable development that the pupils demonstrate as well as the school’s own approach to energy use, recycling and promotion of healthy lifestyles.⁸⁰

⁷⁵ Q289 and Ev323-327.

⁷⁶ Q106.

⁷⁷ Ev214-220.

⁷⁸ Sustainable Development draft action plan for Education and Skills, DfES, July 2003. See www.dfes.gov.uk/sd/action.shtml.

⁷⁹ This Framework came into use for the first time in September 2002 for inspection of initial teacher training and the education provision in higher education establishments and will be in place for all inspection work by 2004.

⁸⁰ *Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship, Guidance from the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Authority for Wales (ACCAC)*, p29.

82. Ofsted has recently completed a study to identify effective ESD practice in schools. This was a limited benchmarking exercise to aid the development of more detailed, future work. Between April 2002 and March 2003, HM Inspectors visited 27 schools (10 Secondary, 17 Primary) representing a cross-section of types and socio-economic contexts. They were selected as potentially being in the “vanguard of any developments in ESD”.⁸¹ Ofsted assessed the value of any specific ESD related initiatives that the schools were involved in and, in particular, the impact of ESD on the general school ethos and learning environment.

83. Ofsted will be publishing its findings shortly but told us that a key observation to emerge had been that where ESD was being promoted as a whole school initiative it was having a positive impact on developing the school ethos and behaviour of pupils. Ofsted found this to be clearly reflected in the positive attitude of most students and their high self-esteem as well as their ability to articulate and express opinions.⁸²

84. We welcome Ofsted’s initiative to investigate current ESD activities in school. We recommend that the Secretary of State requests Ofsted to include ESD in its inspection framework, encompassing ESD both in the curriculum and the learning environment.

Teacher Training

85. We are pleased to note the recent efforts by the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) to identify the opportunities that it can provide to further the ESD knowledge and practice of newly trained teachers and teacher trainers.

86. The Geographical Association describes ESD as technically challenging teaching which requires teachers to engage pupils in a culture of argument, complexity, uncertainty and risk analysis.⁸³ If teachers are to deliver ESD effectively, they need the right skills and tools. However, there are concerns that initial teacher training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) do little to equip teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary to teach ESD in the cross-curricula manner that the QCA advocates.⁸⁴

87. The TTA is responsible for teacher trainers, trainee teachers and teachers in their induction year. It currently orientates its training on ESD around the national requirement for teachers to incorporate ESD in various national curriculum subjects.

88. The Agency has recently commissioned a briefing from John Huckle, an ESD expert, to support the development of knowledge about ESD in different subject areas. This briefing is currently being refined through a peer review process. The TTA has plans to disseminate guidance on appropriate practice in ESD on subject areas to those training teachers. ESD is also incorporated as an element in subject specific induction packs produced for new teacher trainers and the face to face induction programmes provided in each subject area.⁸⁵

⁸¹ Ev90, para 1.

⁸² Ev90, para 3.

⁸³ Ev239, para 4.1.

⁸⁴ For example, Ev360 para 22, Q310, Ev236-237, Ev307-312.

⁸⁵ Ev323.

89. It is important that *existing* teachers also have the opportunity to learn about ESD in their CPD which is the responsibility of DfES. The SDEP's final annual report identifies ESD in CPD as an area which continues to require attention.⁸⁶ **We recommend that DfES takes account of any implications for Continuing Professional Development which are highlighted by the Teacher Training Agency's current work to support ESD in different subject areas.**

90. ESD support material, available to all teachers, is provided by the QCA on a website which has been widely praised by teachers, NGOs, and the SDEP.⁸⁷ This is intended as a first point of contact for teachers and a guide to further resources as necessary. It includes guidance on the opportunities to incorporate ESD in the schemes of work for different subjects. The QCA regard it as the "most powerful weapon in their ESD armoury".⁸⁸ The website currently receives some 9,000 hits a month. This is comparable to the number of visits made to the English and Maths pages on the National Curriculum site.⁸⁹ The QCA have observed that the pages being hit most are those which provide a basic introduction to ESD rather than any of the detail. This indicates that it is being used primarily to help schools start to familiarise themselves with ESD.⁹⁰

91. **We urge the DfES and Teacher Training Agency to maximise the potential of the QCA's ESD web resource and encourage its use in the context of initial teacher training and continuing professional development. However, this website does not obviate the need to continue to develop a more comprehensive range of ESD support for teachers.**

Further and Higher Education

92. Further and Higher Education Institutions (FHEs) can make a significant contribution towards sustainable development. Forum for the Future has summarised these succinctly in terms of the key roles of FHEs as:

- a) places of learning and research; forming and informing the leaders and decision-makers of the future
- b) major businesses; where prudent resource use not only saves money but safeguards reputations
- c) key community players; as employer, purchaser and amenity provider with a major impact on the wider world of influential ideas and technological development.⁹¹

93. In 1993, the Government appointed an expert committee to consider the role of the FHE sector in demonstrating environmental responsibility.⁹² The resulting Toyne Report

⁸⁶ *Understanding, Conviction and Commitment: The Fifth Annual Report of the Sustainable Development Education Panel*, DEFRA, March 2003, p 41.

⁸⁷ For example Ev288, para 5, Ev307-312.

⁸⁸ Q316.

⁸⁹ Q308.

⁹⁰ Q307.

⁹¹ www.forumforthefuture.org.uk/aboutus.

⁹² In 1990, the Government White Paper, *This Common Inheritance* recommended that an expert committee should be convened to consider the environmental education needs of the business community. The Committee's report,

made recommendations targeted at government, further and higher education institutions (FHEI), funding councils and professional bodies. Its key recommendation was that every FHEI should adopt and implement an appropriately timetabled and prioritised strategy for the development of environmental education, and also a wider strategy for the improvement of all aspects of its environmental performance as an institution.

94. A review of the Toyne Report (Toyne II), launched in 1996,⁹³ revealed that most of the organisations which it had targeted had demonstrated “considerable indifference” to its recommendations. It also looked at the extent to which FHEIs were taking a strategic approach to ‘greening’ their curricula. It identified only six significant examples of good practice from the 756 institutions surveyed.

95. The Review made some particular recommendations in relation to sustainable development learning. These are set out in Box 1:

Box 1: Key recommendations of the Toyne Review relating to sustainable development learning

- a) Enabling global citizenship (which is the outcome of sustainability learning) should be recognised as core business of learning institutions and legitimate purpose of life-time learning.
- b) Funds should be made available to establish a national programme to support the further and higher education sector’s response to the challenge of sustainable development.
- c) Within three years all FHE institutions should be either accredited to, or committed to becoming accredited to, a nationally or internationally recognised environmental management systems standard, such as the EcoManagement and Audit Scheme.
- d) Within three years, all FHE institutions should have developed the capacity to provide all students with the opportunity to develop defined levels of competence relating to responsible global citizenship.
- e) Those responsible for defining national standards relating to industrial and professional practice, and associated qualifications and standards, such as industry lead bodies and professional bodies, should ensure that appropriate reference is made to sustainable development issues.
- f) Within three years all funding councils should introduce a mechanism for linking environmental performance to the allocation of funds, for example by introducing environmental criteria into existing quality assessment and inspection procedures.

Environmental Responsibility: An Agenda for Further and Higher Education, was published in 1993 and became known as the Toyne Report after the Committee’s chairman, Peter Toyne.

⁹³ *Environmental Responsibility: A Review of the 1993 Toyne Report*, DFEE, 1996.

96. The RSPB has voiced its concerns that future decision makers coming through the Further and Higher Education sectors will “have little or no exposure to sustainable development, either in principle or practice”.⁹⁴

97. The Royal Academy of Engineering reports that a recent survey carried out amongst second year undergraduate students in the Engineering department at Birmingham University revealed a lack of understanding of even basic concepts relating to sustainable development. For example, more than 90% of the students had little or no understanding of the Kyoto Protocol despite the fact that the targets for carbon dioxide reduction which it sets will require them to deliver low-carbon solutions to their future employers. The Academy believes that this lack of understanding and engagement is almost certain to obstruct the Government’s efforts towards implementing its sustainability agenda.⁹⁵

98. In 1999, national surveys were conducted by the SDEP in partnership with the Higher Education 21 Project (see paras 101-102), to identify whether sustainable development learning elements had been integrated into business, engineering, design and teacher education programmes. The findings revealed a lack of any kind of strategic approach across all sectors surveyed. Other sector-based surveys of land-based and tourism courses, undertaken by the Council for the Protection of Rural England and Tourism Concern respectively, have drawn similar conclusions.

99. The Toyne recommendations have clearly not spurred the FHE sector to embrace sustainable development. Although, they have given those who were already starting to explore sustainable development, a framework to build upon as acknowledged, for example, by the University of Sunderland⁹⁶ and the University of Aberdeen.⁹⁷

100. Sir Geoffrey Holland told us that universities were “dipping their toes in the waters of sustainable development”.⁹⁸ Some specific examples have been highlighted in written evidence to the Committee from the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC).⁹⁹ Government funded initiatives have also operated post-Toyne to try and actively engage the FHE sector. The key initiatives are outlined below.

HE21

101. In 1997, Forum for the Future, sponsored by DETR, ran a two year project to identify and promote examples of best practice for sustainability in the Higher Education sector. The project was endorsed by the then Department for Education and Employment, and was carried out in partnership with 25 HE institutions. Each institution committed to improvement over the lifetime of the project.

102. By the end of the project in March 1999, the HE21 project had produced a range of publications including:

⁹⁴ Ev277, para 5.1.

⁹⁵ Ev273, para 1.5.

⁹⁶ <http://cei.sunderland.ac.uk/USER/toyne.htm>.

⁹⁷ <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/philosophy/endsandmeans/vol1no2/news3.shtml>.

⁹⁸ Q85.

⁹⁹ Ev223-232.

- a) an environmental management systems guide for the HE sector.
- b) four curriculum specifications covering the core learning agenda for sustainability in relation to business, engineering, design and teacher education at undergraduate level
- c) a variety of bulletins identifying “trailblazer” activity and key issues
- d) an HE21-LA21 Partnership for Sustainability discussion paper—including policy context, case studies and recommendations
- e) a set of sustainability indicators tailored to the HE sector.

Higher Education Partnership for Sustainability

103. Forum for the Future is now collaborating with eighteen Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in an initiative called the Higher Education Partnership for Sustainability (HEPS). HEPS is a three year initiative which began in 2000 and has financial support (£1million) from the UK Higher Education Funding Councils (HEFCs).¹⁰⁰ The project aims to help HEIs deliver their own strategic objectives through a positive engagement with the sustainable development agenda and to share that experience across the sector.

104. Forum for the Future is mainly looking at the estates management side of sustainability issues with HEIs such as purchasing, transport and construction. However, it has also identified the curriculum as a key issue for the partnership project. There is a more established path to the ‘greening of operations’ than to curriculum development and it seems that most institutions are more comfortable about launching into the world of sustainable development through this route. Thus, it is a helpful ‘way in’ and provides the building blocks within an institution to integrate sustainable development into its learning operations.

105. As a result of its HEPS work, Forum for the Future has identified a gap between a corporate demand for ESD and its provision by business schools. This was also noted by the SDEP. Sir Geoffrey Holland, former Chairman of the Panel observed that the “biggest sadness” and “disturbing anxiety” that the Panel had come across in the higher education sector was the lack of sustainable development education in the business schools and in management education and training.

106. The key outputs of the HEPS process will be a series of guidance documents, developed by Forum for the Future and due to be published by the end of this year. This series will include a guide for curriculum greening within universities. Forum is also developing a reporting tool so that higher education institutions can measure their progress on sustainable development.¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Ev87, para 68.

¹⁰¹ Q484.

Facilitating a new approach

107. Forum for the Future has identified enthusiasm for ESD in the FHE sector but believes that this is best tapped by a process of encouragement and facilitation which delivers home grown initiatives rather than by the imposition of prescriptive models which do not sit well with traditional academic independence. At the same time, the Environment Agency has identified a need for more guidance for institutions on how to integrate sustainable development objectives into existing courses.¹⁰²

108. Universities UK, the body which represents the executive heads of universities has acknowledged that there is a vital role for Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), as a statutory funding body, in facilitating change through sensitive operation of the funding methodologies, which can provide a framework for institutions' and students' decisions. However, in its response to HEFCE's draft strategy for 2003-8, the organisation cautions that a careful balance must be struck between supporting the sector and steering it to achieve Government driven, policy-related outcomes otherwise there is a danger of it becoming a vehicle for the micro-management of institutions.¹⁰³

109. Forum has found peer level engagement to be a particularly powerful influence on the spread of good practice in the higher education sector. Forum suggests that the professional associations, trade bodies and employer organisations are the key to achieving consistency across the sector. The particular influence that professional bodies can exert on higher education programmes is discussed below in paras 184-192.

110. The pioneering new Open University course on the environment is an excellent example of an innovative cross-curricula approach which seeks to engage science, social science and humanities students in analysis of the factors driving unsustainable change and what society needs to do to redress this change.¹⁰⁴ However, the authors of this course told us that its development process had highlighted the lack of a common ESD language across disciplines. They stressed that it was also difficult to take the kind of cross-discipline approach to sustainable development which is required when discipline domination seemed to be growing.¹⁰⁵ The latter situation is not aided by the fact that research funding mechanisms do not cater well for interdisciplinary projects.

111. We are disappointed at the dismal response shown by the Government and the majority of Further and Higher Education institutions to the Toyne Report and its review.

112. We recommend that DfES and the Higher Education Funding Councils carefully evaluate the findings of Forum for the Future's Higher Education Partnership for Sustainability report and consider how they can best support and promote ESD in Higher Education Institutions both through strategic guidance and changes to funding criteria.

¹⁰² *The business of learning – investing in a sustainable future*, Environment Agency, February 2001, Chapter 4.

¹⁰³ HEFCE strategic plan 2003-08: Universities UK's response to Consultation 2003/12.

¹⁰⁴ See Ev140-145.

¹⁰⁵ Q458.

113. There is little evidence that ESD is being effectively integrated into higher and further education syllabuses. The DfES should assess the adequacy of the range of guidance available to FHEIs relating to the integration of ESD and strengthen this as necessary. HEFCE should evaluate whether its funding mechanisms for both teaching and research sufficiently support cross-curricula activities such as ESD.

The post -16 learning and skills sector

114. DfES has a range of 'delivery partners' to assist it in post-16 education and training outside universities. These include: the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA), the Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) and the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA).¹⁰⁶ These bodies are in a pivotal position to ensure that skills needs relating to sustainable development are identified and integrated into the Government's skills agenda and reflected in curricula content and load.

115. Sector Skills Councils are still being established and we have not considered their work in detail in this report. They will bring together employers, trade unions and employers bodies to consider the skills needs in a variety of sectors. The full network will be set up by summer 2004 when there will be around 25 SSCs covering the UK, replacing the 73 former National Training Organisations. The network will include LANTRA, the SSC for the environment and land-based sector. The SSDA is responsible for establishing the network, promoting the development of each Council and monitoring their performance. The SSDA acts as developer, co-ordinator and ambassador for the network.

116. The LSC was established in 2001 and is responsible for funding and planning post-16 education and training including: further education, work-based training and young people workforce development, adult and community learning information, advice and guidance for adults, education business links.¹⁰⁷ The Council has a budget of £7.3 billion and operates through 47 local offices and a national office in Coventry. The LSDA, previously known as the Further Education Development Agency, is a strategic national resource for the development of policy and practice in post-16 education and training. It was launched in November 2000 with a new remit from the government to cover all education and training provision funded by the LSC.

117. The urgent need to build ESD capacity within the LSCs has been highlighted by organisations such as EAUC.¹⁰⁸ The promotion of sustainable development is included in the LSC's remit. It has identified key projects in this area as: greening the curriculum, developing sustainability champions and sustainability audit. The LSC funded 11 pilot projects relating to sustainability in 2001-02. These were designed to disseminate good

¹⁰⁶ Sector Skills Councils are still being established. The full network will be set up by summer 2004 when there will be around 25 SSCs covering the UK, replacing the 73 former National Training Organisations. Two Councils have been fully licensed to date, e-skills UK and the Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies Alliance (SEMTA). In addition, five 'trailblazers' are operating and a further 13 Councils are in development. The Sector Skills Development Agency is responsible for establishing the network, promoting the development of each Council and monitoring their performance. The SSDA acts as developer, co-ordinator and ambassador for the network.

¹⁰⁷ The LSC brought together the Training and Enterprise Councils and the Further Education Funding Council.

¹⁰⁸ Ev295-299.

practice in sustainable development education and to bring on board the local LSCs by helping them to develop an increasing awareness of ESD.¹⁰⁹

118. The LSC launched a second tranche of projects in November 2002, completed in June 2003, focussing on five sustainable development education themes: management, strategic planning, curriculum, formal/informal learning and social inclusion.¹¹⁰ These projects will provide the basis of a Best Practice Guide to be developed by the LSDA by August 2003 with a national dissemination event planned for October 2003. The LSDA is also developing a web-based ESD toolkit with case studies which it hopes to make available by the end of October this year.¹¹¹

119. We welcome the range of pilot projects which have been supported by the LSC and LSDA to explore a range of approaches to ESD. We also welcome the willingness of the two organisations to work together in this manner. It is now important to build on the experience of these initiatives and develop a coherent and focused programme of activity.

120. The LSDA has been a major partner in the development of the Leadership College which will develop the leaders and managers of the future for the learning and skills sector.¹¹² The College will be launched in autumn 2003 and the LSDA expects to have close association with and influence on its programmes. The Agency recognises that this is an ideal opportunity to influence the content of these courses in terms of sustainable development education and to ‘train the trainers’ in this area. The LSDA will also be playing an influential role in the development of the new sector skills council for Life Long Learning which is due to be launched in March 2004.

121. We welcome the LSDA’s intention to use its involvement with the new Leadership College and Sector Skills Councils for teachers to integrate education for sustainable development into its programmes from the start. These developments represent an important opportunity to embed ESD into the activities of key players in the learning and skills sector and cannot be missed.

Informal public education

122. Individuals can play their part in making sustainable development a reality by making changes to their everyday lives. However, to do so requires an understanding of which everyday practices to change, the potential impacts of these changes and a means to exert the appropriate lifestyle choices.

123. All behaviour change programmes are challenging. However ESD poses some specific difficulties because of the complexity of the issues involved. Often the information relating to sustainability is dependent on scientific evidence which may be contested. Focus groups suggest that the general public is “overwhelmed” by the number of sustainability issues

¹⁰⁹ There are 47 local LSCs.

¹¹⁰ See www.isda.org.uk/programmes/sustainable.

¹¹¹ Q423.

¹¹² Four organisations are contracted to run the college as a consortium are the Learning and Skills Development Agency, the Open University, Lancaster University Business School and Ashridge.

which need to be addressed.¹¹³ In the absence of positive feedback about the achievements which have been made, most people feel uncertain about how effective any individual actions might be in relation to the scale of the task and are unlikely to take any action as a result.

124. At present a consumer-led lifestyle is widely considered to be normal. Voluntarily denying oneself wanted goods and services and reducing personal choice is seen as abnormal, irrational and old fashioned.¹¹⁴ Acting unsustainably is not socially unacceptable nor is acting sustainably noticeably rewarded. Furthermore, those trying to make more sustainable choices may find themselves actually thwarted by the economic and administrative infrastructure they operate within. For example, ‘green team’ students we met at Hampstead Comprehensive had discussed fair trade issues, health food and organic farming and wanted to ensure that their school catering reflected some of these concerns. However, the school was unable to influence its catering contract.

125. Over the past 15 years, regular surveys in England have monitored public attitudes to the environment. These have shown that public concern about the environment has been increasing across all types of issues and that awareness of environmental issues has not changed significantly since 1996/7. In the latest survey (October 2002), 99% of respondents had heard of at least one of the terms: climate change, global warming or the greenhouse effect. However, 70% of respondents wrongly thought that the hole in the ozone layer was a cause.¹¹⁵ The latest OECD environmental review of the UK concludes that these findings confirm the need for continued, well-targeted initiatives to strengthen environmental education and awareness raising.¹¹⁶

Awareness campaigns

126. DEFRA is the department within Government, with lead responsibility for promoting sustainable development within Government and has largely focussed its efforts on awareness raising and public campaigns.¹¹⁷

Going for Green

127. In 1995 the Government launched *Going for Green*. The programme was designed to increase public recognition of the role of simple, individual action in delivering sustainable development and to secure commitment to personal lifestyle changes that would reduce the environmental degradation caused by day to day living. *Going for Green* operated through various communication channels—the media, service providers, retailers and community groups—to disseminate positive messages around the themes of resource use, pollution and the protection and enhancement of local environments. Initially piloted in specific communities, it was rolled out on a nationwide scale in 1996.

¹¹³ Ev1, para 2.3.

¹¹⁴ Ev1-3, paras 3.2 and 3.4.

¹¹⁵ Survey of Public Attitudes to quality of life and to the environment-2001, DEFRA, October 2002.

¹¹⁶ OECD, *Environmental Performance Review of the UK*, 25 October 2002.

¹¹⁷ Ev188, para 20.

128. In 1998 the National Consumer Council undertook a review of the Government's environmental awareness raising, of which *Going for Green* was the key component. (Other initiatives at the time comprised mainly of energy efficiency programmes and promotions from diverse environmental charities supported by the Government's Environmental Action Fund). The Council concluded that the Government's approach was "somewhat diffuse and bitty" and that it was "failing to present a coherent, readily accessible message" or even "creating confusion in people's minds".¹¹⁸

129. In 1999, mid term evaluation of the *Going for Green* community-based projects concluded that they were making little discernible difference to household behaviour. Despite high levels of support for environmentally friendly action among participants, the evaluation revealed a range of reasons why they personally found it very difficult to do so.¹¹⁹ It was in this evaluation that the term 'value-action gap' was first coined.

Are you doing your bit?

130. In response to these criticisms, in the run up to the Kyoto Climate Change negotiations in 1997, the DETR launched "*Are you doing your bit?*" (AYDYB) while what remained of *Going for Green* was quietly absorbed into 'Keep Britain Tidy'. AYDYB was planned as a three year campaign with total funding of £19.7 million.¹²⁰ Its basic purpose was to reinforce existing promotional activity on climate change and transport in particular. An evaluation, published by DETR in November 2000, found that while the campaign's brand recognition among its target audience was strong "there had only been small changes in consumer attitudes or behaviour".

131. In its final year, 2001-02, most of the campaign's resources were reallocated to rural support, during the outbreak of foot and mouth disease, and expenditure was cut from a planned £9.3 million to £0.6 million.¹²¹ All funding came to an end in April 2003. DEFRA decided against commissioning any further evaluation of AYDYB in view of the limited resources expended since the DETR study.¹²²

132. Others have, however, commented on its degree of effectiveness: Environmental campaigns (ENCAMS) worked with DEFRA on the AYDYB roadshow. ENCAMS told us.

"The problem with such events is that they attempt a one-size-fits-all message to an homogenous audience, and do not take account of the public's segmentation into attitudes and behaviours. For example, many visitors to the roadshow already recycled, saved energy, reduced waste and used public transport. Usually they were seeking reassurance and reinforcement for their actions or seeking information on

¹¹⁸ OECD, *Environment Performance Review of the UK*, 2002, p184.

¹¹⁹ Blake, J. 1999. *Overcoming the "value-action gap" in environmental policy: tensions between national policy and local experience*, *Local Environment* 4, 257-278.

¹²⁰ Ev189, para 29.

¹²¹ We have previously commented on the impacts of the foot and mouth crisis on DEFRA's ability to maintain commitment to other policy areas. See for example, the Fifth Report from the Environmental Audit Committee, Session 2002-03, on *Waste-An Audit*, HC 99, para 87.

¹²² Ev189, para 29.

how to do more for the environment. Whilst this is an important and valuable sector, were these ‘converted’ really the target audience for the roadshow?”¹²³

133. Forum for the Future believe that the fundamental flaw of AYDYB was that it failed to reinforce positive behaviour: anyone ‘who did their bit’ did so without recognition or reward while surrounded by others not doing their bit and finding life a lot more convenient. Other NGOs, academics and educational professionals have also criticised AYDYB for being “naïve”¹²⁴ and “scattergun”¹²⁵ and too general and unfocussed to achieve any real shift towards sustainable behaviours. The Environment Agency was equally critical but more optimistically felt that it had at least been a “step in the right direction”.¹²⁶

134. Global Action Plan, as its Director Trewin Restorick described, had “wrung their hands in horror” at the number of government initiatives such as *Going for Green* and AYDYB which had come in “like big firework displays, lit up the sky very briefly and then disappeared with no long-term impact”.¹²⁷ A more successful and cost-effective approach to promoting sustainable lifestyles, demonstrated by some non-governmental programmes, is to focus on specific messages targeted at specific groups *alongside* initiatives which enable practical behavioural changes.¹²⁸

135. A new communications strategy for sustainable development is being developed within DEFRA and the Department is considering replacing the general awareness raising approach of AYDYB with better targeted and more effective activity, focussed on waste and energy use. This approach is likely to be well received by others involved in promoting sustainable development. A more targeted approach requires an understanding of current lifestyles—“our starting places”—and the barriers faced in each particular area of lifestyle change, so that specific changes can be promoted appropriately.¹²⁹ This will require a long-term, consistent programme of promotion which operates at both national and local level on a scale commensurate with major public health campaigns.

136. DEFRA’s two major awareness raising campaigns relating to sustainability to date have been less than half-hearted and ill-focussed. We believe that the funding of any further large-scale, general awareness campaigns would not provide value for money. To stimulate the behavioural change required we recommend the Government funds and develops a coherent, long-term, targeted approach to promoting sustainable development which focuses on specific, priority issues such as waste and energy use.

137. We welcome DEFRA’s plans to consider replacing the general awareness raising approach of its *Are You Doing Your Bit?* campaign with a more targeted approach. Any new initiative should be fully funded to completion, subject to monitoring and evaluation, and protected from resource leakage.

¹²³ Ev234.

¹²⁴ Ev1-4.

¹²⁵ Ev184-5.

¹²⁶ Ev221-223.

¹²⁷ Q30.

¹²⁸ Ev232-236, Ev1-4, Ev178-181, Ev29, para 3.1, 1. This approach is supported by the findings of a study of sustainable development language commissioned by the SDEP from Quadrangle Consulting and published in October 1999.

¹²⁹ Ev254-256.

138. Future mass media campaigns should concentrate on reinforcing positive behaviour through incentives, rewards or reassurance and be supported with a range of practical opportunities for behavioural change at both individual and institutional levels.

A new communications strategy for sustainable development

139. The Head of Communications at DEFRA recently described the communication of sustainable development as an “immense challenge”. He said

“we are talking about producing real outcomes – significant changes to attitudes and behaviour in society. There is no overnight, one-size fits all, quick fix. It is therefore not surprising that we are drawn towards pessimism rather than optimism about our chances of success”.¹³⁰

140. DEFRA gained extensive experience in the communication of sustainable development as the lead department co-ordinating the UK delegation at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. The department had to work hard to highlight the public interest stories behind the Summit issues before UK media editors were even minded to send teams to Johannesburg to cover this major international event.

141. DEFRA’s Communications Directorate is responsible for developing the new, long-term communications strategy for sustainable development. As part of this process it is ‘auditing’ all of its existing sustainable development-related communications activity (both internal and external) to identify which approaches have proved successful, with a particular emphasis on discovering what motivates behaviour change. It will be considering all aspects of communications, including the use of the internet, media relations and paid publicity.

142. DEFRA intends to seek stakeholder’s views on any resulting proposals later in the year. The department will be recommending that education should be treated as a priority communications area, with specific consideration given to a high profile national schools education programme.¹³¹

143. In addition to DEFRA’s work, the sustainable development communications consultancy Futerra has recently assessed the degree to which a range of Government departments are employing successful communications strategies to change behaviours and attitudes in support of sustainable development. Futerra expects to make its report available in summer 2003.

144. We welcome DEFRA’s initiative to develop a new communications strategy for sustainable development.

145. Education will be a priority communications area in the strategy and DfES should actively contribute to its development.

¹³⁰ Speech by Lucian Hudson, Head of Communications, DEFRA at FUTERRA conference on communicating sustainable development – *Blood Sweat and Tears*, 11 December 2002.

¹³¹ Ev186-194.

146. Although DEFRA is the lead department for awareness raising of sustainable development, it is a cross-Government responsibility and all departments should be actively seeking to contribute to this review and the promotion of the final outcome. We look to the Sub-Cabinet Committee on Green Ministers (ENV (G)) to ensure this.

147. We are aware that a number of departments are participating in a review of their sustainable development communications by FUTERRA. We will draw upon this work in the course of our ongoing scrutiny of the 'greening government' initiative. We recommend that all Departments, even those who have not participated in this exercise, draw upon its findings in shaping their communications response to sustainable development.

Media

148. The media is a powerful force in influencing our attitudes and actions. In our inquiry we have paid particular attention to its use by Government in generating awareness of sustainable development but have not explored its impact upon informal learning for ESD beyond this (see paras 126-147).

149. Research has consistently shown that audience awareness of environmental issues increases with the volume of media coverage of those issues. Public opinion surveys record higher levels of concern matching the topics covered in the media. However, these levels of concern equally fall away as coverage declines.¹³²

150. A variety of Government departments are starting to engage actively with the media to promote sustainable development. DCMS has discussed the opportunities for sustainable development education programming with the BBC's Education Department. However, it can only set the framework for public service broadcasting and plays no role in determining the content or scheduling of broadcasting output. National and regional newspapers are equally independent.

151. DCMS also plans to consult the BBC and Channel 4 on its forthcoming sustainable development strategy, which gives suitable prominence to the potential for DCMS' sectors to inform and motivate the public on sustainable development issues. One of the department's NDPBs, the National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts, has funded Futerra, to produce two short films to be used by business, local government and educators.¹³³

¹³² Ungar, S., *Knowledge, ignorance and popular culture: climate change versus the hole in the ozone layer. Public Understanding of Science*, 9, 2000, 297-312; Allan, S., Adam, B. and Carter, C. (eds), *Environmental risks and the media*. 2000; Mazur, A. and Lee, J., *Sounding the global alarm. Environmental issues in the US national news. Social Studies of Science* 23, 1993, 681-720. Mazur, A., *Global environmental change in the news. International Sociology*, 13, 1998, 457-72; Simoes de Varvalho, A., *Climate in the News. The British press and the discursive construction of the greenhouse effect*, 2002. Unpublished PhD, University of London.

¹³³ During the last year, the Science Museum has held an exhibition about Climate Change, the Natural History Museum has opened the Darwin Centre, and the National Maritime Museum had a major promotion, "Planet Ocean", to raise public awareness of the importance of conserving and sustaining the world's oceans. See Ev314-315.

Leisure

152. DCMS accepts that the sectors which it oversees, including libraries, the Royal Parks and the historic environment, have a significant role to play in ESD. The Department reports that several of these, including the National Museum for Science and Industry, the Natural History Museum and the Royal Parks Agency, are already actively promoting sustainable development through their educational programmes and exhibitions.¹³⁴

153. The Secretaries of State for DCMS and DfES recently announced their intention to work more closely together through museums. The two departments are jointly funding grants of £2.5 million to be shared by eleven national museums to deliver children's education programmes and community projects in partnership with museums in the regions. The projects are intended to support learning in general and enrich the National Curriculum.¹³⁵

154. We welcome the recent announcement by Culture, Media and Sport and Education and Skills to collaborate more closely through their work with museums. The two departments have a key role to play in promoting ESD through informal learning channels.

155. DCMS has offered to support DfES in developing the lifelong and informal dimensions of its Sustainable Development Action Plan. We recommend that DfES draws upon DCMS' experience in this area.

At home

156. Local authorities offer a key route to engagement with sustainable development at the household level because of their direct influence on everyday life. Many have built up effective programmes and networks to encourage local action for sustainable development through their Local Agenda 21 (LA21) strategies which are now being incorporated into Community Strategies.¹³⁶

157. We visited Nottinghamshire County Council which is operating a number of ESD initiatives in conjunction with the City Council. For example, it produces a regular sustainability magazine which seeks to present human interest stories behind sustainable development issues and demonstrate that sustainability is normal and mainstream. This message is reinforced by ensuring that the publication is present not only in public buildings but also in dentist surgeries and in hairdressing salons. Further examples discussed during our visit are included in the Annex to this report.

158. The development of effective ESD programmes and materials to support individual households has proved a challenge. Few initiatives to date have succeeded in generating

¹³⁴ Ev314-315.

¹³⁵ DCMS Press release 60/2003, *Cash boost for regional museums will benefit kids and communities*, 25 June 2003.

¹³⁶ Agenda 21 was the "sustainable action plan for the 21st century" which was agreed at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (the Rio Earth Summit). Much of Agenda 21 refers to the need for local and community action and local authorities have translated it into Local Agenda 21.

lasting changes in behaviour. However, a programme which seems to be making some progress is GAP EcoTeams initiative.¹³⁷

EcoTeams

159. An EcoTeam is a group of 6-8 households who agree to meet together with a facilitator once a month over a 4 month period to work on ways to change their consumption practices. The effects of the behavioural changes made by individuals in each household are measured over time. The original concept was developed by the founder of the Global Action Plan movement, David Gershon, in 1990. Several Northern European countries took up the EcoTeam idea in the early 1990s, with variable degrees of success. The most notable success has been in the Netherlands where results from long-term monitoring of 10,000 EcoTeams show that many of the behavioural changes achieved through the programme were still in place nine months later.¹³⁸

160. GAP is currently supporting EcoTeams in Rushcliffe in Nottingham. We took oral evidence from five members of the public who were members of these teams and discussed their initial motivation to join and their experiences of being an EcoTeamer. Many wanted to build on their existing interest in the environment and learn more about the practical actions they could take, others had joined to get to know more people in their area.¹³⁹ As well as learning practical measures to reduce water and energy consumption in the home, the EcoTeamers had swapped intelligence on the best cycle routes to work, shared lifts to farmers' markets, and lobbied their local Council to provide a local can recycling bank.

161. In 2002, GAP took 11 teams (98 households) through the programme (and another 11 are currently underway). In 2002 the teams achieved just under 50% savings on waste, 27% on gas and electricity and a 17% reduction in water use. The EcoTeam model currently costs around £85 per household. This makes it too expensive and intensive for GAP to run on a larger scale as the organisation relies on sponsorship. The EcoTeams project is supported by Biffaward (through landfill tax monies), Rushcliffe Borough Council and the Energy Savings Trust.

162. The cost is mainly due to the staff time involved in the facilitation process, which is fundamental to success. GAP is seeking to make the scheme less cost-intensive and transferable to a wider area. This may then make it viable for local authorities to invest in EcoTeams, which can assist the authority in the delivery of objectives such as minimising waste disposal costs and encouraging social cohesion.¹⁴⁰ Nottinghamshire County Council spends £22 per household per year on waste disposal. Households participating in EcoTeams tend to halve their waste and therefore theoretically save the council £11 per household per year.

163. We were impressed by the EcoTeams programme run by Global Action Plan which is successfully promoting behavioural change at household level. We recommend that

¹³⁷ Ev117-118.

¹³⁸ Staats, H.J. and Harland, P. 1995. The EcoTeam programme in the Netherlands. Study 4: a longitudinal study of the effects of the EcoTeam program on environmental behaviour and its psychological backgrounds. Centre for Energy and Environmental Research, Leiden University.

¹³⁹ See Ev117-127.

¹⁴⁰ Q49.

the Government funds the expansion of this programme to operate on a trial basis across diverse communities, with a full evaluation of the resulting costs and benefits both in qualitative and quantitative terms.

The workplace

Is there a sustainable development skills gap?

164. Although there seems to be a degree of consensus regarding what we need to learn and understand about sustainable development there has been no systematic assessment of the extent to which these skills are currently being integrated into both our formal and informal systems of learning and the nature and size of the skills gap which needs to be addressed if we are to meet our sustainable development goals.

165. In contrast, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit is working with the Centre for Education in the Built Environment to identify and map the provision of education in the skills required by the new 'urban professional'. An exercise is in progress to define the relevant skills required, survey the existing type and scale of provision of education for these skills and its geographical spread. On completion, liaison with the Regional Development Agencies, other agencies and appropriate providers will be undertaken to develop and deliver provision ranging from bespoke Continuing Professional Development to degree programmes.¹⁴¹

166. A similar exercise could be applied to ESD. However, in order to evaluate the sustainable development skills base effectively, stakeholders need to ensure that they are talking about the same thing. The LSC and LSDA highlighted the need for common language as SD skills can be labelled differently in different sectors. For example as skills for citizenship, key skills, basic skills or communication skills.

167. There remain concerns within both the educational sector and amongst employers that there is a deficit in basic education, in terms of scientific and social scientific literacy. Select committees of both Houses of Parliament have consistently raised issues relating to science education in this respect.¹⁴² The QCA and National Foundation for Educational Research is currently considering changes to the science curriculum as part of its 14-19 reforms.

168. The Co-operative Insurance Society, which employs more than 10,000 people over 160 sites in the UK, has observed a "poor level of education and knowledge about sustainability" across its workforce in the UK. The company has identified a "significant education gap" especially in basic science education which it has had to overcome before it can teach and explain the new sustainability initiatives it is pursuing within the company.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ Ev196, para 5.1.

¹⁴² Third Report of the House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, Session 2001-02, on *Science Education from 14-19*, HC508-I. First Report of the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee, Session 2000-01, on *Science in Schools*, HL 49. Third Report of the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee, Session 1999-2000, on *Science and Society*, HL 49.

¹⁴³ Ev59, paras 11&12.

169. The LSC provided a practical example of a skills gap which it identified and helped to plug. The NVQ which relates to the gas industry has recently been updated to include sustainable issues and sustainable modules. This was particularly driven by the need to enable people working in the industry to install up-to-date condensing boilers which are being promoted in the UK but have been underutilised because of the lack of skills available to do so.

170. A growing number of professional institutions are recognising that the challenge of putting sustainability into practice requires a rethinking of professional training. The Sustainability Alliance (an alliance of professional institutions) reports that professionals are beginning to call for more help and guidance from their professional associations as they are being required to demonstrate their competency in complying with a growing and complex set of environmental, social and ethical standards.¹⁴⁴

171. The Sustainability Alliance (8 organisations representing professions such as town planners, architects, waste managers and electrical engineers) believes that sustainable development has profound implications for the engineering, planning, chemical, environmental and accounting professions in particular in both the practice and role of the professional. Those professionals responsible for the safety, technical and economic performance of their activities now have growing responsibilities to:

- a) use resources sustainably, minimise the environmental impact of their projects in the reduction of wastes and emissions, and
- b) to use their influence to ensure that their work brings social benefits which are equally distributed.

172. The Alliance suggests that these responsibilities heighten the importance of ethics and social responsibility in curriculum design and will require greater emphasis on codes of conduct and the role of the professional as social change agents.

The Skills White Paper

173. DfES published its Skills White Paper on 9 July 2003.¹⁴⁵ In advance of its publication, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, Rt hon. Charles Clarke MP, assured us that this would incorporate the recommendations of the SDEP in relation to skills for ESD.¹⁴⁶ The White Paper makes a number of references to sustainable development but it neglects to set skills policy within the overall context of the Government's overarching commitment to sustainable development. Throughout, the paper consistently emphasises the economic dimension of sustainable development only, linking it to skills policy in the narrowest sense as a driver for economic productivity and competitiveness. For example, the Paper states:

¹⁴⁴ Ev372-4.

¹⁴⁵ *21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential*, DfES, July 2003.

¹⁴⁶ Q210.

“A better skilled workforce is a more productive workforce. We must improve our productivity, and our ability to support sustainable development, if we are to compete successfully in today’s global market”.¹⁴⁷

174. More encouragingly, the White Paper identifies sustainable development, alongside leadership and management, as a cross-sectoral theme to be given priority across the Skills for Business Network. Cross-sector Boards, established by the SSDA, will be considering which generic skills (relevant to all sectors) and sector specific skills are necessary for understanding, developing, and implementing sustainable technologies and working practices.¹⁴⁸

175. We welcome the commitment, in the recent Skills White Paper, to make sustainable development a priority theme across the Skills for Business Network in relation to its work on generic and cross-sector skills. However, we are disappointed that the Government chose to present its future skills policy so visibly and exclusively within the narrow context of economic competitiveness rather than against the wider backdrop of sustainable development. The White Paper will be a key point of reference across the employment and education sectors and the Government has missed an important opportunity to embed sustainable development as a guiding principle .

Training and development

176. For most people the workplace is the significant learning environment in their adult life. As more employers seek to demonstrate corporate social responsibility, develop accredited environmental management systems, and meet the requirements of an increasing body of environmental regulation, their employees are gradually becoming more aware of sustainability at work. However, sustainable business practice is still not widespread and neither is the ESD to support it.

177. Some organisations are now required to provide programmes to raise staff awareness in relation to sustainable development. For example, to be certified to the international environmental management system standard ISO 14001 an organisation must ensure a level of understanding of key sustainable development issues across its entire workforce, encompassing their diversity of education, ability, experience and working environments. As part of the Government’s greening government initiative, all Government departments are expected to have a strategy in place for raising staff awareness of sustainable development.¹⁴⁹

178. There are a number of NGOs working with businesses to help them use staff engagement to improve their environmental performance. For example, Forum for the Future offers a learning programme aimed at improving sustainability knowledge and understanding of mid-career managers¹⁵⁰ whilst GAP runs an ‘Environmental Champions’

¹⁴⁷ *21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential*, DfES, July 2003, para 1.3.

¹⁴⁸ *21st Century Skills: Realising Our Potential*, DfES, July 2003, para 3.6 (f).

¹⁴⁹ Second Annual Report of the Green Ministers Committee, November 2000, DETR, para 3.4 All departments were to have a strategy by March 2000.

¹⁵⁰ Sustainability Learning Networks Programme is run in partnership with the University of Cambridge’s Programme for Industry .The Programme focuses on equipping participants with the knowledge and skills needed to take forward

programme working with employees of large organisations and SMEs to reduce their organisation's resource use.¹⁵¹

179. However, as with schools there do seem to be a range of providers overwhelming businesses with ESD support. In looking for advice and guidance in running their staff awareness programme, the Co-operative Insurance Society, identified more than sixty service providers—all of which were subsidised through Government or European funding. However, it found that few of these were sufficiently well-resourced to provide an effective service.¹⁵² This again highlights the need to target resources effectively.

Union Learning Representatives

180. The trades unions already offer access to a range of learning opportunities for their members and the Government has recognised this key role in establishing the Union Learning Fund and Union Learning Representatives (ULRs).¹⁵³ To date, 6500 ULRs have been trained and the Government aims to have 22,000 in post by 2010.¹⁵⁴

181. A recent survey by the TUC indicated that workforces were keen to do more on sustainable development issues, not least in terms of the environment, but felt hampered by a lack of resources and statutory right to play a positive role.¹⁵⁵ The TUC found that 10% of respondents had been refused time off for environmental training although almost half had never actually asked. The reluctance of some employers, particularly smaller firms, to provide time off for training is a well known barrier to all types of training. The Government is currently seeking to address this through its Employer Training Pilots.¹⁵⁶

182. The unions are seeking to incorporate sustainable development into their steward training, through the Learning Representatives. However, the Trade Union Sustainable Development Advisory Committee accepts that the appointment of ULRs to date constitutes a “great sustainability opportunity missed” as many received preliminary training which did not incorporate ESD.¹⁵⁷ However, trades unions organisations such as the TUC are working to retrieve the situation.

business strategies for sustainability and profitability. The Programme is accredited by Cambridge University to Diploma level.

¹⁵¹ See Ev27-30, Ev58-61.

¹⁵² Ev59, para 13.

¹⁵³ The Union Learning Fund was introduced in May 1998. It promotes activity by unions in support of the Government's objective of creating a learning society, by influencing the increase in the take-up of learning in the workplace and boosting union's capacity as learning organisations. Union Learning Representatives encourage access to and take up of the available learning and training possibilities for workers.

¹⁵⁴ DfES Pres release, Unions to be given key role in skills strategy-Clarke, 2 July 2003.

¹⁵⁵ Ev49.

¹⁵⁶ Employer Training Pilots were introduced by the Government in September 2002 in six local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) areas to increase the demand for training by reducing the barriers to take-up, particularly by those people with lower skills. The pilots have been extended to run for two years and to cover a further six local LSC areas. An evaluation of the current Employer Training Pilots will inform the development of future national programmes to support skills training. Key barriers to training in small firms are particularly being addressed: the cost to employers of giving low-skilled staff time off work, and the lack of time for training due to work. The pilots reimburse employers, with extra support for small firms, for the cost of releasing employees during normal working hours.

¹⁵⁷ Ev51.

183. We recommend that DfES works with the trades unions to maximise the potential for promoting and incentivising education for sustainable development through the mechanism of the Union Learning Representatives and the Union Learning Fund.

Professions

184. Over the last five years, professional bodies have been coming together in a variety of groups and alliances to try to address the issues that sustainable development raises for membership. For example, in the form of the Sustainability Alliance and the Professional Practice for Sustainable Development (14 professional bodies a partnership project involving the Environment Agency).

185. The SDEP set out a number of strategic goals for the professions. This included a recommendation that by 2010 all professional bodies and industry lead bodies should have sustainable development criteria included within their course accreditation requirements. Having phased out their own examinations, many professions now rely on 'accredited' degrees as the educational route to membership and play a key role in defining the curricula of higher education programmes.

Qualifications and Standards

186. In February 2001, the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) and Sustainability First hosted a conference to initiate a debate on the desirability of establishing Sustainable Development Standards.¹⁵⁸ Following this, IEMA consulted 8,000 stakeholders and found 75% in favour of such standards with support expressed by DETR (now DEFRA), various higher education organisations and professional institutes including members of the sustainability alliance.¹⁵⁹

187. Ten environmental institutions, including IEMA, have combined to launch a new umbrella body called the Society for the Environment, which is aiming to co-ordinate qualifications and develop a framework for new 'Chartered Environmentalist' status. IEMA has also put forward a very prescriptive model for sustainable development standards to DfES.¹⁶⁰ However, DFES has not yet responded or indicated whether it would support such an approach in principle.

188. The professions are now wanting to move quickly and are exploring professional standards in sustainable development both as specific qualifications and elements of professional courses. For example, the Royal Institute of British Architects launched an enhanced sustainability syllabus in June 2000 and hosted a symposium on sustainability in architectural education in June 2002.¹⁶¹

189. Mr Russell Foster, the Chief Executive of IEMA, gave us the impression that the environmental institutions were expecting to set the professional standards in this area

¹⁵⁸ Sustainability First is a charity which was formed to encourage and help professionals recognise the importance of sustainable development.

¹⁵⁹ Ev164, para 2.5.

¹⁶⁰ These are set out in *Sustainable Development Standards: A preliminary consultation exercise*, IEMA and Sustainability First, 2001.

¹⁶¹ *RIBA hosts symposium on sustainability in architectural education*, RIBA Press Release, 10 May 2002.

which others should follow. It is not clear that this is a view more widely shared amongst other professional institutions and this may be a potential area for conflict. It is important to ensure that institutional aggrandisement does not impede a collaborative response from all the professions.

190. There have not as yet been any major steps towards specific ESD qualifications.¹⁶² QCA has developed some initial material on the ESD opportunities within qualifications.¹⁶³ However, as each subject is typically associated with a range of different qualifications, this presents a more complex area for integrating ESD than the National Curriculum.¹⁶⁴

191. The QCA has been revising the common criteria which guides the development of *all* qualification specifications. There is now a requirement for all qualifications to involve an understanding of sustainable development “where appropriate to the subject”. This updates the previous reference to the understanding of environmental issues alone and enables QCA to ensure that ESD is incorporated as subjects come up for re-accreditation.¹⁶⁵ The QCA, along with the SSDA and LSC, is also participating in a review of vocational qualifications.

192. The development of standards and qualifications for sustainable development is at an early stage for both the professions and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The DfES should convene a standing conference of all those responsible for developing qualifications in this area to facilitate a co-ordinated approach.

Monitoring and Evaluating Progress

Indicators

193. The Government measures its progress against its sustainable development strategy by its 15 headline indicators and the 150 indicators which underlie these. Three of the sub-indicators are relevant to ESD. These are:

- a) public Understanding and Awareness (T7)
- b) awareness in Schools (T8)
- c) individual Action for sustainable development (T9).

194. DfES is responsible for T8 and DEFRA for T7 and T9. Progress against these indicators tends to be based on the latest survey of public attitudes and not on a systematic

¹⁶² Although in 2002, NCFE Environment and Sustainable Development Certificate (FE) was the first QCA approved accredited learning programme for sustainable development—set at a Level 1 Foundation certificate. This was one of first examples of a qualification combining explicitly stated ESD principles and funded learning. Intermediate and advanced qualifications are in development. The University for Industry/Learn Direct have also produced a modular programme entitled ‘Sustainable Development for All’ See Ev48-52.

¹⁶³ Q280.

¹⁶⁴ Q319.

¹⁶⁵ Q321.

annual basis which would support the monitoring of the implementation of DfES' proposed sustainable development action plan.

195. We recommend that DfES commissions research into effective indicators for ESD to support the monitoring and evaluation of its proposed sustainable development action plan. The forthcoming review of the UK Strategy for Sustainable Development, and its associated indicators, provides an opportunity to revise current indicators.

Further research

196. ESD is not being systematically monitored or evaluated across the learning spectrum and there is a clear absence of sufficient baseline data from which to measure progress.

197. QCA regularly evaluates elements of the national curriculum. QCA has yet to identify its research priorities for this year but ESD has not been one of its priorities to date. QCA is currently allocated just £22,000 to develop ESD in schools compared with £300,000 for developing physical education.¹⁶⁶ In 2002, QCA focused its evaluations on how schools were implementing the inclusion statement¹⁶⁷ and considering issues such as diversity and equal opportunities.

198. The Schools Sampling Project is one of the key ways in which QCA gathers information on how schools are coping with the curriculum. It uses that sample to ask on-going questions about the manageability of programmes of study as well as focussing on issues that are particularly pertinent that year (eg in 2002 the introduction of citizenship was incorporated). No specific monitoring of ESD is included in the survey and QCA told us that it favoured a more qualitative approach to evaluate work in this area.¹⁶⁸

199. In view of the recent ESD work by Ofsted it would be timely for the two bodies to join forces to review and evaluate current ESD activity. We understand that QCA and Ofsted have already given a general undertaking to conduct more joint investigations.¹⁶⁹

200. We recommend that QCA and Ofsted, undertake joint, qualitative research on the benefits of ESD in the light of the findings of Ofsted's recent investigation of ESD in schools.

201. Wider work across the whole learning spectrum is also required. The UK National Association for Environmental Education and the GA suggest that further research is required to explore the mainstreaming of sustainable development issues into learning and the links between sustainable development and life-long learning.¹⁷⁰

202. The Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning has a continuing programme of research on the impact of lifelong learning on sustainability.¹⁷¹ However,

¹⁶⁶ Q340.

¹⁶⁷ The Inclusion Statement is a statutory requirement that was introduced as part of the revised national curriculum in 1999. Schools have a responsibility to provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils.

¹⁶⁸ Q302.

¹⁶⁹ Q302.

¹⁷⁰ Ev258, para 2.1.

¹⁷¹ See Ev117, para 5.0.

the role of learning in promoting sustainable development and related behavioural change would benefit from a co-ordinated programme on the scale of the ESRC Global Environmental Change Programme (GECPC) which ran from 1991-2000. The GECPC research programme aimed to bring social science and economic expertise to bear on global environmental research and remains the largest social science programme ever run in the UK.

203. The programme addressed four key questions: the social and economic causes of environmental change; the impacts of environmental change; the policies and strategies which governments, businesses and individuals can adopt in order to mitigate or adapt to environmental stresses; and how environmental knowledge relates to these actions.¹⁷²

204. We acknowledge the substantial contribution made by the ESRC Global Environmental Change Programme. There is now a clear need for new basic and applied research to support the design, implementation and evaluation of formal and informal education for sustainable development. We recommend that the ESRC investigates the viability of such a programme.

Annex

Visit to Nottingham, Tuesday 13 May 2003

Oral evidence session with EcoTeam members

1. EcoTeams is a programme run by the charity Global Action Plan (GAP). It is described in more detail in paras 159-164 and Ev117-8.
2. The Committee took the unusual step of taking oral evidence from members of an EcoTeam in the private home of GAP's EcoTeams co-ordinator, Penney Poyzer.
3. Penney and her architect husband, Mr Gill Schalom, are converting their Victorian, semi-detached house in West Bridgford, into an 'eco-home'.¹⁷³ They are working to improve energy efficiency whilst also considering the effect that every aspect of the house has on the environment. The aim is to demonstrate what can be done in an existing home without having to commission a purpose-built energy efficient house. Where possible, natural building products have been used such as lime plaster and the house now has features such as a solar-panel on the roof and a composting chamber for toilet waste.
4. The Committee enjoyed a tour of the 'eco-home' prior to taking oral evidence.

¹⁷² Berkhout, F., Leach, M. and Scoones, I. (eds), *Negotiating environmental change: new perspectives from social science*. 2003, Edward Elgar.

¹⁷³ see www.msarch.co.uk/ecohome.

Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall

Main presenters

Mr Peter Webster	Director Environment, NCC
Mr Phil Keynes	Senior Environmental Co-ordinator, NCC
Ms Theresa Barnes	Environment, Waste and Recycling (Nottingham Nappy Project)
Mr Mike Peverill	Local Agenda 21 Policy Officer, Nottingham City Council
Mr John Peck	Headteacher, Peafield Lane Primary School
Ms Pippa Manson	Head of Environmental Education, Education Department, NCC
Ms Julie Cope	“Environmental Champion”
Ms Alison Stuart	“Environmental Champion”
Also present: Cllr Butler (Cabinet Member for the Environment) and Ms Cathy Gillespie (Notts CC Environment Department)	

5. The Committee visited Nottinghamshire County Council (NCC) to discuss a range of issues relating to education for sustainable development and the promotion of sustainable development in general. Nottinghamshire is one of the largest local education authorities (LEAs) in the country. It serves a population of over 700,000 and maintains over 370 schools. The Council’s Environment department has also participated in Global Action Plan’s ‘Environmental Champions’ programme (Ev27 for more detail).

6. Sustainability is one of four cornerstones in NCC’s strategic plan and the environment is one of six priorities. NCC also has a Corporate Environmental Policy. We discussed NCC’s overall approach to sustainable development how the local government Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) and the Private Finance Initiative could better promote good sustainability performance within local authorities.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁴ At the Committee’s request, Nottinghamshire County Council provided further information.

Awareness raising

7. NCC's strategic plan commits the Council to raising environmental awareness. The Committee discussed the range of publications, campaigns, and staff training being employed to meet this commitment.

8. In 1998, Nottingham City Council were partners in a concerted environmental campaign called 'Turning the Tide' with Leicestershire and Derbyshire Councils and three local newspapers. The City Council has built on the experiences of this campaign and now produces a regular sustainability magazine 'Living for Tomorrow' in conjunction with the County Council. This presents human interest stories relating to sustainable development to demonstrate that sustainability is normal, mainstream and not just for the worthy. The Council work to ensure that this publication is available in hairdressers and dentists as well as public buildings to reinforce this message.

9. The two Councils are also trying to promote a particular behavioural change by deterring the use of disposable nappies which make up to 2-4% of the county's waste stream. They have published a leaflet promoting the Notts Nappy Project, which encourages alternatives to the use of disposable nappies. The project is targeting ante-natal classes and midwives to engage healthcare professionals in promoting awareness of this issue.

10. NCC is conscious that it should be seen to be leading by example in terms of sustainable behaviour and has participated in GAP's Environmental Champions scheme. NCC has a 'champion' on every floor in Trent Bridge House (the Environment Department's main office) and has concentrated on waste and recycling to date but is also looking to develop energy and travel to work themes. Performance results for each floor are posted in the lifts to generate a sense of ownership and to highlight good/poor performance to colleagues. NCC is hoping to roll out the scheme to other departments.

Formal education

11. Pippa Manson, Head of Environmental Education at NCC, outlined the LEA's approach to ESD. NCC are seeking to develop teachers' understanding of ESD to build capacity in the county so that schools can deliver ESD themselves and make links with other initiatives such as Citizenship and Healthy Schools. Three county schools are already Eco-schools but the education authority has found that the level of ESD understanding among teachers is low. For example, the Council recently interviewed for a post relating to environmental education and only two out of ten teachers could describe and explain ESD.

12. NCC operates a *Trailblazer* scheme to demonstrate the contribution that outdoor education can make to all areas of the curriculum. *Trailblazer* is designed to give pupils of all ages and abilities the chance to develop their understanding, awareness and care for the environment and is operated through schools which are accredited to run the scheme. One teacher in each school acts as the Trailblazer School Co-ordinator.

13. The scheme involves: field studies; adventurous activities; practical conservation and personal and social education. A Record of Achievements is given to all participants who progress through each level and awards are presented to those pupils who complete the

award requirements so that there is recognition and credit given for their environmental education.

14. Mr Peck outlined his approach to ESD at Peafield Primary School. Peafield has been identified for inclusion in Ofsted's current research project on good ESD practice (see paras 81-82). Mr Peck advocated an appreciation of the local environment as an excellent starting point for engaging his pupils. Their enthusiasm can then be built upon to help them relate to wider issues of sustainable development on a global scale.

15. Mr Peck emphasised how important it was for the head teacher to give signal to staff that ESD was core business within the school. ESD is optional for primary schools and he had found that new staff were often wary of using it as a learning context. Mr Peck had sought to demonstrate leadership on ESD by appointing a teacher responsible for the environment and running in-service training days on environmental issues. He had also sought blanket permission from parents to take the children outside into the local environment any time in the year where it is deemed relevant to the curriculum. Peafield has developed its own environmental trails and these are used to teach local history, science and geography.

Visit to Hampstead Comprehensive and Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College, 20 May 2003

Hampstead Comprehensive School, Cricklewood, London

1. The Committee visited Hampstead Comprehensive to talk to staff and pupils about their involvement in *envision's* Young Envisionaries Award (YEVA).

Young Envisionaries Award

2. YEVA is the main project of *envision*,¹⁷⁵ a charity, established in June 2000 to develop frameworks to inspire, initiate and support action by individuals (beyond the 'converted') relating to sustainable development.

3. YEVA aims to engage young people at school and college and seeks to "inspire and empower" them with their potential to act as vehicles for positive change. *envision* staff visit the school at the beginning of the Autumn term and make contact with year 12/13. This may be by addressing an assembly or attending a 'fresher's fayre' or activity day. A meeting is then set up to discuss the project with interested sixthformers and *Envision* Youth Educator (EYESs). These are volunteers, trained by *envision* and recruited largely through volunteer bureaus, websites and newspaper adverts. There are two EYE volunteers per school.

4. At the initial meeting of the YEVA 'green team', the sixth formers discuss their individual interests and areas where they would like to make a difference. They undertake team building exercises with the facilitators and start to consider what projects or activities

¹⁷⁵ Environmental Vision (operating as *envision*) is registered as both a charity operating in England & Wales, and a company limited by guarantee.

they could undertake to address their concerns. Sustainable development is not mentioned by the facilitators at this stage. However, as the pupils research their ideas more thoroughly they are encouraged to understand how their interest relates to wider Government policy.

5. YEVA teams wind up in the summer term, around April/May, to accommodate exams. However, some schools are keen to carry on. At the end of the summer term *envision* stages an award ceremony for all the YEVA teams across London. *envision* has also run YEVA workshops for all 'green teamers' across London. This has proved popular and helps the teams to feel part of a larger network beyond their own school.

6. YEVA was piloted in five schools across North London during 2001-02. Their activities included: 'recycled' fashion shows, globalisation debates, classroom recycling, education of younger pupils, setting up green spaces within schools, healthy & ethical food days and solar power installation. Following the success of the pilot phase, *envision* have expanded YEVA into around 20 schools across London, including areas such as Barnet, Ealing, Croydon and Newham. YEVA intends to approximately double in size each year, expanding outside London for 2003-2004. This will build towards the ultimate ambition of transferring the model to a national programme.

7. Following a successful start, *envision* are currently funded primarily through trusts and grants. However, they have found that their approach does not always fit neatly with the criteria required to bid for funding from Government schemes such as DEFRA's Environment Action Fund.

YEVA at Hampstead Comprehensive School

8. The headmaster, Mr Andy Knowles, and Ms Andrea Smith, Director of Post-16 Studies discussed the role of YEVA in the context of the school's overall approach to extra-curricula activities. The school prides itself on a strong extra-curricula programme and has found this to encourage applications to the sixth form. Hampstead Comprehensive generally welcomed expert support for its enrichment activities from outside organisations such as *envision*. Mr Knowles told us that this support aided busy teachers who may not always have the necessary knowledge. Pupils were also often more willing to engage with organisations not naturally associated with school.

9. The Committee discussed the YEVA project with Hampstead's YEVA 'green team', in the presence of their *envision* co-ordinators Nick Nielsen and Matt Price and supporting teachers, Mr George Reynoldson (Assistant Director of Post-16 Studies) and Mr Noel Jenkins (Head of Geography).

10. The pupils were very enthusiastic about their involvement in the project and were keen to become EYEs themselves when they left school, whether they were going on to further education or employment.

11. The Hampstead green team had started their work by seeking to promote healthy eating in the school and to offer more vegetarian and fair trade products. Through a school survey, the pupils identified popular support but were unable to influence the school catering contract to change the menu or hire a fair trade vending machine. The pupils therefore arranged to bring in their own vegetarian food to sell, undercutting the school

canteen. The pupils used the profit from this venture to regenerate a disused piece of land in the school grounds to make a garden and outdoor art gallery.

12. The pupils told the Committee that the YEVA project had helped them understand what practical action they could take to address some of the sustainability issues that they were learning about in the curriculum or that personally concerned them. The pupils highlighted geography as the main school subject where they had been introduced to sustainability. Mr Jenkins, Head of Geography, observed that the YEVA project was reinforcing the pupils' formal learning. In some cases, they had inquired about topics already covered in class, such as solar power, with a new enthusiasm generated by approaching the issue from their own personal perspective, outside the classroom.

Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College, Baron's Court, London

13. Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College is a multi-cultural, inner city general Further Education institution and one of the biggest centres of FE in the country. Between 2001/02 it undertook a one-year cross-college sustainability and diversity pilot project. An outline of this project and the activities undertaken were provided as written evidence to the Committee by Dr Nigel Rayment, formerly the Entitlement Manager at the college and now an Educational Consultant on Sustainability and Diversity. They are not repeated here¹⁷⁶ The Committee visited the college to learn more about the project and its impact on the staff and students.

14. The Committee discussed the project with the college Principal, John Stone, Vivien Guy, Tutorial and Enrichment Manager, Dr Nigel Rayment and a variety of tutors and students.

15. The project had set out to achieve the following educational aims:

- a) to provide relevant enrichment opportunities
- b) to raise awareness of the concept of sustainability and opportunities for action
- c) to develop active interest in citizenship issues
- d) to extend inclusion
- e) to raise levels of motivation and morale.

16. The pilot year involved three themed terms covering: Environment, Fair Trade and Human Rights and Refugee Issues. Activities were closely linked to the tutorial programme and students were also encouraged to participate in events and workshops around the country run by *People and Planet*—a national student network which campaigns on sustainability issues.¹⁷⁷

17. Tutors noted that the partnership with *People and Planet* had been beneficial in motivating students because the organisation was experienced in offering a diversity of

¹⁷⁶ Ev304-306.

¹⁷⁷ See www.peopleandplanet.org.

opportunities for engaging with sustainability issues. This meant that students tended to find an issue which 'clicked' with them and was a good starting point for further learning about sustainability.

18. Notable benefits of the project included: the development of communication and wider key skills, lobbying, team building and a high level of participation in local Millennium Volunteer and Princes' Trust projects. Staff felt that this demonstrated the contribution that ESD can make to the achievement of citizenship targets as well as enhancing an institution's reputation within the community.

19. The pilot project was part funded from FEFC Entitlement Unit money under the umbrella of enrichment activities. The college had made inquiries to the Learning and Skills Council London West (LSCLW) about bidding for the second phase of sustainability project funding. However, it was told that the LSCLW would not be submitting any bids in relation to that initiative as there was no staffing capacity to process and oversee the bid. The project at HWLC has now been dramatically reduced in scope.

20. Staff stressed the importance of supporting the enrichment programme with appropriate teacher training. The college is currently retraining staff over a three year cycle and their programme includes ESD. The college is also looking to move beyond ESD related theme weeks and develop strategies to embed sustainability issues in the core curriculum.

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4	Birley, Tim, Independent Advisor on Sustainable Development	Ev167
5	Botanic Garden Education Network	Ev173
6	Centre for Alternative Technology	Ev174
7	Centre for Research in Education and the Environment, Bath University	Ev8,24
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9	Centre for Research, Education and Training in Energy (CREATE)	Ev178
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11	Clark, Andy, Environment Co-ordinator, Canon Burrows C of E Primary School	Ev184
12	Co-operative Insurance Society (CIS)	Ev58
13	Corus	Ev185
14	Council for Environmental Education	Ev290
15	Department for Culture, Media and Sport	Ev314
16	Department for Education and Skills (DfES)	Ev68, 80
17	Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)	Ev186
18	Department for International Development (DfiD)	Ev295
19	Department of Urban Development and Regeneration, University of Westminster	Ev195
20	Development Education Association	Ev197
21	Development Education Project, Manchester Metropolitan University	Ev199
22	EcoTeams Initiative	Ev27, 117
23	Energy Saving Trust	Ev201
24	Engineering Employers Federation	Ev205
25	English Nature	Ev214
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27	Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC)	Ev223
28	Environmental Campaigns Ltd (ENCAMS)	Ev232
29	Environmental Education Advisers Association	Ev236
30	Field Studies Council	Ev316
31	Forum for the Future	Ev146
32	Geographical Association	Ev238
33	GES Earth – Glenn Strachen	Ev282
34	Global Action Plan	Ev27
35	Groundwork South	Ev318
36	Groundwork UK	Ev241
37	Holland, Sir Geoffrey	Ev35
38	Improvement and Development Agency	Ev245
39	Institute of Education, Manchester Metropolitan University	Ev246
40	Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)	Ev155
41	Learning and Skills Council	Ev68
42	Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA)	Ev128

43	Learning Through Landscapes	Ev251
44	Living Earth	Ev254
45	Murray, Emma	Ev257
46	National Association for Environmental Education, University of Wolverhampton	Ev257
47	National Foundation for Education Research	Ev375
48	National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)	Ev258
49	Norfolk Education Advisory Service	Ev299
50	Northmore Trust	Ev261
51	Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)	Ev42
52	Oxford Centre for Sustainable Development	Ev262
53	Peterborough Environmental City Trust	Ev264
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60	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)	Ev275
61	Scottish Executive	Ev318
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65	Teacher Training Agency (TTA)	Ev323
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69	UNED-UK	Ev327
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75	Worcestershire LEA	Ev313
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Formal minutes

Wednesday 16 July 2003

Members present:

Mr Peter Ainsworth, in the Chair

Mr Gregory Barker
Mr Colin Challen
Mr David Chaytor
Mrs Helen Clark
Sue Doughty

Mr Mark Francois
Mr John Horam
Mr Malcolm Savidge
Mr David Wright

The Committee deliberated.

* * *

Draft Report (Learning the Sustainability Lesson) proposed by the Chairman, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 204 read and agreed to.

Annexes read and agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Tenth Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chairman do make the Report to the House.

Several papers were ordered to be appended to the Minutes of Evidence.

Ordered, That the provisions of Standing Order No. 134 (Select Committees (reports)) be applied to the Report.

Ordered, That the Appendices to the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee be reported to the House.

The Committee deliberated.

[Adjourned till Wednesday 10 September at half past Three o'clock.]

Past reports from the Environmental Audit Committee since 1997

2002-03 Session

First	Pesticides: The Voluntary Initiative, HC100 (<i>Reply, HC 443</i>)
Second	Johannesburg and Back: The World Summit on Sustainable Development–Committee delegation report on proceedings, HC 169
Third	Annual Report, HC 262
Fourth	Pre-Budget 2002, HC 167 (<i>Reply, HC 688</i>)
Fifth	Waste – An Audit, HC 99
Sixth	Buying Time for Forests: Timber Trade and Public Procurement - The Government Response, HC 909
Seventh	Export Credits Guarantee Department and Sustainable Development, HC 689
Eighth	Energy White Paper – Empowering Change?, HC 618
Ninth	Budget 2003 and Aviation, HC 672

2001-02 Session

First	Departmental Responsibilities for Sustainable Development, HC 326 (<i>Reply, Cm 5519</i>)
Second	Pre-Budget Report 2001: <i>A New Agenda?</i> , HC 363 (<i>HC 1000</i>)
Third	UK Preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, HC 616 (<i>Reply, Cm 5558</i>)
Fourth	Measuring the Quality of Life: The Sustainable Development Headline Indicators, HC 824 (<i>Reply, Cm 5650</i>)
Fifth	A Sustainable Energy Strategy? Renewables and the PIU Review, HC 582 (<i>Reply, HC 471</i>)
Sixth	Buying Time for Forests: <i>Timber Trade and Public Procurement</i> , HC 792-I, (<i>Reply, HC 909, Session 2002-03</i>)

2000-01 Session

First	Environmental Audit: <i>the first Parliament</i> , HC 67 (<i>Reply, Cm 5098</i>)
Second	The Pre-Budget Report 2000: <i>fuelling the debate</i> , HC 71 (<i>Reply HC 216, Session 2001-02</i>)

1999-2000 Session

First	EU Policy and the Environment: An Agenda for the Helsinki Summit, HC 44 (<i>Reply, HC 68</i>)
Second	World Trade and Sustainable Development: An Agenda for the Seattle Summit, HC 45 (Including the Government response to the First Report 1998-99: Multilateral Agreement on Investment, HC 58) (<i>Reply, HC 69</i>)
Third	Comprehensive Spending Review: Government response and follow-up, HC 233 (<i>Reply, HC 70, Session 2000-01</i>)
Fourth	The Pre-Budget Report 1999: pesticides, aggregates and the Climate Change Levy, HC 76
Fifth	The Greening Government Initiative: first annual report from the Green Ministers Committee 1998/99, HC 341
Sixth	Budget 2000 and the Environment etc., HC 404
Seventh	Water Prices and the Environment, HC 597 (<i>Reply, HC 290, Session 2000-01</i>)

1998-99 Session

First	The Multilateral Agreement on Investment, HC 58 (<i>Reply, HC 45, Session 1999-2000</i>)
Second	Climate Change: Government response and follow-up, HC 88
Third	The Comprehensive Spending Review and Public Service Agreements, HC 92 (<i>Reply, HC 233, Session 1999-2000</i>)
Fourth	The Pre-Budget Report 1998, HC 93
Fifth	GMOs and the Environment: Coordination of Government Policy, HC 384 (<i>Reply Cm 4528</i>)
Sixth	The Greening Government Initiative 1999, HC 426
Seventh	Energy Efficiency, HC 159 (<i>Reply, HC 571, Session 2000-01</i>)
Eighth	The Budget 1999: Environmental Implications, HC 326

1997-98 Session

First	The Pre-Budget Report, HC 547 (<i>Reply, HC 985</i>)
Second	The Greening Government Initiative, HC 517 (<i>Reply, HC 426, Session 1998-99</i>)
Third	The Pre-Budget Report: Government response and follow-up, HC 985
Fourth	Climate Change: UK Emission Reduction Targets and Audit Arrangements, HC 899 (<i>Reply, HC 88, Session 1998-99</i>)