



Brighter Futures – Greener Lives

Sustainable Development Action Plan
2008-2010



department for
children, schools and families

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Brighter Futures – Greener Lives



Foreword

Sustainable development (SD) is a key responsibility for all of us and everyone has to play their part in making it a reality. In the Department for Children, Schools and Families we have a dual role: firstly, to ensure children's wellbeing, and secondly, to ensure that children have the skills and knowledge they will need to live in a changing world.

Preparing young people so they are fully equipped for the challenges of the future is central to the work of any Government and vital to the long-term health of any society. We know that this Department's initial work on sustainability with schools has been a success, but it now needs to extend to children's services more widely and particularly to the youth sector.

The vision set out by the Government in *Securing the Future* (2005)¹ was to "enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations" and the vision in *The Children's Plan* "to make this country the best place in the world for our children and young people to grow up"² are complementary: children cannot grow up into a stable and secure world unless we, as a country and as an international partner, find ways to improve our wellbeing while conserving our most precious resource, the planet. This is the context for the Department's new sustainable development action plan: *Brighter Futures – Greener Lives*. There is much to do, but I am confident that by working together we can make our planet a better place for children and young people.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Balls'.

Ed Balls

Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families

1 *Securing the Future* – delivering UK sustainable development strategy (HMG, 2005)

2 *The Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures* (TSO, 2007, p3)

About this plan

This Sustainable Development Action Plan (SDAP) from the Department for Children, Schools and Families is intended to cover the period April 2008 to March 2010. It follows and builds on the work outlined in the earlier SDAP *Learning for the Future* (2006)³ from the Department of Education and Skills. It has been prepared by the Department to show how we will fulfil our obligations to deliver Government policy in relation to children and their families in a way that is in harmony with sustainable development.

The plan covers the whole of the Department's remit, from the way we operate our buildings, through to policy and the work we do to lead the system of agencies and local authorities supporting schools and children's services. Inevitably, the SDAP gives an overview of the work planned. It is underpinned by more detailed delivery plans covering sustainable operations, sustainable schools and children's wellbeing. Each of these delivery plans is a living document that will be reviewed and updated throughout the period of this SDAP. <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/aboutus/sd>

It is intended that the delivery plans will be available on our website for interested parties to look at and comment upon. The SDAP and its delivery plans will be regularly monitored and reported both internally through a Sustainable Development Programme Board and via corporate performance reporting to the Departmental Board, and to the Sustainable Development Commission.

The SDAP is not a statement of our core business – this is set out in *The Children's Plan* (2007) – but of how we deliver our core business to support the Government's commitment to sustainable global development.

³ Learning for the Future – the DfES Sustainable Development Action Plan (2006)

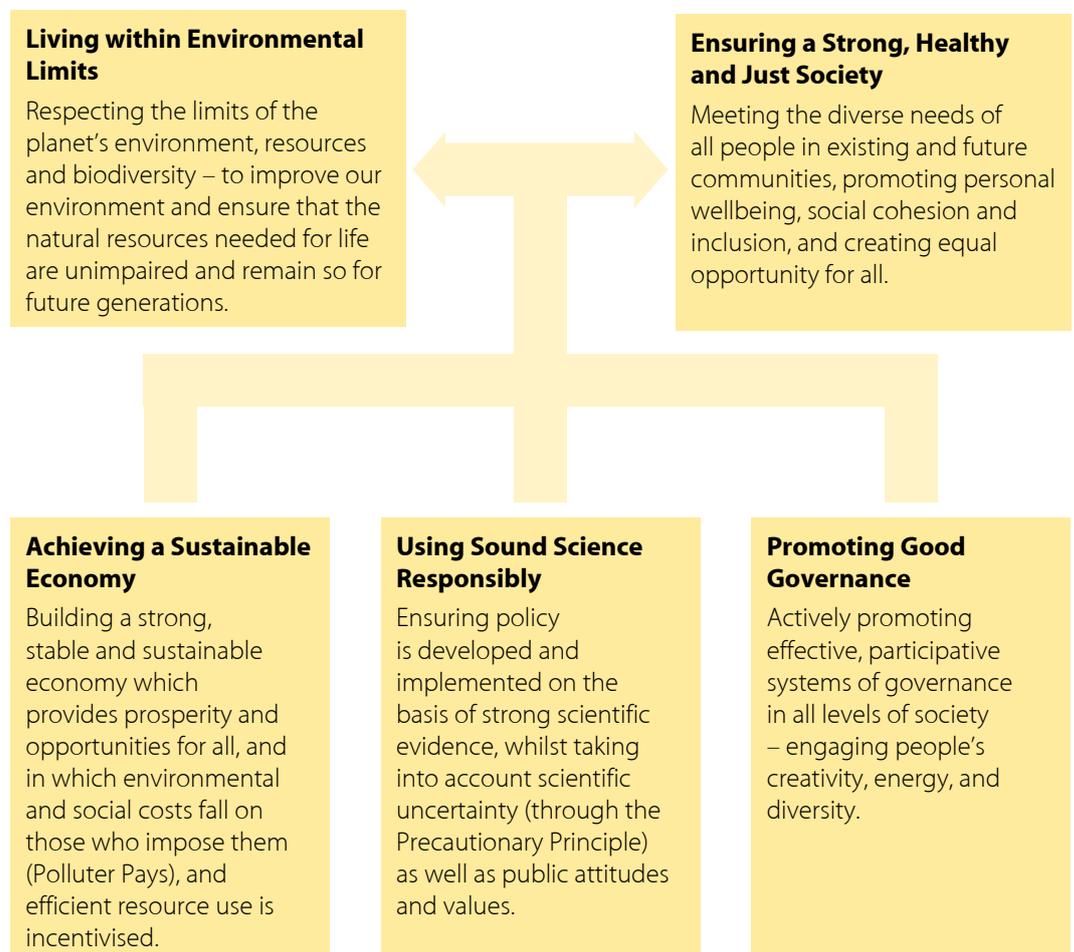
Part 1: Where we are now and how we got here

The Government responded to increasing concerns over climate change, unsustainable consumption, loss of natural resources and quality of life in communities with *Securing the Future: delivering UK sustainable development strategy*, (2005). The Government's strategy is based on the internationally accepted Bruntland definition of sustainable development: 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

Five key principles were laid down in the strategy and these continue to provide the basis for sustainable development (SD) policy in the UK. These principles are:

- living within environmental limits;
- ensuring a strong healthy and just society;
- achieving a sustainable economy;
- using sound science responsibly; and
- promoting good governance.

For a policy to be considered sustainable it must respect all five principles.



The strategy also set out four shared priorities for immediate action across the UK. These were:

- climate change and energy;
- sustainable consumption and production;
- natural resource protection and environmental enhancement; and
- sustainable communities and a fairer world.

Finally the UK strategy committed departments to preparing sustainable development action plans (SDAPs) based on the strategy's contents, and reporting on progress in 2006 and regularly thereafter. The Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) monitors and reports on the quality of departments' SDAPs. Reporting directly to the Prime Minister, it is the Government's independent advisory body and watchdog for sustainable development.

Our Duty of Care to Children

In December 2007 representatives from 180 countries together with observers from intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations met in Bali to negotiate a new pact to succeed the Kyoto protocol, which expires in 2012⁴. It was the clarity of the science and the strength of the case for urgent action that made possible an agreement at Bali on a roadmap for achieving a global climate deal by the end of 2009.

Children have often gone unheard in this debate although, as UNICEF⁵ and others have observed, they have as much at stake – if not more – than those making the decisions that will affect their future. Moreover the debate is not limited to climate change. The SDC's publication *Every Child's Future Matters* (2007)⁶ highlights the close relationship between children's wellbeing and their environment, pointing out the need for safe and healthy outdoor space, contact with the natural world, and a public realm designed for people, not vehicles. The report argues convincingly for the environment to be viewed as the agent that binds and adds strength to the social and economic thrust of *Every Child Matters*⁷ – something that must be there if we are to deliver our commitments to children.

As the Department responsible for children's wellbeing in England it is our duty to ensure they grow up in places which encourage physical activity, outdoor play, socialisation, mental health and above all a positive sense of place, belonging and contribution to the world. It is our duty to ensure that we have not exhausted the Earth's natural resources by the time they have grown up, or failed to deal with climate change placing their economic prosperity, and lives, at risk. It is our duty to ensure they are prepared to tackle the type and scale of the challenges they will face in their lives, and do so confidently and optimistically rather than become overwhelmed or apathetic⁸.

This is why *The Children's Plan* described sustainable development as a 'non-negotiable'.

These concerns are not lost on children and young people where sustainability and the environment often top the list of their concerns.

4 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – Bali (2007)

5 UNICEF: Climate Change and Children (2007)

6 *Every Child's Future Matters* (SDC, 2007)

7 *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2003)

8 See also: Stern Review on the economics of climate change (Cambridge University Press, 2006)

The Department's contribution

What children told us in our sustainable schools consultation in 2006:

"Too many cars driving when you are trying too get to sleep."

"Children want to walk but they can't because of the cars."

"There seems to be no respect for the world whatsoever."

"Too much waste and packaging."

"I do not like how people think that everything will last forever."

"People shouldn't leave litter on the floor. They should not waste fuel driving around. Everyone should recycle their stuff."

The (then) DfES produced its first SDAP in 2003, and reaffirmed its commitment in 2006 in line with *Securing the Future* by publishing *Learning for the Future* which set out our actions for 2006-2008.

The focus of the 2006 plan was to achieve the following:

- policies that support the UK sustainable development strategy;
- a smaller carbon footprint and better value for money through robust environmental management practices and a more sustainable school estate;
- improved strategic working with other government departments, non-departmental public bodies and other partners;
- greater awareness of sustainable development within the Department and for those working in education, resulting in greater sustainable behaviour across the board; and
- positive impact on the communities we serve through sharing good practice and volunteering.

Clearly the focus of the 2006 plan was the Department's own sustainability performance, and that of schools. Its main themes were sub-divided into a total of 46 'actions' designed to lay the foundations for sustainability within the Department – the vast majority of which have been completed.

In Annex A can be found a breakdown of progress made against the actions. The Department has done much good work to advance the sustainable development agenda, but we fully recognise that to better integrate it, not only into policy thinking and delivery but into our general day to day operations, a great deal more remains to be done.

A review of progress against the actions was prepared for the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) in August 2007. It reported back to the Department and was largely content with the progress made thus far, finding good evidence against most of the actions in the SDAP. A high percentage of those considered to have a high SD impact were completed or on target (92%). However, the SDC did raise concerns about the Department not having provided sufficient evidence to support the self-assessment levels selected in the 'embedding sustainability' and 'procurement' sections.

As reflected in this review, since *Learning for the Future* was published in April 2006, rapid progress has been made in a number of key areas: we have established the National Framework for Sustainable Schools⁹, we have announced our ambition for all new school buildings to be zero carbon by 2016 and as we establish a task force to determine how to achieve this goal, we have set an immediate requirement for all new school buildings to meet a 60% carbon emissions reduction. Furthermore, the Building Schools for the Future programme¹⁰ remains a once-in-a-generation opportunity to provide facilities for young people that will give them the best possible environment in which to learn.

We have also made a start operating the Department itself in a more sustainable way by working with the Carbon Trust on energy audits and putting its recommendations into practice in our operations. We have also seen excellent progress in a number of our NDPBs, for example the 'Leading Sustainable Schools' programme of the National College for School Leadership¹¹, and the revised secondary curriculum from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

We have been greatly helped in our work on sustainable development by a unique relationship with the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC). For the last three years, Jake Reynolds has been seconded from the SDC to work with the Department full time and is challenging us to make faster and more effective progress. He has been able to draw on expertise from many of his colleagues at SDC and this has been a significant help to us in developing our policies so that they underpin sustainable development.

We recognise that we have not yet achieved consistency across the board to develop policy in a way that underpins sustainable development, but the commitments in our new Children's Plan will take us faster and more purposefully in this direction than before. The operation of our estate also has to improve significantly, and with £10 billion spent per annum in schools and children's services we must establish sustainable procurement as the norm. There is scope for improvement in our programme management systems and for us to communicate more effectively with staff and with our stakeholders.

Nonetheless, we remain confident that people in DCSF and its agencies, like the general population, are keen to live and work more sustainably. Enabling this interest through effective management and strategic direction, and harnessing it through distributed leadership, will drive the new action plan forward.

9 Sustainable Schools for Pupils, Communities and the Environment (DfES, 2006)

10 Evaluation of Building Schools for the Future – 1st Annual Report (PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, 2007)

11 See also NCSL

Part 2: Our sustainable development objectives and how we will achieve them

The newly structured Department for Children, Schools and Families brings together all key aspects of policy affecting children and young people.

As part of its vision to “make this the best place in the world for our children and young people to grow up”, *The Children’s Plan* proposes a stronger leadership role for Children’s Trusts, and encourages Directors of Children’s Services in local authorities to champion children’s interests throughout their work, including areas like housing, planning and transport where children’s interests are very often not given the consideration they demand.

However, rather than simply ‘preaching’ the message the Department must be seen to be ‘living’ it and lead by example and that is a core goal of this SDAP. Our Departmental Action Plan 2007 is particularly relevant here as it concerns the role we play in leading the system of services around children, schools and families, which must include managing change to a more sustainable way of living; and, through setting a good example through our business systems and management of our infrastructure. The Department can and must set a good example.

The SDAP also supports the delivery of the other DCSF strategic objectives and linked Public Service Agreement targets (PSAs), some of which are shared with or held by other departments. This plan contributes to achieving other cross-Government PSAs, for example PSA 27, *Lead the global effort to avoid dangerous climate change* and PSA 28, *Secure a healthy natural environment for today and the future*.

Objectives

The Children’s Plan reiterates the Department’s aim for all schools to be sustainable schools by 2020, and the need for all public services to share a common responsibility for children’s wellbeing. Taking care of the environment and providing for the health and wellbeing of children are mutually inclusive goals. Almost any action taken to enhance environmental quality also helps to meet the basic needs and rights of children.

In our previous SDAP we focused mainly on the schools sector where we felt there was the greatest interest and opportunity to make a difference. Schools, and young people themselves, have been keen to take up the baton, but there remains much to do with our delivery partners to embed sustainability across the whole sector.

Young people are the next generation of consumers and stewards of the planet, and yet their knowledge of natural resources and the environment can be patchy, mediated more through television than first hand experience. Gaps have developed in areas like food, where some basic vegetables are not recognised, and the relationship between processed foods and agriculture is not well understood. Owing to high rates of car use, and the perceived dangers of being outdoors, there is a risk that children are becoming isolated from their communities, their places, their environment. Our challenge, through changes in education and public space, is to enable them to reconnect with these fundamental sources of wellbeing.

Our new SDAP reflects the role of the Department as the strategic leader of services for children and young people. This means targets need to be both ambitious and tactical. For children's sakes they have to drive a system-wide change that enables us to deliver our Children's Plan in line with sustainable development. Departing from this goal will erode our own ability to deliver improved outcomes for children, now and in the future.

Our objectives can be summarised as:

- **leading change in the system – achieving our goals for children and in doing so ensuring sustainable development;**
- **leading by example; and**
- **empowering and educating young people for life in a sustainable world.**

The reality is, of course, much more complex. These three objectives will only be achieved through comprehensive and detailed delivery plans. The delivery plans have SMART targets and are 'live documents' that can respond to changing priorities within the timeframe of the overarching SDAP. We set out here the broad reach of these underpinning delivery plans and how we will monitor action and ensure delivery. The delivery plans themselves will be available for public scrutiny on our website and constructive challenge will be welcomed. Regular monitoring of this SDAP and its delivery plans through to 2010 will take place within the overall monitoring of *The Children's Plan* through to 2020 (see diagram on page 19).

Realising the objectives in this SDAP will enable us to deliver PSAs, our Children's Plan and departmental strategic objectives and the priorities set out in the UK sustainable development strategy *Securing the Future*. There are multiple cross-linkages between these – the key ones in bold – illustrated in the table overleaf.

Sustainable Development Objective	Public Service Agreements	<i>The Children's Plan</i> / Departmental Strategic Objective	Securing the Future priorities
<p>Leading Change in the system</p>	<p>Narrow the gap in educational achievement between children from low income and disadvantaged backgrounds and their peers.</p> <p>Improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people.</p> <p>Improve children and young people's safety.</p>	<p>Secure the wellbeing and health of children and young people.</p> <p>Safeguard the young and vulnerable.</p> <p>Achieve world class standards in education.</p> <p>Close the gap in educational achievement for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> <p>Ensure young people are participating and achieving their potential to 18 and beyond.</p> <p>Keep children and young people on the path to success.</p> <p>Lead and manage the system.</p>	<p>Climate Change and energy.</p> <p>Sustainable consumption and production.</p> <p>Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement.</p> <p>Sustainable communities and a fairer world.</p>
<p>Leading by example</p>	<p>Lead the global effort to avoid dangerous climate change.</p> <p>Secure a healthy natural environment for today and the future.</p> <p>Improve children and young people's safety.</p>	<p>Secure the wellbeing and health of children and young people.</p> <p>Safeguard the young and vulnerable.</p> <p>Achieve world class standards in education.</p> <p>Close the gap in educational achievement for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> <p>Ensure young people are participating and achieving their potential to 18 and beyond.</p> <p>Keep children and young people on the path to success.</p> <p>Lead and manage the system.</p>	<p>Climate Change and energy.</p> <p>Sustainable consumption and production.</p> <p>Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement.</p> <p>Sustainable communities and a fairer world.</p>
<p>Empowering and educating young people for life in a sustainable world</p>	<p>Raise the educational achievement of all children and young people.</p> <p>Increase the number of children and young people on the path to success.</p> <p>Improve children and young people's safety.</p>	<p>Secure the wellbeing and health of children and young people.</p> <p>Safeguard the young and vulnerable.</p> <p>Achieve world class standards in education.</p> <p>Close the gap in educational achievement for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.</p> <p>Ensure young people are participating and achieving their potential to 18 and beyond.</p> <p>Keep children and young people on the path to success.</p> <p>Lead and manage the system.</p>	<p>Climate change and energy.</p> <p>Sustainable consumption and production.</p> <p>Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement.</p> <p>Sustainable communities and a fairer world.</p>

Leading change in the system

Common voice with delivery partners

The DCSF convenes a range of working groups for schools agencies, wider children's services/field forces, youth and young people partners. Our ambitions for the wellbeing of children are fundamental to the purpose of these partnerships and to the role of our partners. The remit letters for each of our non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) require them to consider how they will ensure that their actions support sustainable development and, by working together to refine messages on sustainable development, the Department and its partners will speak of our shared concerns with a common voice.

The SDC is keen for departments to introduce key NDPBs to the process of measuring the environmental impact of their policy development and operations. Remit letters now include references to meeting sustainable development objectives and our NDPBs are required to prepare SDAPs which are complementary to our own SDAP, and those that manage their own accommodation, will in future be expected to make returns in line with the Sustainable Operation of the Government Estate (SOGE) requirements. Progress will be monitored through the Sustainable Operations delivery plan underpinning this SDAP and reported to the Departmental Board via quarterly corporate performance reporting.

Championing children's environmental needs

Over the last two years, regional government offices have been supporting networks to promote sustainable schools. It is important that this work is seen as part of the wider picture of preparing young people for life in a sustainable world and linked to future regional skills needs. Government Offices also provide leadership to local authorities in relation to our achieving our goals for children and this must also be aligned with their wider role on sustainable development.

Carbon reduction and zero carbon buildings

The Children's Plan outlined the ambition that new school buildings will be zero carbon by 2016. A Task Force will advise on how this ambition can be met. We are taking action now while we work towards zero carbon by setting an immediate requirement for new school buildings to reduce carbon emissions by 60% relative to those now being built. More detailed delivery targets are included in the Sustainable Schools delivery plan which has been revised and updated since its first publication in February 2007.

Carbon Management strategy

In 2006, the SDC reported that 15% of public sector carbon emissions were the result of actions related to the school system. This is the equivalent across the UK of 2% of our total carbon emissions. We have been working with the SDC to research what the options are to reduce carbon emissions across the school/children's services system and how we can manage that reduction more effectively. The research has developed a model, rather than a detailed year on year plan, and indicates options which we will need to test for feasibility. This work is still at an early stage and will be developed and tracked through the Sustainable Schools delivery plan.

Better food in schools

The Government is determined to transform the quality of food in schools.

New nutritional standards have been introduced and a seasonal food chart developed to help schools make more cost effective and sustainable purchasing of fresh ingredients. In addition, we support Defra's work on the Year of Food and Farming, a programme of activity to reconnect young people with the food chain, farming and the countryside.

DCSF is working with its Non-Departmental Public Body, the School Food Trust, to deliver advice and guidance to schools and local authorities on sustainable practices in relation to school kitchens and the procurement of school food. Once published, this guidance will be promoted widely and steps taken to ensure its recommendations are adopted by school cooks and caterers and procurement officers.

Future plans to improve sustainable practices in school catering include the development and promotion of seasonal menus; securing greater commitment to the Government's Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative from leaders in the education sector; development of a catering and food procurement supplement to *Food Policy in Schools – A strategic policy framework for school governing bodies*¹², which provides additional information to help schools promote healthy food and improve sustainability and efficiency by building on the guidance in the Food in Schools Toolkit; improved training for school catering staff in the newly launched School FEAST (Food Excellence and Skills Training) centres; a better matching of supply to demand and more coordinated procurement of food supplies, leading to more efficient logistics and lower 'food miles'; work with partners to improve the training of local authority catering managers; and a series of pilot projects to examine and spread best practice on the use of efficient kitchen equipment.

It is essential that we carry through the best practice of schools and local authorities to embed sustainability across the system. The Department cannot do this without the active participation of local authorities, so we will be seeking to agree the implementation of this plan with the Local Government Association, the Local Authority Caterers Association, and the Chief Executives Task Force, which is charged with supporting sustainable improvement in local government.

Children travelling sustainably

Since 2003, the joint DCSF and DfT Travelling to School Initiative has sought to increase the proportion of pupils travelling to school sustainably by removing the barriers to walking, cycling and using public transport for school journeys. The core of the programme is helping schools to develop travel plans identifying what can be done in each school, for each pupil, to support sustainable travel. The programme will increase understanding among the whole school community of the travel options that are available to them and increase the number of young people choosing active travel options over that of the car.

The initiative is supported by £7.5 million pa joint funding to support a network of local authority based school travel advisers to work with schools and help them develop and implement school travel plans, and £20 million a year in small capital grants for schools with approved travel plans. We are ahead of the trajectory to meet the 2010 target of all schools having a School Travel Plan in place. All schools with a school travel plan are required to complete a question in the Annual School Census about the mode of travel to school for each pupil and as part of the new local performance framework, the percentage of school pupils travelling sustainably to school forms one of the 198 national indicators derived from Public Service Agreements and the Department's Strategic Objectives.

Local authorities are under a duty to promote sustainable school travel and transport and are required to produce an annual Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy. To support this duty the DCSF provides £4 million pa.

¹² Food Policy in Schools: A Strategic Policy Framework for Governing Bodies (National Governors' Council & Food Standards Agency, 2007)

Leading by example

Operation of our estate

The Department has an obligation to improve operational performance. Targets are set by central Government for the whole of the Government estate to manage and reduce its environmental impact. This is doubly important as the lead Department responsible for the future wellbeing of young people and their families we should be setting a good example. A Sustainable Operations Management System (SOMS) has been put in place within our four HQ buildings (70,477 m²). The system is based on the ISO14001:2004 quality standard to manage continuous improvement. DCSF will be seeking ISO14001:2004 accreditation by December 2008.

The operation of our estate has to make significant improvements in order to reach the targets. We have put in place many of the Carbon Trust recommendations made in 2006 to improve energy efficiency in HQ buildings, but there is still a lot to do. We are refurbishing our London HQ and replacing lighting, air-conditioning and controls with much improved energy-efficient products. We will be looking again at our contracts for catering to improve the quality and sustainability of the food on sale to staff and provided in our meetings with visitors, for example, removing bottled water, pre-packed sandwiches and cardboard coffee cups.

We commissioned further work from URS Corporation Ltd to develop a series of options for improvement to the standard required by central Government and these will be put in place to deliver further carbon savings from 2008 onwards. Future decisions on day to day operations, refurbishment and the new buildings planned to replace our Sheffield and Darlington offices will be costed for carbon emissions to ensure that we pursue the most efficient options available and do not inadvertently increase the Department's carbon footprint. We aim that these new buildings should be built to BREEAM excellent standard.

This progress will be monitored by the Sustainable Operations delivery plan and specific project plans.

Procurement

Central government spends an estimated £13 billion every year on procurement of goods and services. Not surprisingly this means that the purchase of goods, works and services by Government has the potential to contribute directly to sustainable development across a wide range of sectors, from construction to information technology. There is huge scope within this Department to marry value for money to environmental and social concerns and this is reflected in our sustainable procurement strategy addressing how sustainability issues can be addressed in public sector procurements:

<http://dcsf.gov.uk/procurement/index.shtml>

Environmental procurements, for example, would include energy efficiency and green energy, raw material from sustainable sources, buying environmental friendly products, transport – reducing emissions and reducing amount of travel required. Social considerations include equal opportunities, encouragement of SMEs – 3rd sector, local and community enterprises, local labour, opportunities for unemployed, delivering benefits for local communities/economy, and Fair Trade.

Sustainable procurement guidance is available on the DCSF external website and our internal intranet for DCSF staff, its NDPBs and delivery partners. This supplements available guidance published by the OGC, on 'Social Issues in Purchasing' demonstrating how to integrate relevant sustainable development issues at the various stages of the procurement process. DCSF considers sustainable procurement as the core of its procurement, structuring processes to remove any potential barriers. There are demonstrable synergies between sustainable development objectives and obtaining value for money, purchasing energy efficient goods that reduce whole life costs

We have developed a sustainable procurement delivery plan, based on the Government's Sustainable Procurement Flexible Framework as part of our Sustainable Operations delivery plan. The Flexible Framework covers the key behavioural and operational change programmes that need to be delivered in each public sector organisation to deliver sustainable procurement. There are 5 key themes identified: people; policy, strategy and communications; procurement process; engaging suppliers; and measurements and results.

We will aim for achievement of level 3 of the Sustainable Procurement Flexible Framework by December 2008, and level 4 by December 2009.

Aspects of Corporate Social Responsibility

In the last year, we have stepped up the amount and quality of internal communications for volunteering and sustainability, including a programme of events on all sites. In the coming year, we'll be tying that activity into *The Children's Plan*; supporting more charity events, including Comic Relief – Sports Relief, and Children in Need; and encouraging staff to get involved in volunteering work with schools on team-building days. We will also be pulling all of the guidance on volunteering and CSR together into one place on the Department's intranet.

This will be monitored through our Sustainable Operations delivery plan.

Communications

Our internal communications, and those with our delivery partners, need to give a stronger message about the importance of delivering our objectives, and operating our estate, in a way that supports sustainable development. We have initiated a programme of regular internal communications. We are also strengthening our messages to delivery partners through both formal means, such as the Secretary of State's remit letters, and informal dialogue. We are aware that more needs to be done to communicate effectively with young people and encourage their involvement in sustainable development. We will explore how we might do this and work up action within each of the delivery plans.

Empowering and educating young people for life in a sustainable world

Skills and knowledge for the 21st century

The national curriculum has for many years included specific references to sustainable development. It is a compulsory part of Citizenship, Design & Technology, Geography and Science and should be integrated across the whole curriculum. The new secondary curriculum has a much sharper focus on sustainable development. 'Global dimension and sustainable development' is one of the cross-curricular themes identified by Qualifications Curriculum Authority within the new curriculum.

Sir Jim Rose has been appointed to lead an independent review of the primary curriculum. As with the new secondary curriculum, the primary review will consider how the curriculum can be used to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of sustainability issues.

Our young people deserve a high quality learning route that provides access to skilled employment and higher education, and which meets the skills needs of the economy well into the future¹³. We believe that the new Diplomas will provide all young people with exciting and challenging opportunities to increase their employability and experience different styles of learning in different settings. Students need an education that equips them to thrive in a constantly changing global society. We do not know exactly what will be the skills needed for sustainable development, but we expect that they will include team work, flexibility, analysis of evidence, thinking critically, making informed choices and participating in decisions.

Working with key external partners, including the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG), the Department will use the inspirational power of the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games to drive forward strategies in key areas, building on and adding value to existing work. In doing so, we aim to boost the interest and active participation of children and young people in sport and to support young people and learners to make healthy choices more generally. More broadly, we aim to direct young people's enthusiasm into projects that give them the chance to learn new skills, broaden their horizons and be more active and creative in their local communities, better equipping them for life in a global society. We will also use the power of the Games to address the disaffection and under-achievement of some young people. The Games will provide unique opportunities to support young people's learning about sustainability and regeneration, and will reflect the global dimension of the event. Details of what is planned will be announced during the year and set out in our sustainable schools delivery plan.

¹³ See: Leitch Review of Skills: prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills (HMSO, 2006)
Also: World Class Skills: implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England (TSO, 2007)

Empowering young people to make a difference

It is important that young people are heard. We know that they want action to ensure the world becomes a better place to be and the future of their planet is secure. In addition to our own actions to improve our sustainability, we need to empower young people with the skills, knowledge and freedom to voice their opinions and to make a difference. We will be following up the existing work we have done with third sector organisations to plan greater activity to empower young people in the run up to the UN Conference on Climate Change in Copenhagen December 2009.

Young people should play a part in decision making at local and national level. Local authorities are making use of a wide range of methods to increase young people's representation. Some are creating a role for Young Mayors, where a young person is elected by their peers to represent their interests in local democratic structures and may have a budget of their own, as well as direct access to adult elected members. Others are establishing Youth Councils and Forums, which enable young people to get involved in decision-making and promote the voice of young people at council level and in wider services. The Hear by Right standards and Act By Right accredited workbook are also being used to plan and support the involvement of young people in local service design and delivery.

The success of the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds has demonstrated that the most effective way to increase young people's influence over services is to give them direct control over funding. The Government wants to build on the progress made by the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds to increase young people's influence further and improve the way services respond to their needs. The Government therefore plans to expand the Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds over the next three years in order to enable local authorities and their partners to build on the good practice developing in local areas, and continue to lay a strong foundation for greater devolution of resources to young people. Via guidance local authorities will be encouraged to consider sustainable development in their local grant criteria and in training young people as grant makers and project leaders.

Making Every Child's Future Matter

During the consultation process for Sustainable Schools, children and young people asked what was happening to promote the environment in children's lives outside school. As a result, the Department commissioned the SDC to consider their concerns. The SDC responded by publishing *Every Child's Future Matters (ECFM)* in August 2007¹⁴.

ECFM demonstrates the impact of the environment on children's wellbeing and to their life chances: both in the short term, for example through the proven benefits to mental and physical well being of access to green space, safer roads, and less pollution; and in the longer term – through energy use and climate change.

The Department welcomed the report. We began work to emphasise the impact of the environment on children's policy and services, and we are encouraging practitioners to better understand its influence. For example, the strong evidence to support the physical and emotional benefits of play in natural environments is currently informing policy development in areas such as play strategy and play pathfinders: sustainable refurbishment of playgrounds with natural materials is being encouraged by the Department.

¹⁴ Every Child's Future Matters (SDC, 2007)

As the Department responsible for children's wellbeing and promoting children's interest, we are working with other government departments, local authorities and other partners to create an environment fit for children. If we get this right, we can support our children to have happy and safe childhoods and healthy lifestyles. We are working closely with colleagues in the Department of Health on health and obesity. We are also developing our policy on play with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to create opportunities for children to enjoy outdoor play where they can feel safe experiencing everyday adventures. The cross-Government *Staying Safe Action Plan* recognises the need to strike a balance between protecting children and giving them the opportunities to explore and experience for themselves. It includes commitments to make outdoor space safer for children and young people, including around play and positive activities and road safety. Children need the freedom to explore outside, access to high quality green spaces and the opportunity to engage with the natural world. Support for playable spaces will also promote sustainable communities where there is more positive interaction between adults and children in public spaces.

Local authorities have a pivotal role as place shapers in implementing sustainable development principles, including through their Sustainable Community Strategies. Directors of Children's Services are ideally placed to strategically champion children's interests across a range of areas outside their traditional boundaries, such as planning and transport.

It is an approach clearly outlined in *The Children's Plan* which moves sustainable development to centre stage, and reflects the growing awareness of how environmental influences affect life chances from an early age.

Ensuring delivery

The way we ensure our strategic objectives are delivered is in large part dependent on the messages the Department gives out in our every day interaction with partners. These can be specific as in the remit letters to our NDPBs and contracts with other partners; or generic as in the way we work ourselves, the awareness of sustainable development brought to situations by staff, and its reflection in their conversations with partners. The specifics can be set out in delivery plans that are regularly reviewed by those responsible for making change happen, and subject to scrutiny and challenge from stakeholders.

We intend to build on the experience we have acquired through the delivery of the Sustainable Schools strategy and adopt this model for the delivery plans underpinning this SDAP. The Sustainable Schools action plan (which will henceforth be called the Sustainable Schools delivery plan to avoid confusion with the overarching SDAP) was published in February 2007, following our consultation, and it has been updated as actions have been completed and new ones identified. We will publish a revised version in April 2008. The focus group of NGOs who helped us to articulate the National Framework for Sustainable Schools have not only been supportive of the Department and individual schools in making progress but have also acted as critical friends to keep this action plan live. They made positive suggestions for improvement that are built into the plan, for example, the need for a cross-cutting theme on biodiversity and the need to map sustainable schools against various award schemes available to schools which could help them to deliver aspects of sustainable development. Within the Department, the central Sustainable Development Unit has driven the plan and coordinated the internal Sustainable Schools programme board of policy leaders responsible for taking forward actions within their remit.

The Sustainable Operation of the Government Estate (SOGE) return (that each Government department makes to the SDC) includes information about carbon emissions, use of natural resources including waste management, procurement and corporate social responsibility. It would therefore make sense if the existing action plans for the Sustainable Operations Management System in each building, alongside the sustainable procurement plan and a separate plan for developing corporate social responsibility, form a Sustainable Operations delivery plan. This new comprehensive delivery plan will be published by the beginning of May and subsequently monitored internally and reported to the Sustainable Development programme board. The Sustainable Operations delivery plan will set out how we will deliver our SOGE targets, including improvement against the sustainable procurement flexible framework.

The DCSF will respond to the challenge set out in the ECFM report and publish a delivery plan for ECFM underpinning this SDAP to guide our work on children and families.

This model provides for transparent and auditable action through publishing on the Department's website the 'live' delivery plans; the opportunity to set detailed, specific and measurable targets; clear monitoring and challenge through a programme board; and scope for scrutiny and external challenge through a stakeholder panel (as we have with sustainable schools).

Delivery plans to underpin the SDAP will be:

**Sustainable Operations
Procurement CSR**
Available: May 2008
Lead Director: Ian Taylor

**Every Child's Future
Matters (ECFM)**
Available: April 2008
Lead Director: Anne Jackson

Sustainable Schools
Published: February 2007
Available from: www.teachernet.gov.uk/sustainableschools
**Lead Director General:
Ralph Tabberer**

Accountability

Delivering the work of the Government without damaging the environment for future generations or adversely affecting the lives of people in other parts of the world is the responsibility of all who work in the civil service. The Department will demonstrate its increasing concern that a deteriorating environment limits the effectiveness of our policies, by working with other government departments and Government Offices in the regions. It is only by pursuing a holistic approach to promoting sustainable development that the wellbeing of children and young people will be secured.

Within the DCSF, Ministers and senior officials have to demonstrate leadership that has sustainable development at its core. For 2008-10, the priority accorded to sustainable development in the DCSF will be shown by delivery of the following goals:

- SD being set within both the Permanent Secretary's and **board-level objectives for 2008-10**, with the cascading of these sustainable development objectives expected as a key outcome.
- Encouraging the inclusion of sustainable development objectives in DCSF relevant **staff members' performance objectives for 2008-10**. This is most likely to happen as a direct consequence of sustainable development objectives being reflected in business plans and then cascaded down to staff, and through work to champion sustainable development activity.

With senior officials committed to taking action, the example is set for others to follow.

The next major step for sustainable development in DCSF is to strengthen our governance structures. We will establish a Sustainable Development programme board for the overarching sustainable development programme. This will be chaired by a Director General or the most relevant lead Director.



We also need to instil behaviours for sustainable development in our staff. Our next staff survey will include questions to elicit the level of current awareness among staff and whether they translate this into their behaviour in the workplace and the way they take forward their objectives. We will seek their views on 'big opportunities' and 'next steps' for accelerating and deepening the Department's commitment to sustainable development.

Our induction of new staff, management and leadership development will include understanding of sustainable development and its relevance to the Department's objectives. Performance management will reflect the inclusion of sustainable development in the objectives of staff forward job plans.

When new policy is developed the team responsible undertakes a regulatory impact assessment. *The Children's Plan* has highlighted the need for those developing new policy to include sustainable development within the range of impacts assessed. We have worked with colleagues from Defra to adapt the 'stretching the web' sustainable development impact assessment tool to the needs of DCSF policy planners. Directors and the Sustainable Development programme board will challenge those developing new policy to undertake and report upon the sustainable development impact assessment.

A central Sustainable Development Unit is able to coordinate and challenge other parts of the Department to deliver their policies in a way that supports sustainable development but such a Unit cannot deliver sustainability as a separate task. It is the responsibility of all team leaders in both policy and operational roles. Over time, and with the right level of management commitment, support and challenge, sustainability should be so embedded in delivery of our core objectives that a discrete specialist unit should become superfluous.

Appendix A: Progress review of SDAP 2006-2008

A	B	C
Ref	Action	Status
1	Continue to provide capital grants to schools and fund school travel advisers to support schools developing travel plans promoting more sustainable ways to travel to and from school so that 10,000 schools have travel plans in place, with all schools engaged by the end of the decade.	We met March 2006 target and exceeded the March 2007 target of 55%, or 13,750 schools with approved travel plans in place. By March 2008 we expect 70%, or 17,500 schools to have an approved school plan in place.
2	Carry out a Sustainable Schools Strategy consultation with which to engage stakeholders and find out what they need and want.	Consultation summer 2006, 870 responses. Government response published Dec 06, followed by Sustainable Schools action plan (April 2008) to set out and monitor Department intentions.
3	Provide guidance to caterers and schools on procuring school meals.	Launched June 2006.
4	Sustainable Schools web service.	Launched June 2006 at WWF conference. Average monthly figures indicate the site has 30,000+ visitors a month with 10,000+ unique visitors.
5	Sustainable Schools Self Evaluation tool (s3 tool).	Piloted summer 2006, launched at Learning through Landscapes conference in November. Available for download on the Sustainable Schools area of Teachernet from autumn 2006. www.teachernet.gov.uk/sustainableschools 9,000+ downloads and over 1500 hard copies distributed by July 2007.
6	Hold International Education Week 2006, a major DfES annual event providing an opportunity for the whole of the education sector to celebrate the benefits of an international dimension at all levels of education.	International Education Week (IEW) 2006 took place between 13 – 17 November 2006.
7	Undertake a pilot to establish formal peer mentoring schemes in schools so that 3,600 pupils are empowered to support each other as they meet the range of challenges on the path to becoming active members of their communities.	Formal peer-mentoring pilot in secondary schools – 180 schools have been recruited to join the 2 year pilot and started in the Autumn term 2006 to identify the 3,600 matched mentor/mentee pairs to take part in the programme. The focus of the £1.5m pilot will be on schemes that address attainment, transition, bullying and behaviour.
8	Introduce monitoring procedures for major new build and refurbishment projects that are required to achieve a minimum BREEAM rating of 'very good'.	Monitoring arrangements are in place with BRE. Currently approximately 300 schools have registered for BREEAM assessments. Design and construction timescales are such that we will not have a clear picture of performance against these standards until 2008.

A	B	C
Ref	Action	Status
9	Work with BRE to deliver a series of six BREEAM training events for Local Authority officials and designers.	Six training events were delivered during 2006.
10	Ensure that all BSF schools comply with BREEAM requirements.	The Department's BREEAM targets are a condition of funding and are an explicit requirement within the standard output specification that has been developed for BSF.
11	Complete scoping study into the carbon footprint of the schools estate.	This is completed and has established that schools are responsible for annual carbon dioxide emissions of around 9 million tonnes, i.e. 15% of public sector emissions.
12	Gather data from schools so that statistics on energy and water use for all English schools can be compiled for the financial years 2003/04 – 2005/06.	Data has been gathered and this indicates that energy and water use has not significantly changed between 2003 and 2006.
13	Commission a cost benefit analysis tool which ranks the cost effectiveness of the whole range of carbon reduction strategies.	This has changed due to completion of other work and monitoring in the Sustainable Schools Action Plan.
14	Develop and publish <i>Sustainable Design of Schools</i> : a guide for new school buildings to encourage clients to specify buildings with lowest whole life costs and environmental impacts.	Complete. Published December 2006
15	Work with GLA and other authorities to explore solutions, leading to published guidance on meeting planning requirements renewable energy.	The content of our guidance on renewable energy systems in schools is and formatted as an interactive pdf publication.
16	Appoint a specialist adviser on renewable energy to help form the Steering Group and to provide expert policy guidance on the installation of renewable technologies.	Faber Maunsell appointed as a lead technical adviser for renewable energy, and the steering group has met on two occasions.
17	Jointly host a seminar (with DTI) (Now DBERR) to determine how support from sponsors will be applied to install renewable energy systems in schools.	This event was held on March 2006, but did not result in any firm offers of sponsorship. There may be opportunities to develop partnering arrangements for installing renewable energy systems within the DTI's Low Carbon Building Programme.
18	Host a seminar to inform suppliers of the Department's requirements for sustainable development for new buildings and major refurbishments.	Complete. A Sustainable Schools design conference was held on December 4th 2006.
19	Develop a policy maker's toolbox comprising details of sustainable development principles and a simple to use policy appraisal method.	<i>The Children's Plan</i> impact assessment commitment/guidance on SD. SD procurement guidance for within the Dept.
20	Ensure that sustainable development is assessed as early as possible, i.e. when conducting a first stage impact assessment and that, where it is appropriate to do so, fed through to the Partial, Full and Final RIA in accordance with Cabinet Office guidance.	The directorate level 'gatekeepers' will make sure that each impact assessment is completed fully before giving 'validation'.
21	Ensure sustainable development outcomes are considered as part of any future thinking on performance frameworks.	<i>The Children's Plan</i> .
22	Include sustainable development in the remit letters, grant settlements and major correspondence with NDPBs and other key delivery partners.	Remit letters including reference to sustainability. Sponsor teams deal independently with their particular NDPB/Stakeholder. Letters including ref. NCSL, QCA, TDA, CAF/CASS, LSC, Pfs.
23	Work with NDPBs to encourage them to produce their own sustainable development action plans.	SDAP produced: TDA, LSC, NCSL.

A	B	C
Ref	Action	Status
24	Facilitate a forum for DfES and NDPBs to align sustainable development work through their action plans and share good practice.	Meeting of NDPBs and key stakeholders at DCSF 18 July 2007 to discuss next steps and share experiences.
25	Establish a partnership with Defra to promote sustainable schools, similar to arrangements with DH (healthy schools), DfT (school travel) and HO (drugs, crime).	Monthly KIT meetings have taken place since May 2006. Action from Defra to support schools tackling Waste and input to decisions on Climate Challenge Fund.
26	Publish full Ministerial Response to recommendations in the report. Defra agreed to withdraw this as event have moved on.	This will be revisited with Defra to decide the best way forward given the lapse of time.
27	Implement actions set out the Ministerial Response.	No response was published therefore not applicable.
28	Implement the UNECE Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Strategy and support the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UN DESD).	UK UNESCO SD working group commissioned to assist DSCF by independently monitoring and evaluating progress across government under UN Decade of ESD and to meet the UK's wider reporting obligation to the UN.
29	Implement an Environmental Management System in each of our HQ buildings and gain certification to ISO 14001.	The Sustainable Operations Management System (SOMS) is in place and includes Departmental and Site Action Plans that cover all 4 DCCSF HQ buildings – based on ISO14001:2004. This will deliver 'quick wins' as well as longer term benefits. SOMS will develop a system that allows the Department to transparently review and demonstrate its sustainable development achievements. The related documents include Action Plans for the Department and each site, a Departmental Communications Plan, a Departmental Legislation Register. In addition there will be documents that outline how we will monitor, review and audit the SOMS.
30	Launch internal marketing campaigns to raise awareness and influence individuals towards more sustainable practices.	Marketing campaign began with roll out of national waste recycling arrangements from Feb 2006. FM Site Environment Advisers involved in displaying posters to inform about saving energy and water. Further marketing will form part of SOMS and communications strategy and action plan.
31	Work with the Carbon Trust to reduce our carbon emission in the short and long term, in line with the Government's Climate Change Programme.	We have been working with the Carbon Trust on energy audits to 3 of our 5 buildings (the maximum number of buildings they are able to review). Recommendations have been included within the SOMS Action Plan. Their recommendations have also been presented to Facilities Management Team Leader's who are progressing no cost/low cost recommendations.
32	Embed sustainable development (social and economic considerations alongside economic aspects) into the Department's procurement strategy and processes.	CPS – Procurement was originally included within the scope of the CSDD SO project. Tasks completed: Integrated commercial policy approved by the Board and published on the procurement website. Detailed sustainable procurement guidance published on the procurement website and shared with our NPDs. Published a sustainability impact assessment for use from the start of the procurement process. Delivered awareness raising workshops for core purchasing and contract management staff. Provided more guidance on monitoring and supply chain management in the context of sustainability.

Index of Footnotes

- 1.** Securing the Future – delivering UK sustainable development strategy (HMG, 2005)
www.sustainable-development.gov.uk/publications/uk-strategy/index.htm
- 2.** *The Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures* (TSO, 2007)
www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan
- 3.** Learning for the Future – the DfES Sustainable Development Action Plan (2006)
www.dcsf.gov.uk/aboutus/sd/docs/SDAP%202006%20FINAL.pdf
- 4.** Framework Convention on Climate Change – Bali (2007)
<http://unfccc.int/2860.php>
- 5.** UNICEF: Climate Change and Children (2007)
www.unicef.org/publications/index_42166.html
- 6.** Every Child's Future Matters (SDC, 2007)
www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/edu_cayp.html
- 7.** Every Child Matters (2003)
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/publications
- 8.** Stern Review on the economics of climate change (Cambridge University Press, 2006)
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/stern_review_economics_climate_change/stern_review_report.cfm
- 9.** Sustainable Schools
www.teachernet.gov.uk/sustainableschools
- 10.** Evaluation of Building Schools for the Future – 1st Annual Report (PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, 2007)
www.teachernet.gov.uk/_doc/12318/BSF%20Final%20Report%20December.pdf
- 11.** Leading Sustainable Schools
www.ncsl.org.uk/sustainableschools/index.cfm
- 12.** Healthy food in schools
www.food.gov.uk/multimedia/pdfs/foodpolicygoverning.pdf
- 13.** Leitch Review of Skills: prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills, (HMSO, 2006)
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/leitch_review/review_leitch_index.cfm
- 13a.** World Class Skills: implementing the Leitch Review of Skills in England (TSO, 2007)
www.dcsf.gov.uk/skillsstrategy/index.cfm?fuseaction=news.view&NewsCategor

Additional Links

The Sustainable Development Commission (SDC)
www.sd-commission.org.uk

Kyoto Protocol (1997)
http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php

Building Schools for the Future
www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/resourcesfinanceandbuilding/bsf

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (2007)
www.ipcc.ch

Climate Change Bill (2007)
www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/climatechange-bill

Carbon Targets for New Build Schools
www.teachers.gov.uk/management/resourcesfinanceandbuilding/schoolbuildings/sustainability/renewableenergy/carbontargets

2007 PBR CSR: Public service agreements
www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr_csr/psa/pbr_csr07_psaindex.cfm

Year of Food and Farming
www.yearoffoodandfarming.org.uk

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