

National Assembly for Wales Sustainability Committee

Report on Mainstreaming Sustainability into Ministerial Portfolios – 10 years of the Statutory Duty

Addendum to WAG response

1. The Assembly Government has provided its response to the Sustainability Committee's report on Mainstreaming Sustainability into Ministerial Portfolios – 10 years of the Statutory Duty. The Committee Chair wrote to me on 12th November requesting an update on this response.
2. This paper is therefore an addendum to the original WAG response. Paragraphs 11-139 of the WAG response describe the activity being undertaken in support of sustainable development across Ministerial portfolios. This addendum updates the Committee on the information in these paragraphs.

Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

Sustainable Development

3. We have held an additional engagement event on the challenges and opportunities of sustainable development with the third sector, and in particular how that sector can make sustainable development its central organising principle. A final engagement event on sustainable development is planned for January 2010.
4. We will shortly be publishing our Sustainable Development Annual Report for the period 2008-09.

Environment Strategy

5. On 18th November I launched the Environment Strategy Action Plan Annual Report. This sets out the progress made by WAG and all our partners in delivering actions that will contribute to the environmental outcomes that we have set out in our Environment Strategy. For the first time, we reported on how we, as an Assembly Government, have had regard to the biodiversity duty under Section 40(1) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. This requires us to "have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity" in what we do.

Planning

6. We continue to promote sustainable development as a core objective of planning policy in Wales. A new Ministerial Interim Planning Policy Statement was published in May 2009 which set out a national planning policy expecting most new developments in Wales to meet a minimum sustainable buildings standard from 1st September 2009. This is set at

Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 for new homes and BREEAM 'Very Good' for non-domestic proposals, with additional expectations for carbon reduction.

7. In June 2009 we introduced legislation to make design statements mandatory for most planning applications in Wales. Design statements are a useful tool for ensuring that the quality of design and sustainability implications of new developments is expressly outlined with planning and listed building proposals.

Waste

8. On 3 November I announced that we were proceeding with our proposals to introduce a charge on single use carrier bags before the next Assembly elections in 2011. We want to substantially reduce the amount of single use carrier bags that are taken away from shops each year in Wales and encourage consumer behavioural change towards more sustainable consumption. We also want to cut down on the use of resources and encourage waste reduction/prevention.
9. I will be consulting on refined proposals in Spring 2010. This consultation will include draft regulations and a Regulatory Impact Assessment.
10. We have secured additional funding for the infrastructure programme relating to anaerobic digestion from the Strategic Capital Investment Fund. This investment on food waste alongside the acceleration and facilitation provided by the Waste Procurement Team (on both food waste and residual waste) is making a major contribution to sustainable development by ensuring adequate waste treatment capacity to enable Wales to meet diversion targets.
11. Following its consultation, I hope to be able to launch new waste strategy, Towards Zero Waste, in Spring 2010.

Energy

12. Energy efficiency measures are among the most cost-effective carbon reduction actions.
13. Arbed is the new Strategic Energy Performance Investment Programme , a joint housing, regeneration and energy efficiency initiative, which will invest in the energy performance of buildings which in turn will generate green jobs and drive innovation.
14. Arbed represents the Assembly Government's most immediate opportunity to drive Wales out of recession, and will leave a legacy of Welsh workers and businesses with the skills to exploit an energy performance market that will continue to grow both here and the rest of the UK.

15. In total, it is estimated that over the next three years, up to £350 million will be invested in the energy performance of Welsh homes, coordinated through Arbed. This includes funding through the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme, investment by social housing providers to meet the energy performance requirements of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard and investment from the energy companies.
16. The initial phase of Arbed will see over £30 million of Strategic Capital Investment Funds invested in major domestic energy performance projects across Wales' Strategic Regeneration Areas. The strategic deployment of these funds is expected to lever in at least a further £20 million investment by energy companies through the Community Energy Saving Programme. This approach is unique to Wales and is now paying dividends, for example the recent announcement by British Gas to invest through the CESP scheme in the Swansea area.
17. HM Treasury / CLG labour coefficients suggest that this investment will generate between 5,600 and 11,200 person years of employment (depending on the nature of technologies/measures invested in, some of which are more labour intensive than others).
18. In 2007 the Marine Renewable Energy Strategic Framework project was begun, to improve our understanding of the marine resource in Wales, and its potential for exploitation within a sustainable development framework. The Framework is due to be completed in the Autumn of 2010.
19. In respect of the feasibility study looking at the tidal energy resource of the Severn Estuary, we expect a consultation on the findings of the feasibility study to take place late in 2010.

Climate Change

20. We have completed the consultation on the Climate Change Strategy Programme of action Consultation and now working to develop the final Strategy, which it is planned for publication on March 2010.
21. We are committed to at least a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020 compared to 1990. This commitment is supported by all four major parties in the Assembly and sends a strong signal that Wales recognises its duty as a small industrial nation with a higher emissions level to lead the way.
22. In December 2009 we announced that the Welsh Assembly Government has signed up to the **10:10 campaign** to reduce by 10% greenhouse emissions from its administrative estate. We will aim to cut emissions from grid electricity use, fossil fuel use and travel.

Zero Carbon Buildings

23. We aspire to a rapid progression to zero carbon for all new buildings in Wales. Delays in securing the transfer of Building Regulations mean that the timescale for change will have to be reviewed once transfer takes place.
24. We have introduced BREEAM 'Excellent' or Code 3 as a condition of all new buildings supported by WAG funding/investment/land disposal, in order to start the journey towards zero carbon and for wider sustainability purposes.
25. This has been supplemented by recent changes to national planning policy for climate change which have meant that from September 2009 all new housing developments of 5 units or more will be expected to meet Code level 3 (but with a 31% improvement on current Building Regulations) and BREEAM Very Good (but with Excellent for energy credits) for new non domestic developments over 1000m².
26. The Transfer of Functions Order for Building Regulations received royal assent effective from 31 December 2011. This will enable us to prescribe a standards framework for all buildings, whatever their source of funding, which is tailor made for Wales.
27. We have established a zero carbon support programme that is intended to map and monitor activity acting as a bridge between policy and delivery with the emphasis on sharing of information, raising awareness to ensure engagement over the next 2 ½ years.
28. The programme is liaising both across Assembly Departments and with external organisations to ensure activities are coordinated. Current activity includes a series of awareness raising sessions for contractors and the professions.

Deputy First Minister and Minister for the Economy & Transport:

29. The Green Jobs Strategy Strategy builds upon existing activity. Internally, DE&T are looking at Governance issues and mapping out business areas that can achieve more in this area. The following provides some brief examples of progress:

Flexible Support for Business: Environmental & Sustainability Service

30. This service is in place and is the first component of the Green Jobs Strategy.

31. Flexible Support for Business assists businesses that are adapting their products and services. In particular with specialist innovation, IP, design and manufacturing support, which is available through the £35m EU funded Business Innovation programme.

32. We are working in partnership with specialist providers including the Carbon Trust, Constructing Excellence Wales, the Ecodesign Centre, Envirowise, the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to deliver this service.

Future Skills and Training

33. DCELLS has developed the Pilot Sector Priorities Fund which attracts Convergence funding support and enables Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) to develop project bids to address perceived weaknesses or gaps in the learning market in relation to their sector needs.

34. DCELLS has brought together those SSCs which cover the low carbon skills/occupations to encourage them to work together on a partnership bid.

Fostering Innovation and Technology

35. Funding for R&D, Innovation and new product development is available through the R&D element of the Single Investment Fund, Wales European Structural Funds and Higher Education Funding Council. Help is available to access external sources of funding from UK and EU sources including Technology Strategy Board and FP7.

36. The All Wales Low Carbon Research Institute (LCRI), with Assembly Government support, has recently announced a £34 million expansion in activities for a programme of research into renewable energy generation technologies.

37. In Nov 2009 we announced a £4 million investment in the Climate Change Consortium for Wales which will bring together nearly 200 experts in four Welsh universities to improve our understanding of how climate change will affect the environment and all our lives.

Strategic Regeneration & Sustainable Buildings

38. We are developing our approach to strategic regeneration in Wales, particularly in areas of high deprivation and building on the models we have developed in the Heads of the Valleys and Môn a Menai.
39. Our regeneration activities are firmly based on sustainability principles and will involve and engage with communities creating an infrastructure for the future that favours sustainable ways of living and working.

Transport

40. The National Transport Plan, which was published for consultation last July, sets out in more detail how the Welsh Assembly Government will deliver its vision of a modern and sustainable transport system. We have adopted a balanced approach, so that transport plays its full part in tackling climate change, whilst ensuring that it continues to support economic development and social cohesion.
41. Some of the main transport measures set out in the National Transport Plan include the development of Sustainable Travel Towns, enhanced provision for walking and cycling, Increased investment in rail and bus services, the development of strategic park and ride sites and measures to tackle carbon emissions from the freight sector.
42. In parallel with the development of the National Transport Plan, the four regional transport consortia are preparing Regional Transport Plans. These will deliver the Wales Transport Strategy at the regional and local level.

Economic Renewal Programme

43. The Economic Renewal Programme was launched on 13th October 2009, with the purpose of ensuring that the right policies and structures are in place to facilitate sustainable economic growth.
44. The Programme will establish a renewed approach to economic development to
 - encourage a stronger and more sustainable economy
 - meet the challenges of climate change and
 - increase the prosperity and long-term well being of the people of Wales in line with the One Wales agreement.
45. It builds on the very successful whole Government approach taken at the Economic Summits that have united Government, the business community, the trade unions and other key stakeholders.

Minister for Finance and Public Services Delivery

46. The December statement on Public Services in Wales, "Better Outcomes for Tougher Times" is the next phase in our commitment to improving public services. We remain committed to delivering excellent services for the citizens of Wales. It embeds sustainable development principles in our work on delivering better services and outcomes for our citizens who are at the heart of public services where they belong, using their experiences and local knowledge to help drive efficiency and innovation and improve standards of service. At the same time, it makes public services more accountable by giving citizens better information about their performance. Key aspects of the 'Team Wales' approach include:

- working to improve the way we buy goods and services. Greater efficiencies are possible, too, through the use of good practice and business improvement techniques driven by citizen and front-line staff experiences, streamlining business processes, making better use of our capital assets and developing more shared services and other collaborative approaches.
- encouraging sustainable investment, ensuring that every pound of public money is working to help bring people into employment, develop skills and build the sustainable long-term infrastructure for a modern, low carbon economy.
- In doing all of this we will expect Local Service Boards to play a leadership role by coordinating local partnerships and services around agreed outcomes, supported by a new statutory duty on partners to cooperate in framing and delivering their local community strategy.
- taking steps to improve the evidence and information which is available about how public services in Wales are performing and improving to inform decisions about future action and priorities.

Local Service Boards

47. Local Service Boards are strengthening collaborative leadership at the local level. Much of their work is based on ensuring the delivery of the community strategy, which is the key local statutory plan for promoting or improving economic, social and environmental well-being. The revised guidance and accompanying advice note on sustainable development make it clear that community strategies should have sustainable development as a key principle.

48. A number of LSBs work explicitly on sustainable development projects. However, LSBs are developing and delivering a wide range of projects which make a contribution to sustainable development in its wider sense, such as operational delivery of complex cross-sector projects through multidisciplinary teams and pooling resources and integrated planning.

49. There are a number of ways in which sharing innovation and practice in sustainable development amongst LSBs is supported. These include:

- *LSB Innovation Network on Sustainable Development* – the latest meeting in November 2009 was used to identify how One Wales One Planet can provide a framework for LSBs and how LSBs can deliver our shared commitment to sustainability.
- *LSB newsletter* -The newsletter is published bi-monthly and has included and will continue to include articles on how LSBs are tackling sustainable development¹.

50. Examples of specific Sustainable Development projects that are being undertaken by LSBs include:

- *Carmarthenshire's LSB Sustainable Development*
Within a commitment to sustainable development, Carmarthenshire LSB is taking positive action to reduce energy consumption; reduce emissions and increasing social and individual awareness and responsibility.
- *Gwynedd LSB - Reducing Gwynedd's carbon footprint*
The county's Carbon Footprint Project is one of Gwynedd LSB's main priorities. The county's partners collaborate with each other and with experts from the Carbon Trust and Envirowise to secure a substantial decrease in CO2 emissions in Gwynedd. The LSB also supports Bangor's sustainable energy strategy in partnership with the Assembly and the Carbon Trust.

51. Among the other Local Authorities, Flintshire LSB and Powys LSB are also developing projects on climate change mitigation, whilst Monmouthshire is working on projects on adaptation to climate change and sustainable housing.

The Wales Spatial Plan (WSP)

Low Carbon Regions

52. Andrew Davies and Peter Davies from the Sustainable Development Commission launched the Low Carbon Regions report jointly on 12th November 2009. The report was developed over the last year and included a series of workshops in which the emerging findings were tested in each of the Spatial Plan areas. Over the autumn, the Low Carbon Regions work was discussed at the Ministerial meetings in each of the WSP areas to pave the way for the development of area specific low carbon strategies. In this, the emphasis will be on those activities, where the WSP area's regional and cross-sectoral perspective is the most appropriate level at which to progress, avoiding duplication of work already on-going or planned that is targeted at the local or national level, or at specific sectors.

¹ <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/improvingservices/localserviceboards/news/?lang=en>

Networked Environment Regions

53. The Spatial Plan 2008 update contains a commitment to develop South East Wales as a “networked environment region”. This is a key way in which we are seeking to deliver on the commitments in the Environment Strategy. The concept is to identify win/wins where environmental action can contribute to the wider sustainable development of the region, for example by

- making the area more attractive and therefore supporting regeneration;
- helping to mitigate river and sea flooding risks;
- developing walking and cycle-ways as part of sustainable transport;
- promoting sustainable use of water and sustainable urban drainage systems;
- increasing opportunities for leisure/tourism and, as part of this, opportunities for people from deprived areas to pursue outdoor leisure activities supporting healthy living;
- tackling heat island effects in towns and cities, adapting to climate change; and, as a result,
- improving the quality of life within an area.

54. All this requires joined-up action on a regional scale; seeing the environment as a network. Progress is being made in applying the concept to the South East, whilst we are also exploring extending the approach to other Spatial Plan areas. Work is already underway in North East Wales working with the Mersey-Dee Alliance to improve management of the River Dee in ways that will deliver a wide range of benefits. We have established a national Steering Group to support and co-ordinate the work in South East Wales and the River Dee work and lay the foundations for applying the approach in other Spatial Plan areas.

Minister for Rural Affairs:

Woodlands for Wales

55. The *Woodlands for Wales* Action Plan is now in preparation. The actions will help deliver the key outcomes of the strategy with sustainability and responding to climate change being key elements of the delivery.

Wales Land Use Climate Change Group

56. A new group to advise the Welsh Assembly Government on how agriculture can meet the challenge of food security while reducing greenhouse gas emissions was also established in 2009 (January).

57. Farming and countryside organisations, government agencies and academic institutions are represented under the chairmanship of Professor Gareth Wyn Jones.

58. The group will use an integrated, holistic approach based on assessing the trade-offs between benefits and dis-benefits in delivering ecosystem services:

- provision of food, fibre, water and fuel,
- delivery of fundamental support services – primary production, nutrient cycling, soil formation,
- delivery of regulating services – flood control, climate control, disease control, air quality control, and
- delivery of cultural services – landscape, biodiversity and recreation.

59. The scope of the Group's work will include:

a). how to reduce and, as appropriate offset, emissions from agriculture and land use and rural activities taking account of

- the life cycle of the food production chain from field to fork,
- the inputs to the sector from other sectors e.g. fertilizers, transport, other chemicals,
- the overall rural economy in terms of resource needs and sustainability e.g. energy
- the renewable energy generation potential of rural communities

b). how agriculture and woodland can adapt to climate change – taking account of opportunities and threats of climate change

c). how to manage our land to improve the capacity of other sectors of society to adapt to climate change.

60. The Group is due to report back to the Minister for Rural Affairs in January 2010.

Minister for Social Justice and Local Government:

The Local Government Measure

61. The Measure reforms the law relating to community planning. Formally, the Local Government (Wales) Measure defines community planning as a process by which the authority and its community planning partners:

- Identify long-term objectives for improving the social, economic and *environmental* well-being of an area;
- Identify long-term objectives in relation to the area for contributing to the achievement of *sustainable development* in the United Kingdom; and
- Identify actions to be performed and functions to be exercised by the local authority and its community planning partners for the purpose of meeting those identified objectives in the community strategy.

Outcome Agreements

62. As part of the *New Understanding between the Assembly Government and Local Government*, Outcome Agreements are being developed with Local Authorities. These agreements will provide an outcome-focused approach to local and national performance management and will set a more effective accountability framework by incentivising improvement and the delivery of quality local outcomes.

63. Outcome agreements will thus mainstream sustainability in two ways:

- by including specific outcomes relating to some of the more salient and generally-important dimensions of sustainability, such as carbon reduction, waste minimisation and climate change adaptation;
- more broadly by including outcomes which reflect a longer-term set of priorities for the sustainable improvement of local wellbeing.

Local Government

64. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) have received funding from the Sustainable Development Framework for helping local authorities plan corporately for furthering SD. The funding has been utilised to provide 1 to 1 support for authorities to help bridge the gap in meeting their aspirations in areas such as climate change, energy security and food security.

65. Local Government is preparing for the introduction of the Energy Efficiency Scheme, for which 2010-11 is to be the baseline year. It is expected that all local authorities will come under coverage of the scheme. The scheme (known as the Carbon Reduction Commitment in England) will implement a carbon trading scheme from 2011-12 that will incentivise all participating public bodies (including local authorities) to significantly reduce their carbon emissions. Once embedded the scheme will be strengthened to include a cap on participating authorities carbon allowance.

66. Welsh Local authorities are actively engaged with the Carbon Trust for their carbon benchmarking activities and also for advice on carbon reduction techniques. A number of authorities have been successful in obtaining loans under their SALIX finance scheme, which is a partnership scheme between the WAG, the Carbon Trust and SALIX Finance.

67. European funding programmes for regeneration now include biodiversity and other sustainable development related criteria as part of their terms and conditions. Furthermore, it has been proposed that energy savings targets could be set as standard conditions for all core revenue funding and revenue grants to non local authority organisations (primarily third sector bodies).

68. All local authorities in Wales have sustainable development co-ordinators responsible for co-ordinating sustainable development and environmental strategies. They operate through the forum of Sustainable Development

Co-ordinators Cymru in disseminating knowledge and good practice to facilitate delivery of sustainable development at a local level and to inform and influence national strategy.

Communities First

69. A new Communities First Vision Framework has been launched as a framework for guiding applications for funding for the Outcomes Fund 2009-2012. The Environment is one of six themes within the Vision Framework. SJLG officials worked closely with the Department for the Environment, Sustainability and Housing (DESH) in developing this theme, and are in regular contact about any project proposals. The Climate Change and Water Division have recently launched a Low Carbon Communities Challenge, and intend to focus three of the six pilots in Communities First.

Communities Facilities and Activities Programme (CFAP)

70. Through CFAP, support for Social Enterprise and Groundwork, the Communities Division has funded a range of furniture recycling schemes. These include Community Furniture Enterprise in Rhymney which was set up by Groundwork Caerphilly, and Refurb Flintshire.

71. The Programme has provided over £40million to a large number of local projects since 2002. Many of the projects involved the refurbishment of village halls, thus making communities more sustainable.

72. CFAP was reviewed during 2009, and new criteria brought in for the October round. Where applicable, in particular where new-build is involved, schemes are now required to meet BREEAM Excellent standards.

73. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) is working closely with the assembly on the promotion of Sustainable Development within social enterprises.

New Child Poverty Strategy for Wales

74. The Welsh Assembly Government has made clear its commitment to the UK Government's child poverty targets and remains committed to doing all that is possible, within the powers available, to help achieve the goal of eradicating child poverty by 2020.

75. The most recent child poverty figures for Wales demonstrate how important it is for the Assembly Government to do as much as it can, using all the legislative powers available, to do more to increase the life chances for children living in low income families. There are a very wide range of policies and programmes in place to tackle child poverty, but there is recognition that there is a need for a renewed drive to reduce it. The Children and Families (Wales) Measure, passed by the National Assembly

on 10th November, is a key part of this. The Measure makes statutory provision to take forward the Welsh Assembly Government's commitment in terms of child poverty, provides for greater support to families where children may be at risk, and strengthens regulatory enforcement in child care settings.

76. The new legislation will require Welsh Authorities, including Welsh Ministers, to prepare and publish a strategy for contributing to the eradication of child poverty in Wales. It reflects Ministers' understanding that, in order to make faster progress on child poverty, there is a need to galvanise and draw on the expertise and experience of a wide range of public bodies in Wales. On 5th October 2009, Children and Young People Cabinet Committee members agreed the proposed framework for the new child poverty strategy, which sought to identify those policy areas that it will be particularly important to focus upon in our new child poverty strategy.

77. Central to the Welsh Assembly Government's child poverty policy is improving outcomes for children and young people living in poor families in Wales. Building the new strategy around the 13 broad aims outlined in the proposed Children and Families (Wales) Measure and the Welsh Assembly Government's seven core aims will facilitate the Assembly Government's approach, which is to tackle the causes and effects of income poverty through a range of cross-cutting policies and programmes. To that end, whilst the Assembly Government's child poverty strategy will continue to be widely focused there is an increased recognition that there is a need to focus in this new strategy on those outcomes for children and young people that are *particularly* affected by them being in a low income family. The strategy will be published for consultation early in 2010.

Financial Inclusion and Fuel Poverty

78. The Financial Inclusion Strategy for Wales, "Taking Everyone into Account", is based on the premise of key stakeholders working collaboratively, to facilitate a holistic and coordinated, joint-agency response to financial inclusion issues. The Strategy recognises that there are clear links between financial exclusion and fuel poverty that will need to be drawn together and addressed appropriately if we are to be successful in our aim of promoting financial inclusion.

79. Fuel poverty needs to be incorporated into the work of the new Welsh Financial Inclusion Champions team which is jointly funded by the Assembly Government and the Department for Work and Pensions. Cross-referrals between agencies should be an integral part of our work to ensure that every available avenue is followed in support of fuel poor households.

80. Encouraging and supporting ways of reducing utility bills will also play an important part in the promotion of financial inclusion and reduction of fuel poverty in Wales and could be achieved in several ways including:

- encouraging switching utility suppliers linked to the receipt of impartial energy efficiency advice to get the best deals on offer;
- helping to ensure the most vulnerable households take advantage of 'social tariffs' to ensure that they can buy energy more cheaply; and
- making homes more energy efficient.

Social Enterprise Action Plan

81. The Social Enterprise Action Plan contains a list of Actions which will strengthen the support available to new and existing social enterprises throughout Wales. This will encourage community and voluntary groups to consider ways of raising income and trading, thus enhancing their sustainability, and reducing their dependence on grants.

Third Sector

82. The Welsh Assembly Government gave a commitment in the Third Dimension - A Strategic Action Plan for the Voluntary Sector Scheme to develop in partnership with the Third Sector a promotional campaign to attract volunteers and provide a source of information about volunteering opportunities.

83. In line with the Voluntary Sector Scheme, the Welsh Assembly Government is committed to supporting an integrated infrastructure that represents, promotes, supports, develops and is accountable to the whole of the voluntary sector at national and local level.

84. In 2005 the ground-breaking Partnership Agreement between the Assembly Government, WCVA, CVCs and independent Volunteer Centres was signed. It provided formal recognition of the role of CVCs, Volunteer Centres and WCVA as the three parts of the voluntary sector infrastructure. It made a five-year commitment to funding, and introduced, for the first time, core funding for Volunteer Centres. In the spirit of Making the Connections, the infrastructure committed to working together across boundaries to work out how best to meet the needs of the third sector, and to eliminate any avoidable duplication in order to free up resources for front-line services. In July 2008 the initial 5-year rolling agreement was extended to 2013.

85. The WCVA manages a range of volunteering schemes on behalf of the Communities Division. There are many examples of beneficiaries of these schemes participating in activities to improve the local environment.

Minister for Health and Social Services:

NHS Estates Energy

86. Paragraph 74 of the WAG response stated that “The 57 largest NHS sites in Wales use zero carbon-rated green tariffs to supply their grid electricity”. DEFRA guidance now states that green tariffs should not be zero rated.

Environmental Management Systems

87. The Assembly Government are fully committed to improving environmental management systems (EMS) across NHS Wales. A decision has been taken to review and build upon the earlier Green Dragon Level 3 targets. The new benchmark will be based on the ISO 14001 standard and targets have been set for each NHS property holding body. The ISO 14001 system is the most widely recognised international environmental standard. In order to maintain certification the NHS organisations involved will need to be externally audited.

Travel Plans

88. Travel plans are referred to in paragraph 84 of the WAG response. The plans must contain a range of sustainable transport measures that will:

- Improve the accessibility of NHS sites for all users;
- Promote more sustainable alternatives to single occupancy car journeys; and
- Promote the health benefits of active travel

Our Healthy Future

89. Improving sustainability requires a reduction in avoidable ill health. Unhealthy environments and behaviours, and the illnesses and damage they cause, place a considerable and avoidable burden on individuals, families communities and organisations. This also generates costs to the NHS and other support services and reduces productive capacity. These burdens are huge and may be unsustainable in the future. Action is needed to tackle the causes and ensure that interventions to deal with problems that do arise are as effective and efficient as possible.

90. In this context, the Minister for Health and Social Services approved the publication of *Our Healthy Future* in October. Its aims and themes complement the Sustainable Development Scheme, and are focused on achieving a concerted shift towards health improvement and early intervention to help create sustainable healthy communities and reduce avoidable differences in people’s health. In the NHS, focused efforts to measure and improve quality, including action to improve patient safety and ratchet up efficiency, has also begun. One of the overarching ambitions for *Our Healthy Future* is that all organisations and individuals in

Wales work together for a sustainable future by "preventing the preventable" causes of ill-health and health inequalities.

91. In the longer term, this approach should result in a better quality of life for our own and future generations using an active prevention approach through the lifelong health pathway and ensuring that resources are used to best effect.

Corporate Health Standard

92. As part of the ongoing delivery of the Corporate Health Standard programme, the Department for Health and Health Professions will engage with the new NHS organisations to encourage them to work towards Platinum level awards. The Annual Operating Framework for the NHS sets targets for the achievement of Gold or Platinum awards. Public Health Wales, as the deliverer of the Corporate Health Standard, is also encouraging businesses and organisations with current gold level awards to progress to the platinum level.

Minister for Heritage:

Cadw

93. Cadw has established a dedicated member of the technical staff as a co-ordinator for sustainability issues with the aim of creating and implementing a strategy, schedule and timescale for reducing the carbon footprint at all Cadw's sites, as well as developing guidance for owners on 'best practice' methods of improving the energy efficiency of their own historic properties.

94. Cadw has received approval for a £19m strategic heritage tourism EU project. This project aims to maximise the value of heritage including providing benefits beyond individual headline sites and contribute to our sense of place and cultural identity. Sustainability will be built into individual project schemes, for example:

- advice is to be provided for visitors on travel to sites, including promoting access via public transport, cycling and walking;
- connections will be made with relevant existing community heritage and tourism activities;
- the re-use or adaptation of existing structures, the use of sustainable, low maintenance materials and low or zero energy services will be incorporated into all new developments, wherever possible and appropriate;
- carbon footprint impact is to be built into the monitoring and evaluation framework.

95. The work Cadw undertakes in conserving the monuments in State care and in advising others on the conservation of the built heritage of Wales is intrinsically eminently sustainable. Existing materials are routinely re-used

or recycled and the new products required, such as lime for mortars, etc., are manufactured using processes that are significantly less energy demanding than that (eg. cement) for conventional structures. The widespread use of traditional craft skills, using local labour (including Cadw's own Cadwraeth Cymru craft teams) wherever possible also helps to maintain and develop sustainable sources of employment.

Assembly Government Sponsored Bodies

96. The Culture, Welsh Language and Sport Division work closely with its Assembly Government Sponsored Bodies (AGSBs) in relation to monitoring the implementation of the Wales Spatial Plan (WSP) and the Sustainable Development Scheme.
97. There is a requirement upon the Arts Council for Wales (ACW) to set out in their business planning documents how they will support implementation of the WSP and the Sustainable Development Scheme.
98. ACW is currently undertaking a revision of its environmental and travel policy. This update will stress the importance of using public transport and assessing the environmental impact of journeys as well as cost. Approval for the revised policy will be sought in new year.

Sustainable Transport & Tourism Task and Finish group

99. A Sustainable Transport & Tourism Task and Finish group was set up earlier this year to identify ways in which the tourism and public transport sectors can work more closely together. A report was produced and published at a Sustainable Tourism and Transport conference in Cardiff on 4th November which outlines a number of ways in which the tourism industry can encourage people to use public transport when on holiday in Wales.
100. The report examines the barriers that tourists face using public transport as well the challenges faced by managers in improving the attractiveness of public transport to the visitor. It also identified the scope within existing services and Government priorities that may help to overcome the barriers through more effective partnership working.
101. The main recommendations of the report include:
 - providing better information to visitors on what sustainable transport options are currently available
 - encouraging more local services linked to visitor attractions
 - offering incentives to visitors to use public transport
 - simplifying ticketing arrangements including integrated ticketing for different modes of transport
 - travel planning for key visitor attractions

102. The recommendations in this report will now be looked at in more depth by the Sustainable Tourism Forum who will work towards producing a more detailed implementation plan over the next year.
103. A study on the impact of climate change on tourism has also been commissioned by Visit Wales in order to examine the impact that changes to our future weather and climate will have on visitors to Wales and how the tourism industry can adapt and meet these new challenges.
104. Initial findings from this study were presented at a Climate Change and Tourism workshop report in October on how the Welsh visitor economy can adapt and develop its offering considering the levels of climate change expected in future. Visit Wales is continuing to work closely with the Climate Change team on a number of other climate change initiatives.
105. Visit Wales is participating in a Britain & Ireland Sustainable Tourism group involving the national tourist boards to exchange experience and commission joint research. Visit Wales has also joined the ERNEST a European Network for research in Sustainable Tourism to share best practice and experiences at the European level.
106. Work is currently being done to improve our understanding of the scale of Tourism environmental impacts through the Wales Economic Research Unit development of the Tourism Satellite Account for Wales, to enable us to have a better understanding of the policy options to reduce these impacts.
107. On a programme level, Visit Wales is continuing to work through the Forum on a number of different sustainable tourism projects which include introducing best practice guidance in the Harmonised Grading scheme, a UK wide validation programme with Visit Britain to assess green accreditation as well as improving communication to the industry on sustainable advice and guidance via the FS4B portal, introducing toolkits and case studies.
108. Recently, Visit Wales also received approval for 2 strategic EU projects, whose total value is £35m, on sustainable and coastal tourism. Both projects will develop strategic centres of tourism excellence in Wales based on the built and natural environment. The focus of these 2 projects is activity tourism.
109. The National Geographic's Traveler Magazine recently ranked Wales seventh as one of the best rated places "perceived to be in excellent shape relatively unspoiled and likely to remain so".
110. The National Geographic team surveyed 133 destinations in its sixth annual survey of destination stewardship. The survey assesses how development, mass tourism, pollution and globalisation has affected some of the world's iconic destinations.

Minister for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills:

111. I highlighted in the original Government response the role of DCELLS and the areas of high-profile existing and upcoming policies and programmes which will explicitly refer to the linkage with sustainable development as set out in the SD Scheme definition. In this addendum, I highlight the areas where we have further progress since October 2009:

Learning Environments

112. We are seeking to transform the system. The twin drivers for this challenge were the need to modernise provision to meet the demands of the 21st century, and the need to rationalise provision to achieve greater efficiency in a climate of tightly constrained budgets.

113. Some of the plans which came forward were both radical and visionary, and across Wales no fewer than 6 FE College mergers are now in train as a result. Several LEAs linked reorganisation plans for pre-16 education to their post-16 proposals, and so we have now combined both programmes into a single overall transformation strategy. On 2 December, a Transformation National Conference was held at which my Department reported back on the progress made on post-16 transformational change one year on and showcase some of the really exciting work going on across the country.

114. As part of the 'One Wales' agenda this Government made a commitment to deliver schools fit for the 21st century. We are developing a new long-term strategic capital investment plan that will impact upon every school, college and university in Wales. The Development of emerging capital proposals into a forward investment programme will be aligned with capital investment in the rest of educational system. The Assembly Government is working in partnership and will assist local authorities in the development of their capital investment programmes.

115. The Welsh Assembly Government will also assist local authorities in finding ways to join up funding with other public services, as well as to seeking funding from the Assembly Government's new Strategic Capital Investment Fund.

116. One Wales commits to instituting a programme of increased investment in sustainable schools. Therefore, with the assistance of the Assembly Government new and refurbished accommodation will look to reducing carbon emissions and making the most of sustainable features, including obtaining the accreditation of BREEAM "Excellent".

117. Since 2006-07 all new school build projects have had to meet BREEAM 'Excellent' accreditation and local authorities are required to have sustainability/energy efficiency features incorporated into new build and significant refurbishment projects, i.e. grey water recycling, bio-mass and ground source heating as well as solar and photovoltaic panels.

118. 21st Century Schools need to be designed with a robustness that ensures all new and refurbished buildings are well maintained so that the benefits of capital investment do not diminish. We will look to publish guidance on how to build a sustainable school environment to assist local authorities in meeting the standard of a 21st Century school.
119. New buildings in the Further Education Sector are also required to obtain the accreditation of BREEAM “Excellent “. We are working with the Carbon Trust to undertake a feasibility study to ascertain whether an Advanced Metering Monitoring and Targeting (AMMT) system can be installed at each FEI college in Wales.

Skills and Higher learning

120. The Department has developed the Pilot Sector Priorities Fund which attracts Convergence funding support and enables Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) to develop project bids to address perceived weaknesses or gaps in the learning market in relation to their sector needs. We have brought together those SSCs which cover the low carbon skills/occupations to encourage them to work together on a partnership bid.
121. The bid, to be taken forward by the SSCs, seeks to focus on building delivery capacity within the FE sector through the creation of Learning Champions, who will be equipped with up to date knowledge and experience of the latest micro-generation technologies and product range through a programme of industry placements and visits to manufacturers;
122. SSCs need to be at the heart of ensuring that learning opportunities meet business needs. The project will also focus on pilot activities which support the emergence of new job roles e.g. energy advisers, energy assessors, and piloting the delivery of a new apprentice learning framework designed for the needs of the Onshore Wind Energy sector. It will also seek to add value to traditional learning route-ways in the building services sector e.g. apprenticeship frameworks in plumbing ,heating and ventilation, by piloting “bolt on” green technology modules for apprenticeship completers and for Pathways to Apprenticeships participants.
123. The bid will also include a research element which will collect data on existing low carbon skills learning provision across Wales, which it is hoped can be subsequently collated into a directory of provision and made available to the public via the internet based “portal” on sustainable building technologies, which is currently under development by WAG.
124. The Department is investing in an expanded Leadership and Management training initiative will offer an opportunity to deliver management “best practice” to supervisors and business managers through a programme of management modules which can be tailored to

meet the needs of the business. Sector Skills Councils are being encouraged to promote the learning opportunities to businesses within their sector “footprint” which may identify unmet training needs in relation to reducing carbon e.g. energy costs management.

125. The Department is also seeking to link with the work of the Low Carbon Hub through the Welsh Built Environment Forum in order to support a planned skills sub group which will focus on the future skills needs of businesses within the built environment. This work will take account of the impact on the sector of more stringent energy efficiency standards which form part of the recently devolved Building Regulations.

Jane Davidson, AM
Minister for Environment, Sustainability and Housing

December 2009