

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

**Wildlife and Countryside Link
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