Briefing Paper for Trainee Teachers Of Citizenship Education

Policies and Practices for Sustainable Development

Sustainable development and citizenship education

Human societies need to adopt policies and practices for sustainable development because most are living beyond the earth's means to support them. Humanity's footprint (its ecological demand) is (on average) 21.9 hectares per person while the earth's ecological capacity (again on average) is only 15.7 hectares per person. Living within ecological limits requires societies to adopt changed forms of development, with changed forms of technology and social organisation, but there is no real agreement over the definition of such development or what policies and practices are likely to bring it about. While international, national and local agendas exist (see Briefing Papers on Agenda 21 and Local Agenda 21), progress in realising sustainable development is slow as GEO-4, a report from the UN Environment Programme acknowledges.

The table below summarises the content of the dominant discourse on sustainable development found within Agenda 21, Local Agenda 21s, and the sustainable development strategies of the European Union and UK Government.

Substance	Process	Tools
• Reduce use of resources and production of waste, increase resource efficiency, reuse, recycle • Conserve fragile ecosystems • Social equity (between and within countries and across generations) • Quality of life (broader than standard of living) • Respect for traditional knowledge, ways of life, diversity	• Active planning and management • Consultation, participation, empowerment • Decisions at most local possible level, local government pivotal • Partnerships and collaborations between all sectors	• Education, information, awareness raising • Capacity building, institutional know how, confidence, experience • Regulations and enforcement • Market management, taxes, levies, subsidies • Public investment

Consideration of such issues as road charging, nuclear power, or housing supply, suggests that the policies and practices of business, governments, and non-governmental organisations, are contested and reflect different ethical and political positions. The dominant discourse is strongly anthropocentric (human centred) and reformist, advocating the greening of capitalism through a mix of cleaner technology, market mechanisms, and state regulation. Opposing this are radical and utopian discourses that are weakly anthropocentric (recognising the rights of the rest of nature alongside those of human nature) or ecocentric (suggesting an ecologically based morality to constrain human action). While green socialists regard state or co-operative ownership and planning as keys to sustainable development, anarchists and some greens advocate a simpler life in self-managing local communities. While social democracy is perhaps the dominant influence on agendas for sustainable development, liberalism influences the Business Council for Sustainable Development, and socialism and anarchism find expression in the global anti-capitalist movement and the World Social Forum.

Citizenship education for sustainable development is potentially subversive since it should engage students to undertake critical evaluation of prevailing values and the social (economic, political, cultural) arrangements that cause unsustainable development. It should acknowledge that there is no consensus on the meaning of sustainable development; on the ethics that should guide the relations between human and non-human nature; or the kind of knowledge that best provides understanding of complex bio-physical and social systems, their interactions, and foundations for policy. Teachers of citizenship should be alert to policies (including those on

education for sustainable development) that fail to acknowledge these semantic, ethical and epistemological problems and should be constantly aware that sustainability (or the condition of societies that simultaneously conserve and enhance ecological, economic, social, cultural and personal capital) is primarily an ethical condition that has to be translated into a regulative social principle, expressed in laws, institutions, policies, and practices.

Rather than viewing sustainability as policy designed to achieve a certain state of affairs, teachers are better advised to conceive of sustainability as a frame of mind. This involves respect for human and non-human nature seeking their own fulfilment through a continued process of co-evolution that people can encourage with appropriate technology (tools, institutions and ideas, including institutions of governance). It requires teachers and students to be open and engaged with the complexity and meaning of things in the manner of great art or literature; attuned to harmony and discord in the world via a heightened sense of attachment; and capable of viewing nature in ways that are essentially poetic and non-manipulative. The arts, humanities and religious education therefore have key roles to play in education for sustainable development alongside citizenship, science, geography, and design/technology. Along with citizenship education, religious education and PSHE, the arts and humanities can explore the virtue of sufficiency over excess and of sustaining things, not in order to have something for the future, but in order to let things be true to themselves.

Turning ethical principles and a frame of mind into a regulative social principle, and related laws, institutions, policy and practice, should involve all citizens in democratic deliberation on a wide range of ethical and political alternatives. Engaging students in reflection and action on such alternatives should be at the heart of citizenship education for sustainable development and is best encouraged by participation in sustainability issues affecting the local community which generally have national, European and global dimensions. Most existing policy on sustainable development acknowledges the importance of the public sphere or civil society in realising sustainable development, yet real citizenship participation in realising policies and practices for sustainable development remains poorly developed. The Green Alliance, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, Oxfam, and the Groundwork Trust are just four of the many NGOs that encourage debate and action on sustainability issues.

Citizenship Curriculum Areas addressed by Sustainable Development

Education for sustainable development (ESD) relates to the KS4 curriculum guidance on citizenship in the following ways:

Curriculum Aims (p. 41): Sustainable development can be considered an 'umbrella topic' for considering *issues of social justice, human rights, community cohesion and global interdependence*, and encouraging students *to challenge injustice, inequalities and discrimination*. ESD develops social and moral responsibility (towards the rest of human and non-human nature); community involvement (in sustainability issues near and far); and political literacy (the ability to understand and shape the politics of sustainable development).

Democracy and justice (p. 42) *Students should learn about the need to balance competing and conflicting demands, and understand that in a democracy not everyone gets what they want.* Policies and practices for sustainable development are the outcome of more or less democratic decision-making which reflects the power and influence of the private sector, government, and workers and citizens' movements. The dominant discourse of sustainable development suggests that the demands of the economy, society and environment can be

'balanced' but other discourses suggest that such balance is illusionary or unattainable given prevailing economic and political realities. Some argue that economic democracy is a building block of sustainable development, alongside political democracy, while organisations like the Environmental Justice Foundation work to ensure that justice is an element of all policies and practices designed to bring it about..

Rights and responsibilities (p. 43) Green thinking on citizenship seeks to extend conceptions of rights (environmental rights) and recognise citizens' responsibilities to future generations and the rest of nature. To this end it has developed its own notions of environmental and ecological citizenship and supported calls to enlarge the scope of citizenship beyond the state (cosmopolitan and global citizenship). Students should consider whether other species and future generations have rights, and whether the responsibilities of citizenship should extend to them as well as to people currently living elsewhere in the world. The concept of ecological footprints is central to that of ecological citizenship. Corporate social responsibility is the main way in which business expresses its commitment to sustainable development and students might study the CSR policies of a company such as Marks & Spencer.

Identity and diversity (p. 43) One's relations to the rest of human and non-human nature are central to one's identity, and developing sustainability as a frame of mind is perhaps one root of an individual's psychological well-being. Students might consider policies to link schools and communities across the world; provide greater access to green spaces; and support community arts that explore sustainability issues. Since consumerism and popular culture are key forces shaping students' identities, ESD should deal critically, yet constructively, with the politics of consumerism, youth culture and identity politics, by considering such policies as those on eco-labelling, and fair trade, and such practices as buy-nothing day, the encouragement of advertising standards, and free-cycling. Local economic trading schemes suggest practices for organising society and developing identity beyond consumerism. Cultural sustainability requires cultural diversity and students might examine and learn from the ways in which sustainability is explored in the religious beliefs, literature, and popular culture of the various communities represented in the school.

Critical thinking and enquiry (p. 44) There is a strong tradition of critical pedagogy in environmental and development education which has been carried forward into education for sustainable development. Critical pedagogy prompts students *to question and reflect on different ideas, opinions, assumptions, beliefs and values when exploring topical and controversial issues and problems*, and involves ideology critique or the process whereby students themselves come to reject ideas that mask the causes of unsustainable development and provisionally adopt alternatives that seem to offer a more realistic view of causes and possible solutions. In planning lessons and enquires, and selecting topical issues and problems, teachers should seek to expose students to the full range of ideas, beliefs and values, shaping the politics of sustainable development. They should introduce ideas about the social construction of scientific knowledge, the role of science in shaping policy and practices, and the need for citizen participation in the development, application and evaluation, of science and technology for sustainable development. Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry is a key website for all teachers of citizenship education.

Advocacy and representation (p. 44) The processes listed here are central to students forming their own autonomous moral and political judgements concerning policies and practices for sustainable development. There are numerous examples of the advocacy of sustainable development in business, politics, and civil society which students can analyse. Participation in

local community development provides opportunities to develop communication and advocacy skills, as does networking with students working for sustainable development elsewhere in the world.

Taking informed and responsible action (p. 45) All teachers of citizenship should be aware of Arnstein's ladder of participation and should encourage students to suggest for themselves forms of informed and responsible action, once they have been introduced to a wide range of local and more distant initiatives. These should include case studies of movements of workers and citizens who are seeking greater control over land, resources and technology so that they are better able to determine their own path to development.

Range and content (p. 46) ESD encompasses much that is listed under a – n. Particularly important are environmental rights, rights to development, rights of other species and future generations (a); environmental law (b, c); worker's and citizen's movements for environmental and social justice and sustainable development (d, f); the potential and limits of parliamentary and other forms of democracy (e.g. ecological) for realising sustainable development; the role of science in public debate and policy formation (g); the role of green lifestyles and NGOs in the transition to sustainable development (h); economic imperatives that work for and against sustainable development (j); green consumerism, corporate social responsibility, trade unions and 'health and safety' (k); sustaining cultural knowledge and diversity (l); the global movement for sustainable development (m, n).

Examples of **curriculum opportunities** (p. 48) are provided on pages 00 to 00 of this briefing paper.

Teacher resources

The following books provide an introduction to sustainable development and ESD:

Citizenship through Secondary Geography, D. Lambert & P. Machon (eds.), Routledge Falmer, 2001 (chapter on ecological citizenship)
Environmental Citizenship, A. Dobson & D. Bell, MIT Press, 2006
From Here to Sustainability, the Real World Coalition, Earthscan, 2001
Green Political Thought, A. Dobson, Routledge, 2007
Planet Earth, the future, F. Beeley (ed.), BBC Books, 2006
Politics and the Environment, J. Connelly, Routledge, 2002
Rethink, Refuse, Reduce . . . Education for sustainability in a changing world, K. Webster, Field Studies Council, 2004
Retrieving Nature: education in a post-humanist age, M. Bonnett, Blackwell, 2004
Handbook of Education for Citizenship and Democracy, J. Arthur, I. Davies & C. Hahn (eds.) Sage, 2008 (chapter on sustainable development)
Sustainable Development and Learning, W. Scott & S. Gough, Routledge Falmer, 2003
Sustainable Education, Re-visioning Learning and Change, S. Sterling, Green Books, 2001
The Politics of the Earth, J. Dryzek, OUP, 2005

John Huckle's paper on the citized site *Citizenship education for sustainable development in initial teacher training* contains numerous hyperlinks to websites with information and resources.

Key websites for teachers include sustainable schools; DfES sustainable development action plan; RTP! ESD manual for schools; UN Decade of ESD; WWF learning; and the Earth Charter Initiative.

Student resources

The Global Dimension website offers a searchable database of resources. Searching with citizenship as the subject, sustainable development as the theme, and the age range 14 – 16 yielded ten resources in November 2007.

Curriculum Focus	Year 10
Transport policy and sustainable development	One hour lesson

Purpose
Pupils study Government transport policy before arriving at their own proposals to limit road congestion and reduce carbon emissions from road transport. They relate their proposals to the travel and transport doorway of the sustainable schools framework.

Preparation
Teachers should download a copy of the discussion paper Towards a Sustainable Transport System from the Department of Transport's website and read the executive summary as well as page 48 on road pricing. The paper suggests that Britain's road, rail and air networks can all be greatly expanded without undermining a commitment to reducing climate change emissions. Being both 'pro-green' and 'pro-growth' it says that a new generation of cars, improved fuels, and renewable energy to drive electric vehicles could eventually almost completely 'decarbonise' the road transport economy. It argues for airport expansions in south-east England, improvements to the road infrastructure, and seeks more private investment in transport. Environment and transport pressure groups largely dismissed the paper as 'business as usual'. The Campaign for Better Transport responded with 'nice words, but the time for words is past. We're concerned the department's continuing road building programme and aggressive airport expansion plans will fuel climate change'.

Teachers should be familiar with the sustainable schools framework, particularly the section on travel and traffic (page 24)

Procedure
1 Start the lesson by reminding students that road and air transport contributes to air and noise pollution and climate change. They do however bring us many of the goods we consume and allow us to enjoy such benefits as visits to the shops, friends and relatives, and foreign holidays.
2 Invite students to take a position on an imaginary line across the front of the classroom. For example the line might relate to road charging and stretch from 'I would gladly pay to use the road to reduce congestion and cut carbon emissions' to 'I strongly oppose road charging. Motorists already pay enough to use the roads and charges would make it more difficult for poorer people to use their cars'. Think up similar extreme positions relating to air transport, travelling by public transport, walking to school, reducing one's use of transport to a minimum, faith in technology to solve the problems posed by the end of the 'age of oil'. For each topic ask a group of students to individually take and explain a position. If they stand at an extreme, or part way between the extremes, how do they justify and explain the position they have taken.
3 Explain to students that governments have to satisfy the interests of many parties if they are to maintain electoral support and remain in power. The business community wants an efficient

transport system that enables goods to be transported quickly around the country – congestion costs business money as millions of hours are lost each year in traffic jams. Voters want to travel easily and cheaply to work, shops, entertainment, friends and relatives, and to enjoy holidays in distant places. Environment and transport pressure groups are concerned about the social and environmental costs of transport (noise, pollution, climate change) and seek policies that promote public transport, walking and cycling, and reduce the need for transport. In attempting to appeal to all parties a government may offer contradictory policies – airport expansion and action on climate change – it can conceal such contradictions to some extend by suggesting that technology will 'square the circle' – cleaner aircraft and emissions trading will enable air transport to continue to increase while reducing emissions. Explain that these groups have differing amounts of power and influence to shape government policy. Which has most / least influence?

4 Return road charging and remind students that in early 2007 over 1.7 million people signed a [Downing Street e petition](#) against road pricing with the result that Tony Blair wrote to them telling them that no decision had yet been made. Are such petitions an example of democracy at work or do they provide unfair influence for such lobbies as that of private motorists? Inform students of the cautious approach to road pricing outlined in the discussion paper. Explain to them that it is an economic or market based instrument to encourage more sustainable forms of development.

5 Now turn to student's ideas on a sustainable transport system. Divide the class into three groups and explain that after a given period each group will make two policy proposals to make the transport system more sustainable. Group one is to propose policies based on economic instruments (prices, fees, charges, taxes, subsidies). Group two is to propose policies based on regulation or the introduction of laws and regulations (for example a law to require car sharing in some motorway lanes at peak times, a law to prohibit large engine sizes, a planning regulation to prevent superstores and workplaces providing free parking). Group three is to propose policies based solely on information, education and awareness raising (for example an advertising campaign to promote cars with low emissions, travel advisers to visit households and promote public transport and cycling as a means of getting to work).

6 Allow each group to report back with its policy proposals. Get students to vote on the proposals – each student has two votes but cannot vote for proposals arising from the group to which s/he belonged. Discuss which policy proposals were popular and why. Inform students that governments in capitalist liberal democracies generally prefer economic instruments to regulation. What might explain this preference?

7 Finally refer to the sustainable schools framework which suggests (p. 24) that schools *use the curriculum to cultivate the knowledge, values and skills needed to address travel and traffic issues and reinforce this through positive activities in the school and local area*. What other knowledge, values and skills do students think they need if they are to contribute to a more sustainable transport system? Are they contradictions between the government's sustainable schools policy and other policies on education (for example, greater parental choice in education may mean that students travel further to school)? Is school travel being addressed mainly by economic instruments, regulations, and/or information, education and awareness raising? What additional policies from national and local government might encourage more sustainable school travel?

Assessment and differentiation

A follow-up task might be for students to outline and justify in writing one of the policy proposals suggested by their group in greater detail. This would demonstrate their skills of advocacy or *ability to present a convincing argument that takes account of, and represents different*

viewpoints, to try to persuade others to think again, change or support them (guidance, p. 44). Differentiation would be through the level of analysis and advocacy demonstrated in the writing. A weak student would have few reasons to support his/her proposal; a weak grasp of the factors shaping transport policy; a limited awareness of different viewpoints; and restricted understanding of how other might be persuaded to support the policy. A strong student would offer many reasons; have a good overall grasp of transport policy; be aware of many different viewpoints; and recognise several ways in which others might be persuaded.

Reading
Environmental Principles and Policies, S. Beder, Earthscan, 2006 provides an academic and critical account of economic instruments for encouraging sustainable development.

Whole school focus	Year 10
Whole school assembly organised by Yr. 10 pupils	**30 minutes**

Purpose
Year 10 pupils prepare and present an assembly for the rest of the school. They present people who have been declared Champions of the Earth by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the practices they have encouraged to bring about more sustainable forms of development. On a show of hands the whole school has to decide which of the champions they consider to be most worthy of the award.

Preparation
You should familiarise yourself with the mission of the UNEP as a programme of the United Nations. You can download a useful introductory booklet from its website (go to about UNEP).

A UNEP webpage has links to current and past champions with their profiles and acceptance speeches.

You should book a whole school assembly slot well in advance so that Yr. 10s will have the opportunity of giving a presentation to the rest of the school.

Procedure
1 In classroom time introduce Yr. 10 students to UNEP and its role in promoting sustainable development. Explain the purpose of the Champions of the Earth award. Provide students with the opportunity to suggest people who might merit such an award. The award is given to 'outstanding environmental leaders'. Explain that a leader is somebody who demonstrates and promotes good practice. S/he should show others the way to achieving more sustainable forms of development.
2 Now introduce the idea of Yr. 10 presenting the need for sustainable development, the role of UNEP, and Champions of the Earth to the rest of the school in an assembly. Divide the class into five groups – one will present the case for sustainable development; one the role of UNEP and its Champions of the Earth awards; the other three will each present one award winner of their choice (but try to ensure a gender and ethnic mix). Each group will have no more than 5 minutes to present their section of the assembly.
3 Allow the groups to carry out internet research. They should focus on the way in which UNEP and the champions encourage policies and practices that contribute to sustainable development. What is it that UNEP and the champions have done/are doing that promotes sustainable development? You may allow groups to prepare PowerPoint slides to illustrate their short presentations during the assembly.

4 Still in classroom time rehearse the groups' presentations ensuring that they focus on key points, keep to time, and present in a lively way in language that the youngest students are likely to understand.

5 On the day of the whole school assembly take a vote, by show of hands, on which of the three champions winner most merits the award in the view of the whole school. It might then be possible to contact this champion by email and inform her/him of the school's decision.

Assessment and differentiation

Groups might be assessed for their research, presentation and advocacy skills. It should be possible for the teacher to differentiate between students who have made a major and minor contribution to the group's effort.

Community focus	Year 10
Visit to local allotments	One hour minimum, ideally half day

Purpose

The early 19th century saw more enclosures and by 1845 the fear of a peasant revolt led to the General Enclosures Act. Commissioners travelled the country authorising enclosures only on condition that land was set aside as allotments. However, the full weight of the law was often required to ensure there were enough plots to keep the working classes fed. In 1887 the Allotment Act saw to it that local authorities were obliged to provide allotments if there was a demand. Again, that wasn't enough. The local authorities still resisted until the Allotment Act of 1908 imposed responsibilities on parish, urban district and borough councils to provide land for cultivation so long as it was not for commercial purposes. That rule still applies today. . . . From a peak of 1.5 million plots in 1918 we are now down to around 333,000 across the UK.
Chris Opperman, *Allotment Folk*, p. 9

This visit introduces pupils to local food growing as a practice that contributes to sustainable development. By interviewing allotment holders and a local government officer they learn how allotments also contribute to identity and biological and cultural diversity (Many allotments have been enriched by newcomers from eastern Europe in recent years. They join long standing allotment holders who are often already diverse in their origins, cultures and foods they grow.)

Preparation

You should understand something of the history of allotments and the current obligations of local councils to provide allotments. The Local Government Associations publication A New Future for Allotments is very useful as background for the teacher preparing this visit. Published in 2000 it:

- *provides an opportunity for a corporate review of allotments policy within authorities*
- *recommends a modernising approach to allotments provision and management – developing new approaches to land portfolios and building new relationships with allotment societies*
- *underlines the potential of allotments as a resource for providing locally-grown food produced in a sustainable way – without incurring long-distance energy and transport costs*
- *encourages local authorities to build on the approaches adopted by cutting-edge councils*

- *emphasises the need to actively promote allotments to attract new plot-holders*
- *highlights the need for government to modernise the regulatory framework for allotments provision*.

Through parents or others establish links with local allotment holders and the local Allotment Association. Also establish a link with the local government officer who is responsible for allotments in your area. Arrange a date and time when both holders and the officer can meet with Yr. 10 pupils on the allotment site.

Research some case studies of allotments under threat from urban development. This blog relates to the threat posed by the development of the Olympics site to allotments in east London.

Ensure that the approximate permissions are sought and risk-assessment is carried out prior to the visit.

Procedure
1 Introduce the visit in a preceding lesson. Deal with the history of allotments, their role in local food growing and sustainability (reduction of food miles, provision of healthy diets, exercise, keeping people in touch with the rest of nature, maintaining biological and cultural diversity if a mix of plants and people at the site), and current political struggles to protect allotments from development in some areas.
2 If they were to meet allotment holders and the local government officer with responsibility for allotments what questions would students ask? Through discussion agree questions that different pupils will ask during the visit. Topics that might be discussed are current demand and supply of allotments; cost; regulations governing use of allotments; age/gender/ethnic profile of allotment holders; range of food crops grown; help available to newcomers; satisfactions that holders gain; future of allotments in the area, etc. Then brief the students on the arrangements for the visit – clothing, footwear, notebooks, etc.
3 Carry out the visit, recording if possible the responses that the allotment holders and local government officer.
4 In the follow-up lesson discuss students' impressions. Does allotment gardening make a contribution to sustainable development? How? To what extent? Is it something that students should do? Should all school pupils gain some experience of food growing on an allotment? (see sustainable schools framework, pp. 20 – 21) Do local governments have sufficient powers to provide and protect allotments? Do they have the support of elected members? What can holders do if their plots are threatened with development? You might compare students' ideas with those set out in the LGA report *A New Future for Allotments*.
5 A global dimension might be added by studying the efforts of communities elsewhere to secure rights to local land on which to grow food. The landless voices web archive is one relevant source.

Assessment and differentiation
Students might prepare a pod cast based on the visit and interviews. This should explain why allotments contribute to sustainable development and why they are worth defending. The task may be made easier by giving students a script outline. The task may be made harder by requiring students to add a global dimension to the local content.

Resource
The allotment chronicles, a social history of allotment gardening, S. Poole, 2006.

And finally . . .

It is important to teach about policies and practices for sustainable development in a manner does not alarm students unduly and does not cause them to loose faith in the future. Students need to realise that individually and collectively citizens can make a difference. Indeed critical and active citizens are ultimately the key to more sustainable futures.

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