

Sustainability Checklist for the Natural Environment

This checklist has been developed for anyone involved in managing or developing the natural environment (with Natural England staff and partners particularly in mind).

Community groups/leads may also find it useful to browse the Checklist for Sustainable Communities and Regeneration.

Are you...



...developing sustainability learning and skills?

...developing a *broad* understanding of sustainability issues? (sustainability meaning healthy societies living on a healthy planet for many generations into the future)

...exploring how you can maximise the contribution of your activities/projects to sustainability *in-the-round*, including taking a low carbon approach (see www.fairsharesfairchoice.com) and unlocking social and economic benefits?

...supporting your stakeholders (eg visitors, clients/customers, volunteers, staff and partners) to develop their sustainability understanding and skills and to learn to live within our available natural capital?

...taking opportunities to communicate the sustainable approaches to environmental management that have been taken – and why – to stakeholders?



...improving physical and mental well-being?

...supporting physical and mental well-being by providing safe, green and *inclusive* environments that support healthy, balanced and active lifestyles?

...supporting land managers to positively adapt to challenges within their sector?

...supporting a healthy working environment and healthy working practices for staff and volunteers (including yourself!)?



...improving equality in meeting basic needs?

...supporting equality of access (prioritising those who are most in need) for rewarding leisure, learning and employment/economic opportunities along with basic goods and services?

...broadening the sense of 'ownership' of the natural environment amongst communities to encourage a greater diversity of users (eg in terms of ethnicity, socio-economic background and disabled users)?

...promoting equality and diversity *within* your organisation/group/project ie in terms of age, disability, gender, race, religion and sexuality?



...being resource wise?

...cutting your day-to-day consumption of resources and encouraging your stakeholders to do the same?

...adopting high energy, water and resource efficiency/waste standards for your projects, including clear targets going forward?

...maximising the opportunities for local renewable energy and the associated social and economic benefits for communities?

...adopting the highest standards of sustainable construction/refurbishment for buildings and facilities including use of local labour and skills?



...supporting thriving low carbon economies?

...contributing to a thriving, low carbon regional economy by supporting land managers to take a sustainable approach?

...promoting local/regional markets for local/regional products?

...generating employment, learning and volunteering opportunities from the natural environment, compatible with the needs of local communities (particularly those of deprived/excluded groups)?



...reducing high carbon travel?

...promoting, enabling and planning for low carbon access/travel? *eg walking & cycling and public transport, car-share schemes, flexible/home-working, ICT enabled access, multi-use journeys and facilities, sustainable fuels etc*



...using local and ethical goods & services?

...using and promoting locally and ethically sourced goods and services to boost local economies and support people in other parts of the world?

...rigorously checking the sustainability credentials (eg 'green', fair trade) of suppliers including assessing the carbon footprint and 'life cycle' of all the products that you procure?



...enhancing local distinctiveness and diversity including biodiversity?

...maximising support for native biodiversity within your project/activities? *eg through enhancement of habitats and wildlife corridors/highways, species management etc*

...encouraging communities and all sectors to support native biodiversity through their estates/gardens, including preparing for the likely impacts of climate change?

...supporting communities to explore and celebrate their natural and cultural heritage (including through 'the arts')?

...developing distinct attractions/facilities/events which use and promote local creativity and skills?



...helping everyone to join in public decision-making?

...effectively communicating messages about the importance of a sustainable approach to the natural environment to all sections of the community (including excluded groups) to support informed participation in public and community decision-making?

...engaging communities in positive solutions to the sustainability challenge, focussing on positive lifestyle and community benefits?

...being transparent about your own decision-making processes and being clear about why particular decisions have been made?



...taking a longer term approach?

...looking beyond the next few years to ensure that environmental/land management strategies respond to major sustainability challenges such as climate change, energy scarcity and economic instability – including supporting sustainable, resilient communities and economies?

...supporting land managers and wildlife to adapt to irreversible and inevitable climate change impacts, including avoiding habitat fragmentation and employing managed retreat strategies where appropriate?

...taking a genuinely integrated approach that achieves 'win-win-wins' for communities, economies and the environment?