

Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland

A Guide to Sustainable Governance



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Every Action Counts programme March 2009,
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for Education Scotland in December 2011



Foreword

Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland (CASS) is a set of 7 educational resources on sustainable development for community organisations. The CASS resources were adapted from material produced as part of the Every Action Counts programme in England, which aimed to embed sustainable development into the work of community groups.



They were produced as part of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD) programme, funded by the Scottish Government and administered through the Community Learning and Development Working Group. The Community Learning and Development Working Group was established in 2010 to ensure that Scottish communities are supported and encouraged to engage in active learning on local sustainable development.

This set of resources is aimed at community projects and groups and offers advice ranging from how to develop a sustainability plan to simple tips for recycling and saving energy. The resources support both large and small scale community organisations to carry out their activities in ways which protect the environment without impacting on efficiencies and which ensure greater levels of sustainability for the longer term.

Sustainable development is a priority which cuts across all aspects of community life. Many local groups and organisations are already taking forward highly innovative approaches to local sustainability and a range of activities is taking place in schools and within informal education settings.

This publication aims to build on work taking place across communities and to help extend and enhance holistic community approaches to local sustainable development. We hope that the resources will be useful to community organisations themselves and also to people working with them, whether within Community Learning and Development, sustainable development or other related contexts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Fiona Garven'.

Fiona Garven
Director, SCDC

If we want to make our group or organisation more sustainable, a good place to start is the governance processes and the activities of our board. This guide provides both practical advice and relevant examples from existing projects in Scotland which should help your organisation to become more sustainable.

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Acknowledgements

This guidance was produced as part of the Scottish Government's commitment to the United Nations Decade for Education in Sustainable Development and was adapted from material written for Every Action Counts by Eleanor Pryde of bassac. Every Action Counts was the result of a thorough consultation process which was designed to produce guidance that is relevant and realistic for people working in the voluntary and community sector. To this end, a range of people from local and national organisations in England came together for a facilitated discussion around an initial draft. In order to adapt the materials to a Scottish context SCDC consulted a range of community organisations about their work. SCDC would like to thank all those projects who contributed information and photographs that should help to inspire other groups to make similar changes.

Also, find more sustainable development resources at: <http://www.justact.org.uk>
Education Scotland website www.ltscotland.org.uk/learningteachingandassessment/learningacrossthecurriculum/themesacrosslearning/globalcitizenship/supportmaterials/resources

Introduction

Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland... for our board



As leaders and ambassadors, your board members play a pivotal role in influencing and promoting positive change and delivering the values of your organisation. After all, the board is responsible for the strategic development of your organisation in order to ensure its long term sustainability. It is also responsible for ensuring that your organisation develops in a way that reflects the needs of your local community and addresses the issues that local people face.

At the same time, you and your board members may be facing an uncertain future in the face of rising costs, hardship and shortages. As a result, your daily struggle with working towards organisational goals, not to mention limited resources of money and willing help, may be being challenged by new and worrying pressures. Any economic downturn highlights starkly the need for organisations and communities to be ready and able to respond to economic, en-

vironmental and social changes. Those that can adapt and find new, more sustainable ways of living and working will stand a better chance of sustaining their organisations and communities into the future.

Taking action is therefore urgent. In order to better the lives of those we support and make our organisations stronger, we all need to get smarter about sustainable development. Applying sustainable development to your organisation (leading to increased organisational sustainability) can help you to strengthen your organisation's values and develop new and creative ways to save money, generate income and foster external interest. Moreover, the Charity Commission's recent report 'Going Green: Charities and environmental responsibility' suggests that the public are more likely to offer support and investment to charities that take sustainable development seriously.

Is our board delivering the values of our organisation?

Your organisation's mission and values may be based on a passion for equality and human rights, anger at discrimination and injustice, a determination to tackle poverty or an aspiration to build stronger communities and better lives. Yet, it is the vulnerable groups in society that are most affected by climate change and unequal access to limited natural resources. As the Third Sector Declaration on Climate Change states, "there is overwhelming evidence that the worst impacts of climate change constitute one of the greatest social, environmental and economic threats to society. Issues such as health, housing, transport, waste, food production and equality are completely linked with environmental conditions". So, there is much more work that can be done in addressing the environmental as well as social and economic factors that impact on people's lives. You can harness the energy and commitment of your board, and use it to drive a new approach to delivering the values of your organisation – one that balances economic, social and environmental considerations.

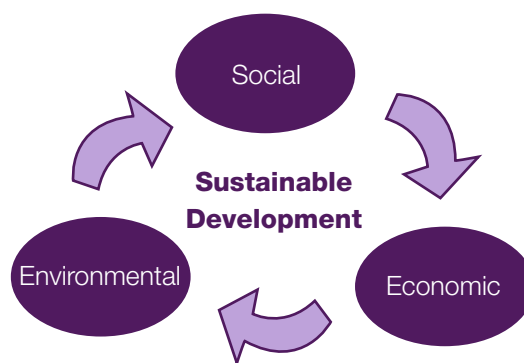
What is the Third Sector Declaration on Climate Change?

The Declaration is a statement of intent from Third Sector organisations to tackle the issue of climate change by taking action in our organisations and in our communities.

Scotland has no direct equivalent, although The Scottish Government and various partners, including Scottish local authorities, have signed up to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration (2008).

What do we mean by sustainable development?

It is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (The Brundtland Report, Our Common Future, 1987). Sustainability is often described as the goal, while sustainable development is the journey, achieved by balancing economic, social and environmental aspects, as in the diagram below:



Is this guidance for me?

This guidance is aimed at you if you are a Trustee or Management Committee Member or if you work with them – perhaps as a Chief Executive, staff member, volunteer or advisor. You will want to find new and creative ways of engaging with your mission and values, connecting with your communities and responding to the external pressures on your organisation.

How can we make the actions of our board count?

As a group of individuals working together for a common aim, the people power of your board is substantial. Their collective action offers huge potential in leading the change not only within your organisation, but externally too, with your community, funders, local authority and local businesses. After all, the role of the board is twofold, influencing the actions that others can take internally to develop your organisation and providing influence externally as ambassadors.

There are a number of ways that your board can build the values of sustainable development into its practices. This guidance will focus on the following five key areas:

1. Practical actions
2. Vision, mission and strategy
3. Financial governance
4. Policy development
5. Recruiting, managing and developing board members

The guidance encourages you to start asking questions, but it does not give all the answers. It is up to you and your board to decide what you want to do, how much you can do and how best to put these things into practice. Your choices will probably vary depending on the size of your organisation, the resources you have available, whether you are rural or urban and whether you employ mostly volunteers or paid staff. The important thing to remember is be realistic! Start with simple actions and succeed at those, rather than setting yourself challenging targets which you can't meet because you don't have the resources, enthusiasm or support.

“ Everybody has a duty to protect the environment - at least to do what they can. It's important for community organisations to make protecting the environment accessible to people so they don't feel they have to change their whole lifestyle. If it's easy to do then everybody can do it.”

Nicky Fox, Stepping Out

What are the Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland Themes?

Why not try using the following five themes to help structure your organisation's approach to sustainable development?

Save energy – save fuel and reduce energy bills

Travel wisely – travelling in ways to save money, save fuel and reduce carbon dioxide pollution

Shop ethically – buying local food which cuts transport pollution and supports local businesses. Fair Trade goods help producers and workers in some of the world's poorest countries

Save resources – saving waste and water

Care for your area – taking an interest in the local environment, protecting local wildlife and having a say on local plans affecting the area

What do we need to consider when working with our board?

It is not the role of your board to get involved in operational detail and they will not have time to read through pages of information about sustainable development. However, it is important that your board supports this work and keeps an eye on progress both from a financial and strategic point of view. It can be helpful if the board is provided with short briefings including key points and hard evidence. Start by asking yourself the following questions:

- What research can we do before we introduce this issue at a board meeting?
- Can we work with others to achieve our aims? If so, who and how will this benefit us?
- How will we communicate our key messages to our board and the outside world?
- How can we deal with resistance?

N.B. It is worth noting that conflicting priorities may arise around certain issues so you and your board will benefit from being prepared for this. For example, your board may be tasked with providing a pension policy that is the best available for the organisation's staff. However, this duty may conflict with your board's decision to provide an ethical pension policy from a supplier with an environmentally and socially sound investment portfolio. The conflict itself is fine, but it would be helpful to have measures in place to help your board work through the pros and cons of the decisions they have to make.

‘Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland... a guide to sustainable planning’ contains lots of ideas about developing a plan to address these issues, but in particular, you may want to think about the following things:

How can we get hard evidence for our board?

One way of getting some hard evidence about what your organisation is currently doing is to carry out an environmental assessment. This will provide you with a baseline of current activity against which you can measure change and impact. As part of this process and depending on resources, you may want to consider energy efficiency tests. The CASS publications ‘A Guide to Making Your Community Building More Environmentally Sustainable’ and ‘A Guide to Sustainable Planning’ have more information about environmental assessments and how to include these in your planning processes. Having a succinct list of facts and figures will enable your board to better focus on where and how your organisation could shape its activities in this area and further its vision and mission.

How can we demonstrate costs and benefits to our board?

If you are starting from scratch there are many environmental measures that you can take that cost very little or nothing at all. Some of them may even save you money in the long run, such as using energy saving light bulbs or printing double-sided. If you are further down the line, you may be considering a bigger capital spend, such as a new boiler. Listing the costs and benefits of spending in this area will help you to get a clear picture about what you are facing. It will enable you to go to your board equipped with clear information about what savings can be made, what costs might be incurred and how any costs measure up against the short or long term benefits produced. You could try thinking about both costs and benefits in relation to economic, social and environmental factors.

Are there any sustainable development requirements for accounting and reporting?

It will benefit you and your board to keep yourselves updated about changes to the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP). At the time of writing there is no obligation for charities to include environmental

information in their annual report. However, this may change in the future and will therefore play an important part in encouraging good practice and increasing transparency in this area.

What perspective does our board have on procurement?

What policies or procedures do you currently have in place around procurement? Would your board support a shift in your procurement to encompass decisions about economic, social and environmental impacts?

What funding is available for sustainable development?

Funders are increasingly asking for evidence that sustainable development is being addressed by organisations, whether in tenders, competitive bids for funding or as an integral part of contractual obligations. How can you present this information to your board?

- The Environmental Funders Network www.greenfunders.org provides a list of UK funders that offer grants for sustainable development work. Some funders provide money for ‘eco-audits’ to help you carry out initial assessments.
- The Big Lottery Fund now aims to encourage and enable grant applicants to incorporate the principles of sustainable development into the design of their projects. Although this is not yet mandatory, it represents a significant shift in thinking. You can read the Big Lottery’s ‘Sustainability Assessment Guidance’ on their website at: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk.
- Local Authorities have targets that they need to meet in this area. Ask yourselves, what the local drivers are. How can you use your work around sustainable development to strengthen your relationship with your local authority? If you are helping your local authority to meet their targets at the same time as receiving funding for your own activities, you may be better placed to negotiate with your local authority on other issues.

What do the staff team need from our board?

As well as providing succinct information for their board, it would be helpful for staff to be clear about what the board need to deliver. The board's role is to be strategic so you don't need to gain everyone's opinion about the pros and cons of recycling, but you do need to know whether the board will sanction certain expenditure.

“We have an environmental policy in place and also a CatStrand visitor charter which encourages users to follow our green principles. Community organisations have a vital role in protecting the environment; representing the community, being an information resource, communicating the importance of protecting the environment and influencing change. The success of the organisation is largely due to the leadership of a strong, committed and dynamic chairman, board and staff.”

Rachel Thompson,
Glenkens Community and Arts Trust

What practical actions can our board take?



There are a number of practical actions that your board can take to support the values of sustainable development. Have a look through the following list for some initial ideas for taking action. It is not an exhaustive list, but is aimed at getting you started

and you will probably come up with your own ideas too. And of course, the number of actions that you decide to do will depend on the size of your organisation and resources available.

“Glenkens Community and Arts Trust was set up in 2001 by a group of local volunteers who wanted to stimulate life in the Glenkens following the threat of foot and mouth. The main aim of the organisation is to combat rural isolation and geographical challenge by offering social, cultural and volunteering opportunities, bringing in professional skills, services and entertainment to the area, by providing a rural transport service and by offering advice services to sectors of the community, especially the elderly and young people.

This aim is being fulfilled through the CatStrand and other GCAT projects in the Glenkens. The success of the organisation is largely due to the leadership of a strong, committed and dynamic chairman, board and staff. We also have the support of a large pool of volunteers. The CatStrand has grown over the 3.5 years since it opened and is now a hub of services in the area. Other projects, locally and nationally, look to us for advice and support.”

Rachel Thompson,
Glenkens Community and Arts Trust

Checklist...

Travel

- How could we reduce the need for trustees to travel?
- Could we bring some board members into meetings via a conference call?
- Could we use a free video conferencing system such as Skype?
- Could we encourage several board members to travel together in one car?

During induction processes and ongoing board building processes, board members coming from the same direction could be put in touch with each other. As well as helping to reduce environmental impact, this is a great way of building relationships between your board members. Perhaps you could provide guidance to board members about travelling more wisely to help cut carbon emissions as well as fuel bills.

Meeting agenda

- How can trustees and especially Chairs who set the agenda find ways to include sustainable development?
- How can we ensure that sustainable development issues mesh with other board business?
- Could we consider the social, economic and environmental aspects of each piece of business?

N.B. You may find it helpful to refer to 'Lost in translation: A complete guide to Chair/Chief Executive partnerships'. (See Section 7) It stresses the importance of the Chair and Chief Executive taking a leading role in framing issues and raising the awareness of potential future opportunities and risks for the organisation.

Board Information

The way that information is presented to the board should help to reinforce the importance of considering, discussing and making decisions in relation to sustainable development.

- How can we ensure that information provided to the board is framed in a way that makes relevant links between economic, social and environmental aspects of our work?
- Could we draw on findings in the nef/Oxfam report, or the Charity Commission's report (See Section 7 for links to these reports) to reinforce our message?
- How does sustainable development link with our organisation's mission and vision?
- Are we able to connect this with the information we provide to the board?

Board papers

- Could we consider sending papers via email to reduce the bulk of board papers?
- If we need to print board papers can we ensure they are double sided, with reduced margins and two pages per sheet (people's eyesight allowing)?
- If our budget allows, could we print board papers on recycled paper?
- Can we store board papers electronically rather than in paper form?

The board room

- Where do we hold our board meetings?
- What refreshments do we provide? Are they ethically sourced? Take a look at *Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland... A Guide to Running Smart and Sustainable Events* for more ideas in this area.

How can we use the values of sustainable development to strengthen our vision, mission and strategy?



The vision, mission and strategy of your organisation provide its backbone and give you a clear sense what it needs to achieve to thrive. You will probably already be familiar with reviewing the vision, mission and strategy and their relevance, in light of changes in your community, society and even the world as a whole! After all, there is growing evidence that links peoples' economic, social and environmental experiences to their quality of life and this is something that concerns all of us working with our local communities.

For example, there is emerging research that connects levels of crime not just to economic and social circumstances, but to the condition of local environments: the more vegetation in an area, the lower the levels of crime as well as fear of crime. Likewise, the relationship between people's health and their environment is well known, with respiratory diseases linked to pollution and damp environments and lack of knowledge about and access to good quality fresh food linked to obesity. (See Section 7 for links to this research).

If your board has not previously thought about sustainable development in relation to your organisation's vision, mission and strategy, you may find it helpful to ask the following questions:



Checklist...

The vision

- What is the leadership's vision for a changed world, and how does being a trustee /Chief Executive in this organisation move that vision forward?
- What do the people we serve need us to be doing?
- Beyond services and outputs, what principles and values does our organisation stand for?
- Do we understand the impact of sustainable development on our organisation and on our ability to carry out our strategy?
- Are we integrating all three aspects of sustainable development in our vision?
- Is this board showing the way as a leader in the community and, if yes, how?

The mission

- How does our mission reflect the values of sustainable development?
- Is taking action on sustainable development in the best interests of our charity? (See Section 6 for more information about legal considerations).
- How can we demonstrate the link between our activities and their economic, social and environmental impact? Even for non-environmental organisations, the impact of pollution, lack of access to affordable public transport, rising fuel prices and flooding, is great for many of those we support.
- How does sustainable development impact on the reputation of our organisation and our ability to fulfil its mission?

Exercise

It is important for your board to get a convincing sense of what sustainable development means for the whole organisation and it must also have a platform to explore gaps in existing provision and to identify where new expertise is needed. In order to understand the economic, social and environmental impact of your organisation's work try the following exercise, perhaps at a board away day.

1. Choose one of your programmes or projects and take a thorough outline of this to your board meeting.
2. Depending on the size of your board, split everyone into two or three groups with no more than six people in each.
3. Ask each group to create a list of the economic, social and environmental impacts of the project and to consider how your organisation mitigates, manages or celebrates these.
4. Once these lists have been created, ask each group to feed back to the whole board. Encourage discussion about whether these three aspects of sustainable development are in balance and, if not, what could be done to make them so.

“We have an environmental statement in our organisation’s last 3-year business plan. Our current plan is now in development due to changed circumstances in light of the implementation of Third Sector Interfaces. We believe community and voluntary organisations have a role in protecting the environment in terms of awareness raising, publicity and the development of practical projects.

In addition to simple measures such as paper and printer cartridge recycling, we have helped to improve the local environment by assisting the Delph Pond Forum and working with local primary school and other community and voluntary organisations in regeneration of a pond in Sauchie, Clackmannanshire. In the past we utilised a Green Mapping process allied to appreciative enquiry to promote and map opportunities for sustainable development.”

Ross Paterson,
CVS Clackmannanshire

Checklist...

The strategy

- How could consideration of economic, social and environmental factors strengthen our decisions about future strategy?
- Are staff and trustees partners in the development of our strategy?
- Is there a good level of information sharing between staff and trustees? Does the engagement between them draw out the necessary links and lessons?
- What longer term opportunities does our organisation gain by factoring in economic, social and environmental values?
- How can we build sustainable development into our risk management framework? What economic, social and environmental factors do we already have in our risk assessment?
- How does our strategy tackle the question of how our organisation is going to address the economic, social and environmental concerns and challenges confronting it?
- Could we develop a sustainable development action plan (SDAP)? Take a look at ‘Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland... A Guide to Sustainable Planning’ for more ideas and information on how to approach this. The publication includes a sample action plan which helps you log the practical things you need to do.
- Do we use LEAP for improving the quality of our organisation? How can we use a tool like this to help structure our approach to sustainable development?
- How do the five Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland themes impact on the strategy of our organisation? Could we use them to provide a framework for developing a strategy?

Building sustainable development into your risk assessment

A risk assessment is vital for planning ahead and sustaining your organisation through good times and bad, so that you can continue to provide a service to people in your community. You therefore probably already have one in place. How can you build economic, social and environmental risks into your risk assessment?

Social – changes to the local population, public perception, changes to political environment, changes in use of your service by local people, complaints.

Economic – accuracy and timeliness of reporting, diversity of funding, adequacy of reserves and cash flow, fraud.

Environmental – potential for flood damage or other extreme weather events, changes to your area such as planning applications for new buildings or roads.

Exercise

Try using a simple SWOT analysis to help you to consider how you can build economic, social and environmental factors into the strategy of your organisation. You could expand on this to include potential costs for each action.

	Helpful To achieving the objective	Harmful To achieving the objective
Internal Origin Attributes of the organisation	Strengths	Weaknesses
External Origin Attributes of the environment	Opportunities	Threats

How can we build the values of sustainable development into our financial governance?



Your board has a vital role to play in ensuring that the finances of your organisation remain stable and sound. But finances are not just about economics. Social and environmental factors can have an impact on them too and the way that your organisation responds to these impacts will be vital in sustaining it into the future.

For more information you might like to try 'Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland... A Guide to Smart and Sustainable Finances', which has a wealth of ideas about how to build the values of sustainable development into your financial processes. For now, you could start by asking yourselves the questions below:



Checklist...

- Where does our funding come from? How are the values of sustainable development reflected in the way that we source our income and is this important to us?
- Where do we invest our funding?
- How do we decide what funding we need and how do we then use it? How can we ensure that we don't 'drift' from our mission?
- How do we currently report on the ways in which we have used our funding? Could we strengthen our reporting by including information about our economic, social and environmental impact?
- How can we measure evidence of economic, social and environmental impact? Could we encourage feed back from staff or volunteers on developments relating to our building? (Try the Carbon Trust at www.carbontrust.co.uk or the Carbon Neutral Company at www.carbonneutral.com for more information about how to measure environmental impact, and the nef publications on Triple Bottom Line reporting for information on how to measure economic, social and environmental impact together – see Section 7).
- Can we add weight to our funding applications by including information about our work around sustainable development?
- If we are refurbishing our building or building a new one, how can we build the values of sustainable development into the planning of this? How can we ensure that our building's environmental impact is balanced with its social and economic one?
- How will we balance additional costs of any environmental measures that we take against other factors such as benefits to our reputation, donor confidence and support to those we serve?

What is Triple Bottom Line (TPL) reporting?

It is reporting that moves beyond a purely financial bottom line to also consider a social and environmental one. In other words it encourages organisations to review their economic, social and environmental value together and to make the most of these to fulfil their vision and mission. There are a number of different approaches to TPL depending on the size of your organisation and resources available. Even if you don't have the resources to carry out full triple bottom line reporting, you may find that it gives you some ideas about how to begin and where you might like to head for.

Try the following nef publications for information about Triple Bottom Line reporting:

'Proving and Improving a quality and impact toolkit for social enterprise' or

'Measuring Value: a guide to Social Return on Investment (SROI)'.

Both are available on the nef website at www.neweconomics.org. John Elkington (the person who coined the term 'Triple Bottom Line') also has a website with a variety of resources on it: www.johnelkington.com

How can we build the values of sustainable development into our policy development?



In partnership with staff, your board plays a key role in approving and supporting policies that strengthen the work of your organisation. It also ensures that decisions are made that will sustain your organisation in the long term. Your board is therefore in a prime position to help build the values of sustainable development into policy making, ensuring that economic, social and environmental concerns are all taken into account.

For more ideas about how to begin building sustainable development into your organisation's policies and procedures, particularly those relating to the people that work and volunteer for you, try 'Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland... A Guide to Smart and Sustainable People Management'.

Try this...

Policies that enable people to work from home not only have a social impact (allowing staff to juggle work with other responsibilities such as picking up children from school) and an economic impact (mitigating the cost of travelling to work) but they also have an environmental impact in reducing carbon emissions produced by car or rail travel.



Checklist...

For other policies, try asking yourself the following questions:

- What policies do we currently have and how often do we review them?
- How could we build the values of sustainable development into our organisation's policies?
- Could we develop a Health, Safety and Environment policy instead of a traditional Health and Safety one? Or a Sustainable Development policy?
- How can we use our commitment to sustainable development to encourage new users, volunteers, trustees and staff?
- What policies do we currently have around purchasing? Could we encourage something to be built in around ethical purchasing, for example locally sourced or Fair Trade? How about switching to a 'Green' Energy supplier?
- How are our learning and development policies structured? How can we adapt them to equip front-line staff, volunteers and trustees with the understanding, awareness, leadership and skills to take actions around sustainable development?
- How will we review whether our policies are actually encouraging a change in practice?

“Our mission is “to invest in sustainable futures by inspiring people to improve places.” We have a Sustainable Development Action plan which sets out how we will work towards more environmental operations. The plan includes action for all employees and is regularly updated by the environment topic group, who oversee its implementation. Our current strategic plan - 'Investing in Sustainable Futures' sets out how we enable society to invest in a sustainable future by investing in: a better environment; environmentally active citizens; improved health and well-being; employment and skills for the future.”

Kerry Riddell,
BTCV Scotland

Exercise

Try the following exercise for a bit of awareness-raising with your board. You can adapt the exercise depending on the number of board members you have.

1. Choose two or three key policies that affect the running of your organisation (your board won't have the time to review every existing policy so setting an achievable target such as two or three will help to make sure that this exercise is successful!)
2. Distribute the policies between members of the board.
3. Ask the board members responsible to read through the policies and identify 3 or more areas where the values of sustainable development could be incorporated.

How can we apply sustainable development when recruiting, managing and developing our board?



Recruiting and retaining committed and active trustees from a range of age groups and backgrounds is vital in providing your organisation with stable leadership and enabling it to develop. It may be worth considering therefore, how you can incorporate sustainable development into the way that you recruit, manage

and develop your board. Can you use an emphasis on the values of sustainable development to help you attract a new and younger generation of trustees who are concerned about the environmental, as well as social and economic, impacts of their work?

Exercise

As a board, think about the following question:

What attracts people to your organisation, either as trustees, staff or volunteers?

Social reasons	
Economic reasons	
Environmental reasons	

Are these three areas in balance? How can you adjust the balance to attract more people?

Outside the boardroom and inside the organisation

Checklist...

Working with the Chief Executive, the senior management team, staff and volunteers.

Your board has a role in supporting the management team to deliver the social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development.

- How can we ensure that trustees, staff and volunteers reach agreement about the best ways of working together and identify how to achieve positive results? 'Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland... A Guide to Sustainable Planning' has a range of ideas for communicating messages and dealing with resistance.
- Could our board appoint one of its members as a 'sustainability champion' who would be responsible for liaising with staff and volunteers and feeding back to the board as a whole?
- Could we invite a board member to join our Green team, if we have one?
- Can we encourage use of e-mail or the internet when possible to communicate and where possible cut down on the need for paper?
- Annual General Meetings (AGMs) present an ideal platform to promote your organisation's values around sustainable development. How can we ensure that the venue we choose for our AGM reflects our values?

Try 'Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland... A Guide to Running Smart and Sustainable Events' for ideas in this area.
- Can we use the AGM as a 'show and tell' of what we have achieved and why sustainable development is important to our organisation?



Checklist...

Board role descriptions and person specification

- Could we update our role descriptions for board members, the Chair and honorary officers to reflect the values of sustainable development? See 'Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland... A Guide to Smart And Sustainable People Management' for more ideas in this area.

Board induction and training

- Could we hold a quiz for new trustees, focusing on sustainable development and its link with the work of our organisation?
- If we have a board manual, how could we build economic, social and environmental concerns into it?
- How much of our board manual needs to be printed and how much could be stored electronically with internet or intranet links when required?
- Could we include a 'sustainable development induction' as part of the board induction? This could help to raise awareness of the organisation's internal procedures and sustainable development practices.

Ongoing board development and training

- Could we go back to basics and find practical ways of linking sustainable development with leadership, trusteeship and strategy development? Some examples of resources can be found in Section 7.

Board awareness

- Could we invite a speaker who is knowledgeable about sustainable development to a board event or meeting? Perhaps the speaker could be from another local organisation that has successfully begun building sustainable development into their mission, strategy, policy and board development.
- Can we use some of the exercises in this guide to raise awareness?

Building the board

- How could we use the theme of sustainable development to creatively encourage our board to support the issues whilst also getting to know each other better?
- Could we host a meal using local food or a Fair Trade tasting session?

Developing sustainable development themes - reviewing performance

- How can our board explore the ways in which economic, social and environmental activity could further the charity's objects?
- Has our board considered including economic, social and environmental aspects in their risk assessment?

Board away day

- Can this be organised to explore issues around sustainable development?

The away day could include financial information, facts, figures and research and evidence which dispels myths and shows sustainable development as a 'must do'.

Be the change, lead the change - the ambassadorial role of trustees



Checklist...

Promoting sustainable development

- How could our board support the work of our organisation in promoting sustainable development? Promotion could include raising awareness of staff and volunteers within the organisation, as well as supporting other organisations involved in building the values of sustainable development into their vision and practices.

Knowledge and information sharing

- Sustainable development is an area where organisations can learn from each other. There is huge potential to share knowledge, perspectives, experiences and practices for mutual benefit, even if your organisations operate in different fields.

Collaborating with others

- How can our board utilise its ambassadorial role to forge alliances and work together with others, not just within the sector but more widely with civil society, regulators, central and local government? Collaboration with schools could be a means of involving young people while also stimulating interest in the wider community. See www.ecoschoolsscotland.org for more on this way of thinking.

“Having developed the conservation programme, both visioning and integrated conservation work into the organisation’s core programme, I would say that I have taken the lead in my organisation with respect to sustainable development. I am currently working on a microhydroelectric project for the organisation and use renewable energy at home, with a 12 volt off-grid solar home set up. We are primarily concerned with re-instilling confidence and survival strategies for disadvantaged young people and feel that providing practical skills toward self reliance helps to reinforce links between a sustainable lifestyle and personal satisfaction/health.”

Rhyddian Knight, Venture Scotland

What does the law state?



Your board must consider its legal responsibilities that relate to sustainable development. Key areas are listed below in brief, but for up to date information contact the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) at www.oscr.org.uk or Companies House at www.companieshouse.gov.uk.

The 2005 Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act, which came into force in 2006, lists the advancement of environmental protection or improvement as a charitable purpose.

This could be a case of charities carrying out environmental activity directly as part of their charitable purposes (these charities are established purely for environmental purposes) or of charities who are not specifically environmental but have environmental themes at the core of the work.

There are various sources of support for charities in this regard, including the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, which has some resources available on its website at www.scvo.org.uk. Your board will need to decide which activities best further your organisation's objects. (The office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) can provide advice and guidance

to trustees who are unsure or are in any doubt about what the charity can or cannot do in terms of environmental projects under charity law. Your organisation may need to change its objects if it wants to adopt an additional environmental-related object.)

Charities wishing to amend their purpose must apply for consent from OSCR to amend their constitution. For more information visit www.oscr.org.uk/meeting-our-requirements/making-changes-to-your-charity.

Section 172 (1) (d) of the Companies Act 2006 introduced a new environmental duty of Directors. Directors of charitable companies are required to act in a way that they consider to be the most likely to achieve their organisation's charitable purposes. They must have regard to the impact of the company's operation on the community and the environment.

The Energy Performance of Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2008 No. 309 – all buildings require an Energy Performance Certificate whenever they are built, sold or rented out. The Certificate shows how efficient a building is.

Where can we find out more?

Building Awareness and Education

Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland...

All seven CASS resources can be downloaded from:

<http://www.scdc.org.uk/community-capacity-building/community-action-for-a-sustainable-scotland>

Environment and Crime in the Inner City

(F.E. Kuo & W.C. Sullivan, Environment and Behaviour Vol. 33, No. 3, 343-367, 2001)

<http://eab.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/33/3/343>

Going Green, Charities and Environmental Responsibility

(Charity Commission, 2008) www.charitycommission.gov.uk/Library/guidance/rs17text.pdf

Physical Environment and Crime

(National Centre for Justice Research, 1996) www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/physenv.pdf

Learning, Evaluation and Planning (LEAP) www.scdc.org.uk/what/LEAP/

Sustainability in practice: monitoring and reporting (2009) Charity Finance Directors Group www.cfdg.org.uk/~media/Files/Resources/CFDG%20Publications/Sustainability%20in%20Practice.ashx

Tackling climate change, reducing poverty: The first report of the Roundtable on Climate Change and Poverty in the UK

(nef, with contributions from members of the Roundtable on Climate Change and Poverty in the UK, 2009)

www.oxfam.org.uk/resources/policy/climate_change/downloads/tackling_climate_reducing_poverty_uk.pdf

The New Politics of Climate Change: why we are failing and how we will succeed

(Green Alliance, 2008) www.green-alliance.org.uk/uploadedFiles/Publications/reports/The%20new%20Politics%20of%20climate%20change%202008.pdf

The Sustainability Challenge: Implications for chief executives in the third sector (ACEVO, 2009)

www.suscom.org/Documents/Sus_Challenge_w1.pdf

Community Action for a Sustainable Scotland... A Guide to Making Your Community Building More Environmentally Sustainable (2011) Scottish Community Development Centre and Education Scotland

What has all this got to do with us? An introduction to Environmental Issues for Trustees

(Every Action Counts, 2008) www.e-c-a.ac.uk/media/uploaded_files/What_is_All_This_Got_to_Do_With_Us.pdf

Board development

Good Governance: Code for the Voluntary and Community Sector The Good Trustee Guide (Fifth edition, Peter Dyer, NCVO 2008)

The Strategic Board: The step-by-step guide to High Impact Governance (Mark Light, Wiley Nonprofit series, 2001)

Codes of Conduct for Trustees: Developing and using trustee codes of conduct (Claire Farmer, CTN 2008)

Lost in translation: A complete guide to Chair/Chief Executive partnerships (Tesse Akpeki, NCVO, 2006)

Ecosystem Leadership Style (Shayne Hughes & Dr Jennifer Crocker)

The article appears on <http://learnaslead.com/programs/ecosystemLeader.htm>

Tools

For organisational/behaviour change models and techniques, try the following:

Management Help http://managementhelp.org/org_chng/org_chng.htm

Entarga www.entarga.com/orgchange/resources.htm

SCVO www.scvo.org.uk/information

If you want information, help or advice about how to work together, try the Collaboration Benefits programme at: <http://locality.org.uk/resources/benefiting-commissioning-community-organisations-collaboration>



This resource was adapted from Every Action Counts... for our board: a guide to smart and sustainable governance (Every Action Counts, 2009) <http://media.justact.org.uk/media/resoucesPDF/15/EveryActionCountsforourBoard.pdf>

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