

A Joint Statement on Sustainable Development

The UK is facing unprecedented challenges for the 21st Century - economic recovery, climate change and biodiversity loss, increased urbanisation and the need for greater social equity. The need for us to strive to achieve sustainable development and effectively address these issues has never been more pressing. An effective, strategic planning system has an essential role to play in delivering true integration of economic, social and environmental priorities and objectives at all levels.

We believe that achieving sustainable development must be at the heart of the planning system. However, there is currently no unifying statutory definition of sustainable development and often decision-makers tend to focus on one pillar (economy, environment or society), rather than integration of all three. This has led to vague duties and weak delivery on the ground.

The Localism Bill presents an opportunity to address this. A statutory definition of sustainable development will help to provide greater certainty in local decision-making and identify the common goal which we should all be working towards.

The organisations listed here support an amendment to the Localism Bill to apply to planning which draws upon the UK Sustainable Development Strategy's definition:

“sustainable development” means development that meets the social, economic and environmental needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs including the application of the following principles:

- (i) living within environmental limits;
- (ii) ensuring a strong healthy and just society;
- (iii) achieving a sustainable economy;
- (iv) promoting good governance;
- (v) using sound science responsibly.”

This overarching definition can then be expanded in the National Planning Policy Framework.

At the local level, councils and communities can determine the policies that need to be applied in their area to ensure that their communities and development are sustainable and fit within the overarching definition.

This statement is supported by organisations and individuals named below:

Action for Market Towns
Age UK
Amphibian and Reptile Conservation
Badger Trust
Rosie Boycott
Buglife
Campaign for Better Transport
Campaign for National Parks
Campaign to Protect Rural England
Creative Concern
Ian Christie
Council for British Archaeology
Darren Johnson AM, London Assembly
(Green Party)
Environmental Law Foundation
Environmental Protection UK
Foundation for Democracy and Sustainable
Development
Friends of the Earth
Jenny Jones AM, London Assembly (Green
Party)
Green Gauge Trust
Just Space Network
The Kindling Trust
Ken Livingstone
Living Streets
Localise West Midlands
London Sustainability Exchange
Jonathan Porritt
Merseyside Civic Society
National Federation of Women's Institutes
National Federation of Parks & Green Spaces
New Economics Foundation
North West Environment Link
One North West
Renewables UK
RSPB
Sheffield Renewables
Sustain
Sustainability South West
Sustainable Works
Sustrans
South Downs Society
South Downs Network
Mike Tuffrey AM, London Assembly, (Liberal
Democrat spokesperson for planning and
environment)
Town and Country Planning Association
The National Trust
Think 2050
The Wildlife Trusts
UK Green Building Council
Urban Splash
West Midlands Regional Environment Forum
Winchester Action on Climate Change Group
Women's Resource Centre
Woodland Trust
WWF-UK
Voice 4 Change
Voluntary Sector North West

**Wildlife and Countryside Link
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