

# Happy planet: sustainable development and citizenship



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# Happy planet: sustainable development and citizenship

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# Happy planet: sustainable development and citizenship

## Introduction

Sustainable development means the need to maintain and improve the quality of life now without damaging the planet for future generations. It embodies the simple but powerful idea that the way we are living today threatens the planet's ability to support us in the future. Many familiar issues are part of this global problem including:

- The depletion of natural capital including energy resources, such as oil and gas
- The destruction of habitats, loss of species, pollution of sea, air and land
- Over fishing, deforestation and over grazing, and the degradation of land
- Climate change and global warming
- Poverty, disease, poor access to education and low-life expectancy.

In *Securing the Future* (2005) the government set out long-term goals and short-term priorities for sustainable development in the UK. Priorities for action were grouped into four main categories:

- **Sustainable consumption and production** which covers emissions, resource use and waste
- **Climate change and energy** which includes greenhouse gas emissions, electricity generation and energy supply
- **Natural resources protection** which covers wildlife and biodiversity, farming, land use, fish stocks, air pollution and rivers
- **Creating sustainable communities** includes poverty, health, crime, access, mobility and local and domestic environments.

Sustainable development is a process in which decision makers assess the social, environmental and economic aspects of any action or decision to make sure that the outcomes are as sustainable as possible. The goal is to balance environmental, economic and societal concerns. The 'five capitals framework' offers a way of thinking about these concerns so that action plans can be developed (Porritt, 2006). Resources required for human progress can be divided into five forms of capital from which we gain benefits:

- Manufactured capital – all things made by humans, e.g. buildings, roads, machines etc
- Social capital – all systems by which people live and work together, e.g. families, businesses, communities, parties, voluntary groups etc
- Human capital – people's knowledge skills, health, motivation etc
- Natural capital – this consists of natural resources (both renewable and non-renewable) and services such as the powerful natural waste processing cycles
- Financial capital – money and other financial assets that enable other types of capital to be owned and traded.

In this model, investment in all five forms of capital is necessary for a sustainable society.

## Education for sustainable development

Education for sustainable development (or ESD) is the term applied to a curriculum and approach to teaching and learning which aims to promote knowledge, skills and understanding about sustainable development. Sustainable development is one of eight key concepts underpinning the global dimension of the curriculum and it is inextricably linked to the big issues, such as climate change. The government's action plan for education for sustainable development states that 'all learners will develop the skills, knowledge and value base to be active citizens in creating a more sustainable society'. Many people active in the ESD field argue that for sustainable development to become a reality everyone needs to view themselves as a decision maker.

A recent survey of ESD in post-16 education and training programmes found that 70 per cent of respondents said they were embedding sustainable development concepts into existing programmes (Martin, 2006). It also found that few institutions were taking a wider, more holistic approach, although some were using citizenship education, enrichment or group tutorial time to focus on sustainable development issues.

## About the pack

The pack has been produced by the Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme to help the integration of citizenship education into post-16 education and training. It forms one of a series of publications which the Programme continues to develop on teaching and learning materials for specific themes. The activities aim to be flexible enough for use in the whole range of post-16 settings including school sixth forms, colleges, work-based learning, youth and community groups. They build upon Unit 12 of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's schemes of work for key stage 4 citizenship (Global issues, local action) especially Section 2 (How is our community sustainable?). The National Framework for Sustainable Schools has eight 'doorways' through which schools can contribute to sustainable development.

Young people are already very aware of the problems of ensuring that everyone takes their environmental responsibilities seriously, since the issues are frequently in the news and often discussed in schools. However, as part of citizenship education, they should consider how individuals and groups can influence the policies and strategies needed to make sustainable development a reality. The pack focuses on action that young people can take to improve the environment and quality of life of local people (the 'local well-being' doorway) thus contributing to sustainable communities. Everyone has a responsibility to make 'greener' decisions, but, as citizens, we should also use democratic processes to encourage those who have power to develop more effective strategies. Some learners may also investigate the ways in which planning decisions are made at local and national levels, and the opportunities for public participation.

The global dimension is also important as young people need to understand that their behaviour influences conditions experienced elsewhere and recognise that they can help make a difference to the planet. Some of the activities, therefore, draw attention to peoples around the world who are directly affected by climate change. Although there is insufficient space in this pack, it is also recommended that young people should take part in Model United Nations General Assembly (MUNGA) simulations focusing on targets for reducing carbon emissions or action to combat global warming (see Resources, page 39).

## Post-16 citizenship

Citizenship education is an important part of the development of young people. It enables them to learn about their rights and responsibilities, to understand how society works, and to develop knowledge and understanding of social and political issues. It prepares them for dealing with the challenges they face in work and life. Through citizenship education, young people can take action on

issues of concern to themselves and to play an active part in the democratic process, thereby becoming more effective members of society. Young people are encouraged to express their views, to have a voice and make a difference to the communities and organisations in which operate, and to reflect on what they have learnt.

It is a Government aspiration, expressed in the 14-19 Education and Skills White paper, that 'everyone leaving education is equipped to be an informed, responsible, active citizen'. Citizenship education can be delivered effectively in a variety of ways and in a range of programmes and courses, including those that are vocational or work-related. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidance on post-16 citizenship states that all young people should have three essential opportunities in their curriculum:

- To identify, investigate and think critically about citizenship issues, problems or events of concern to them
- To decide on and take part in follow-up action where appropriate
- To reflect on, recognise and review their citizenship learning.

QCA has also identified 10 learning objectives for post-16 citizenship which have been used in the development of the activities in this pack (see table below).

#### **The 10 QCA learning objectives**

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Show understanding of key citizenship concepts
- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Analyse sources of information, identify bias and draw conclusions
- Demonstrate understanding of respect for diversity and challenge prejudice and discrimination
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others
- Represent a point of view on behalf of others
- Demonstrate skills of negotiation and participation in community-based activities
- Exercise responsible action towards and on behalf of others.

*(Play your part: post-16 citizenship, QCA 2004 p.21)*

Evaluation evidence shows that young people benefit from post-16 citizenship education through: increased confidence and self-esteem; greater interest in the world; an ability to bring about change; better knowledge about 'the system'; experience of participating in challenging activities; and greater motivation and a more positive attitude. Organisations benefit from the constructive participation of staff and young people in decision-making, from increased motivation leading to better achievement and retention, and from stronger relationships with the local community.

# Activity 1: GOG – Global Own Goals

## Background, organisation and resources

Young people are very aware of global environmental issues and are likely to have had lessons and undertaken projects during their compulsory schooling. This activity enables post-16 educators to build on that prior learning. Young people try to prioritise the top five global environmental ‘own goals’ where humans have damaged the planet. They can do further research, make presentations and discuss possible action as part of active citizenship. The idea of global ‘own goals’ is based on the WWF website ([www.panda.org](http://www.panda.org)) and young people can compare their top five disasters to those of WWF.

## Aims of the activity

- To identify the extent of prior knowledge and understanding about global environmental issues
- To raise awareness of some of the major global environmental issues which are part of sustainable development
- To encourage discussion of the relative priority which young people give to different global environmental issues.

## Targeted QCA learning objectives

- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others
- Exercise responsible action towards and on behalf of others.

## Tasks

The **first** use of the resource is as a research activity. Young people can work in groups of four or five and choose one of the issues summarised on the handout ‘GOG – Global Own Goals’ (page 10). It would be helpful if each group chose a different issue to investigate. The task is to research the issue to find out more about the background, the debates and arguments about the issue, and suggested solutions. They can also look into what action is being taken globally, nationally and locally to tackle the issue. A useful website is suggested for each issue as a starting point. As an option they may have a different issue of their own that they think is particularly important which they could choose to investigate.

Ask teams to prepare a PowerPoint presentation on each issue covering only the main points in not more than five or six slides. Each team can then be allocated five minutes to make their presentation to the whole group.

After all the presentations have been made the young people should be asked to move into ‘rainbow groups’ – i.e. a mix of people who investigated each topic. The new task is to discuss what action should be taken by (a) the international community, (b) our national government, and (c) the local community about the issue. They should try to make at least two recommendations for each of these three sets of decision makers.

Finally, the same groups should decide what they could do as a small group of young people to try to influence the people who need to take action. Such actions could include:

- writing letters
- putting on an exhibition and inviting visitors to discuss it
- emailing people with influence

- writing newspaper or website articles
- joining a campaign being run by a pressure group
- running a conference and getting press coverage.

The **second** use of the materials is as a discussion activity involving a priorities exercise (page 11). Ask young people to read through the list of Global Own Goals to choose what they believe are the top 5 issues. They should then put them in rank order from 1 = most important, 2 = second most important... 5 = fifth most important. They will need to think of arguments as to why they have placed the global issues in this order. Allow no more than 10 minutes for the first part of the exercise.

Then ask the young people to move into groups of four or five. Their task is to discuss their rankings of the Global Own Goals using arguments as to why their top issue should be ranked at number 1. The group should work towards a consensus where they agree the rank order of the own goals. Allow no more than 20 minutes for this part of the activity.

### Debriefing and follow up

Depending on the time available the audience could ask questions after each presentation. The 'rainbow groups' could be asked to record their recommendations to each of the three groups of decision makers on a piece of (flip chart) paper with the issue written clearly at the top of the paper. These could then be posted on a wall for the whole group to see. The facilitator could then highlight particularly interesting suggestions and summarise the kinds of actions being demanded of local, national and international politicians. In the final stage of the activity each group could be asked what action they would propose taking about their issue.

In the second priorities exercise a chart can be created for each group to put their agreed issues in rank order. The facilitator could highlight similarities and differences between groups, then ask groups to explain the different priorities, i.e. 'Why have you ranked A as more important than B?'

According to WWF the top five global own goals in rank order are:

- 1 = Global warming
- 2 = Invasive species
- 3 = Toxic chemicals and pollution
- 4 = Overfishing
- 5 = Wasting water.

The list of global own goals could be used as the basis for a survey of young people and their parents to find out if the generations differ in their views about these global environmental issues. They could also look at the commonalities and potential synergies to be achieved by tackling several issues at once.

### Assessment opportunities

Young people could be assessed on the quality of their research and presentations.

# GOG – Global Own Goals



## **GOG A – Toxic chemicals and pollution**

Undoubtedly synthetic chemicals have brought many benefits. But some chemicals are damaging wildlife and people – poisoning the planet. Between 1930 and 2000 global production of synthetic chemicals increased from 1 million to 400 million tonnes per year. The amount of pesticide sprayed on crops has increased by 26 times in the past 50 years.



## **GOG B – Overfishing**

The 'Blue Planet' is turning into a wet desert. The global fishing fleet is 2.5 times larger than the oceans can support. Already 52% of the world's fisheries are fully exploited, 24% are over-exploited, depleted or recovering from collapse. Western countries' industrialised fleets are taking fish away from the poorer African coastline. We are landing smaller, younger fish and wiping out fish populations.



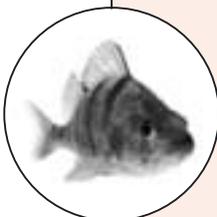
## **GOG C – Over-population and inequalities**

There are arguably too many people on the planet using up too many of the world's scarce resources. However, resources are very unevenly distributed between rich and poor countries, and also within countries. The competition for scarce resources such as oil, water and fertile land is leading to war and the migrations of people in search of a better life.



## **GOG D – Nuclear power and nuclear weapons**

The spread of nuclear power around the world increases the risk of nuclear accidents (such as Chernobyl) and terrorist attacks on power stations. The spread of nuclear weapons in the Middle East and other less stable countries increases the threat of the use of such weapons with potentially catastrophic effects on the planet.



## **GOG E – Invasive species**

This own goal is when people take a species from one place on the planet and put it in another. This is usually because there is some pest we do not like and the new species solves the problem by eating the pest. But the problem is often that they do not have any predators in the new habitat and run rampant. A good example is the Nile perch which was introduced to Lake Victoria in Africa in 1954 to balance the drop in native fish stocks caused by over-fishing. The result was the extinction of 200 local fish species.



## **GOG F – Wasting water**

Although one third of the world's population live in countries that experience water shortages, many countries do little to preserve or make proper use of water. This has led to increased amounts of floods and droughts in areas where there were no droughts. Rivers are dammed or diverted causing bad side effects. Millions of hectares of land have been polluted with salt and lakes have been killed.

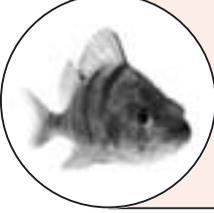


## **GOG G – Global warming**

Global warming leads to climate change. It is likely to change one third of plant and animal habitats by the end of this century. Climate change could result in the extinction of more than one million land-based species in the next 50 years. The rising sea level will make some islands disappear and lead to major coastal cities being flooded or disappearing under water.

# GOG – Global Own Goals

## Priorities exercise

		My priority (1-7)	Group priority (1-7)
	<b>GOG A</b> Toxic chemicals and pollution		
	<b>GOG B</b> Overfishing		
	<b>GOG C</b> Over-population and inequalities		
	<b>GOG D</b> Nuclear power and nuclear weapons		
	<b>GOG E</b> Invasive species		
	<b>GOG F</b> Wasting water		
	<b>GOG G</b> Global warming		

## Activity 2: Opinion finders – Sustainable development

### Background, organisation and resources

This activity is designed as an ‘opener’ to get young people starting to think about sustainable development while meeting other people at an event. It is an information-gathering exercise in which each participant is allocated one question to put to as many people in the room as possible in the time allowed. They then work in smaller groups to summarise the findings. It is an effective way of drawing out the existing knowledge of participants about some of the key aspects of sustainable development. Opinion finders can be used with groups as small as 18 and as large as 60.

### Aims of the activity

- To identify and share young people’s existing knowledge and opinions about aspects of sustainability
- To enable participants to meet and talk about sustainable development issues with a number of people in the group
- To provide an effective ice breaker and opener to a larger event on the environment and sustainable development.

### QCA targeted learning objectives

- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others
- Represent a point of view on behalf of others
- Demonstrate skills of negotiation and participation in community-based activities.

### Tasks

Give each participant a copy of the handout ‘Opinion finder – Sustainable development’ (page 14), with one of the questions circled. You should circle roughly equal numbers of all the questions. It helps in the running of this activity if the sheets are printed on different coloured paper depending on the question circled. Explain that everyone should become an ‘opinion finder’ for their question. They should speak to as many people as possible and make notes of the responses to the question in the box. They will also be asked other people’s questions at the same time. They should avoid people who have the same question (and colour of sheet) as them and just talking to their friends.

### Debriefing and follow up

After 15 minutes, stop the activity and ask all those with the same question circled to gather together in a group. Each group should share and discuss their findings on that question, and record the key points. They can do this on a piece of flip chart paper, if available.

Invite a spokesperson from each group to report their findings to the whole group. Alternatively ask people to post their posters on a wall and invite the whole group to read what others have said. Then pose some general debriefing questions, for example:

- *What are the similarities and differences in people’s definitions of sustainable development?*
- *Do we agree on what are the most important aspects of sustainable development?*

- *Just how bad do we think things can get in 50 years' time?*
- *Are young people taking similar action to help the environment?*
- *Does government action mean more authoritarian measures to make people change their behaviour?*
- *Can young people make a difference?*

### **Assessment opportunities**

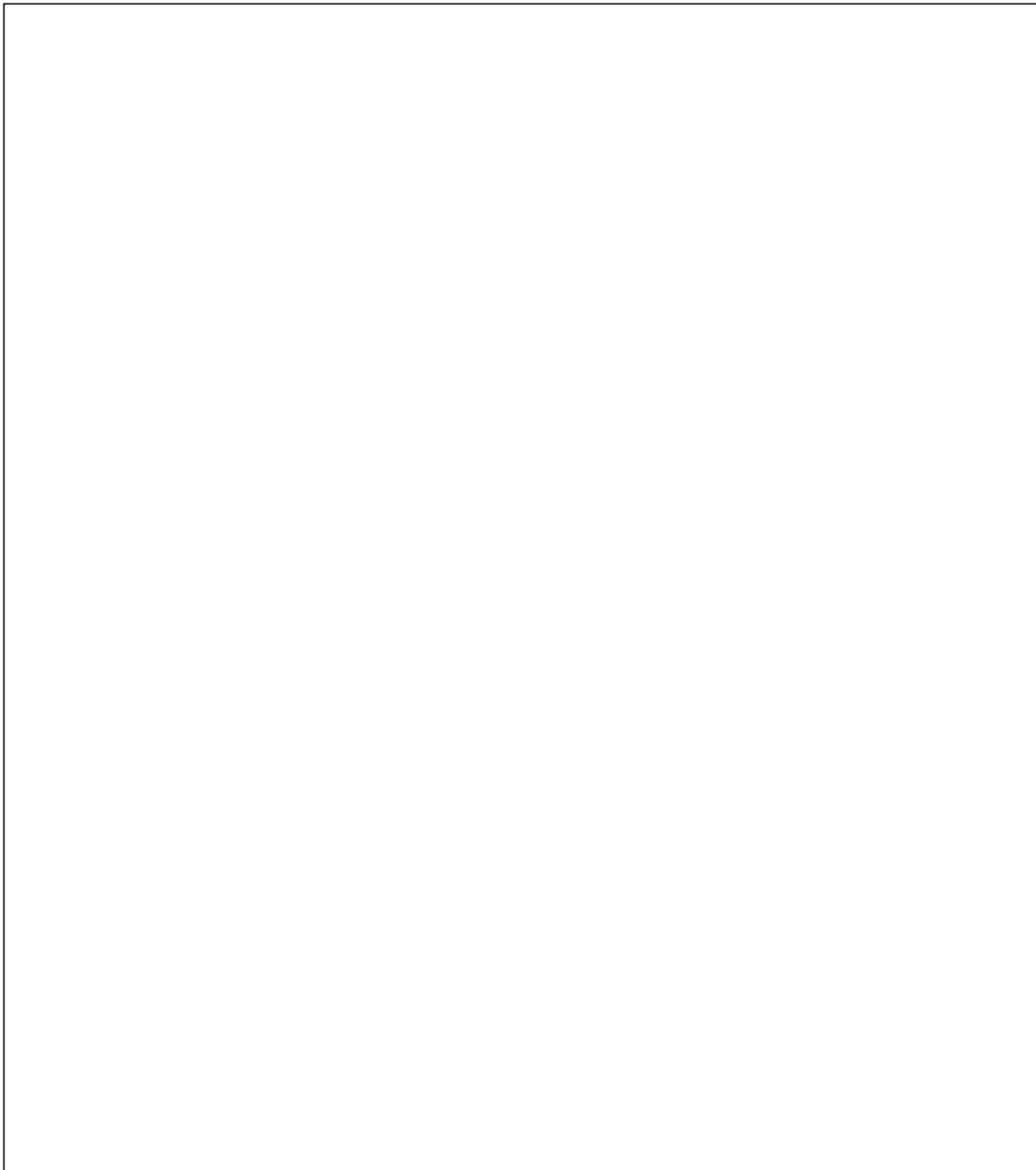
Ask participants to work in pairs at the end of the activity and review what they have learned about their own and other people's views on sustainable development.



## Opinion finder – Sustainable development

**Ask other people the question circled and record answers to your question in the box below.**

1. What is a sustainable development? Which two aspects of sustainable development are of most concern to you?
2. What will the world environment be like in 50 years' time if no action is taken now?
3. What actions do you take to help protect the environment for the next generation?
4. How important is global warming and can we do anything about it?
5. What are the best ways to 'make' people and businesses choose green options?  
(changing the law, education, voluntary action, demonstrations, taxation etc.)
6. What can young people do to raise awareness of sustainable development and bring about change in their local communities?



## Activity 3: Choices and consequences

### Background, organisation and resources

This activity aims to reach the heart of sustainable development by linking the choices that people make in their everyday lives to the quality of life of the next generation. Young people in groups are presented with a list of choices made by people (which they also make now or will make in the future consciously or unconsciously). They have to discuss what 'big' global issues the choice affects using a set of 'Big Issue' cards to help them. Next they consider the possible consequences of these issues for the next generation using a set of 'Consequences' cards to aid them. The final discussion task is to consider how bothered they are about these issues. Are they bothered enough to want to change their own and others' behaviour?

### Aims of the activity

- To understand that everyday choices have wider consequences
- To give some concrete examples of 'think global, act local'
- To provide examples of how their decisions impact upon sustainable development
- To reflect on their own values and behaviour to see if they support or undermine sustainable development.

### Targeted QCA learning objectives

- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others
- Exercise responsible action towards and on behalf of others.

### Tasks

Explain the aim of the activity which is to consider the wider implications of choices we make in everyday life. Ask young people to work in groups of four or five. The first task is to discuss the various actions listed on the 'Sustainable choices' handout (you will need to make enough copies so that there is at least one for each group). They should discuss the wider implications for the environment of the choices described. Only if they need help, provide a set of the 'Big Issues' cards copied from page 18. Groups working at level 3 can record their thoughts in the second column on the 'Sustainable choices' handout (page 17). Groups working at level 2 or below may need the cards as prompts; they can then do a matching exercise. They can write the number of the 'Big Issues' card in the second column (they may think that more than one Big Issue is linked to the choice in which case they can put two numbers in the box). They should need about 15 minutes to complete this task properly, i.e. through discussing the issues rather than treating it as a mechanical exercise.

The next task is to consider the long-term consequences of the choices and the big issues on the next generation. This might be 50 years time when they are old and their children have their own families – so they have children and grandchildren living with the consequences of choices made by their generation. In order to help you can provide each group with a set of 'Possible consequences' cards cut up from page 19. This will enable them to make the link between choices now, big environmental issues and consequences for the next generation. Allow about 10–12 minutes for this stage of the exercise.

The final stage of the activity is for them to discuss their attitudes towards the choices described. How bothered are they?

- *Are they bothered enough to make sustainable choices themselves?*
- *Are they bothered enough to want to promote sustainable choices by others?*
- *Are they quite bothered but do not want to be inconvenienced?*
- *Are they not bothered at all?*

They can use the 'Sustainable choices' chart (page 17) to record the views of their group. Allow about 10–12 minutes for this stage of the activity.

### Debriefing and follow up

You can debrief this after each stage to make sure that groups are on the right track, i.e. have linked the choices to the 'right' big issues and consequences. Alternatively allow groups to complete all the phases of the activity. Ask the first group to say which big issue was linked to the first choice, what the possible consequences are and how bothered they are about the choice. Then move on to another choice and a second group and so on.

The link between choices, big issues and consequences is as follows:

Choice	Big issue	Consequences
1	F	6
2	H	5
3	G	9
4	E	8
5	C	2
6	A	4
7	D	1
8	B	3
9	I	7

As a follow-up activity groups could take one choice that they are 'bothered' about and produce an action plan for trying to influence (a) friends and family, (b) their school/college/youth group, (c) their community to make sustainable choices.

### Assessment opportunities

Young people could undertake research into the choice through a survey of sustainable choices among their peer group. They could produce a report, presentation, podcast or display.

## Sustainable choices

Everyday choices we make	Big Issues	Consequences	How bothered are you?		
			Very	Quite	Not
1. John could separate his household rubbish for recycling, but chooses not to because he is busy and it is easier to put it all in one sack.					
2. Jenny has many electrical appliances that are left on stand by as it is difficult to reboot and set clocks etc each time they are used.					
3. Pauline prefers to ride the mile to college in her mother's 4x4 vehicle rather than walk or use her bike because there is a lot of traffic.					
4. Jack collects about eight free plastic bags given by the supermarket each week and there is a growing pile of bags in a cupboard.					
5. Aysha likes eating fruit all year round and buys exotic and soft fruits from across the world.					
6. Piet likes eating fish and seafood but it is not always made clear in the shops how it was farmed or how it was caught.					
7. Jane lets the tap run while cleaning her teeth, has a power shower everyday and waters the garden with a hose.					
8. Karl has paved over his front garden (for car hard standing) and back garden (for ease of maintenance), and uses strong pesticides on the remaining plants to kill aphids and other pests.					
9. Inga buys a set of teak garden furniture as it lasts longer than soft wood chairs and table and looks much better than plastic. The garden centre does not label where the wood to make the furniture came from.					

## Big issues cards



### Big issue A

Over-fishing, the use of factory ships, seafood farms which destroy habitats, fishing techniques that kill many immature fish or endangered species are all real concerns. These techniques damage the lives of people from traditional subsistence fishing communities.

### Big issue B

The widespread use of paving is adding to the risk of flash floods and flooding as water cannot easily escape. Pesticides are washed into rivers destroying water quality and they can harm bird and other animal life reducing biodiversity.

### Big issue C

'Food miles' refers to the often huge distances that fruit and other foods travel to reach our supermarkets. This is generally transported by air and adds to air pollution, global warming and the depletion of oil stocks. It can also undermine attempts by local farmers to make a living.

### Big issue D

Water is a precious resource and much of it is wasted, for example excessive use in modern appliances such as dishwashers. Scarce resources are used to purify water and distribute it across the country.

### Big issue E

Scarce resources are being used to make non-biodegradable plastic bags. People accumulate bags and they are put into landfill. Other bags are thrown away and pollute the environment. The bags are a by-product of oil production and the oil is running out.

### Big issue F

The failure to separate waste means that landfill sites are filling up more quickly. Also food waste gives off greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming. Recycling materials means that scarce resources are not being used up so quickly.

### Big issue G

4x4 vehicles or so-called 'Chelsea tractors' are the most polluting vehicles which damage air quality and increase CO<sup>2</sup> emissions which contribute to global warming. They also can be more dangerous than ordinary cars when hitting pedestrians. Taking a car ride rather than walking or cycling contributes to a lack of exercise and the growing problem of obesity and its associated health problems.

### Big issue H

Most electrical appliances were manufactured to be left on 'stand by' and this wastes an enormous amount of household electricity. It increases the size of a household's carbon footprint and contributes to global warming. It is a highly inefficient use of energy.

### Big issue I

Teak is a hardwood which in some parts of the world comes from destruction of the rainforest. The use of hardwoods from non-renewable resources will lead to the disappearance of a natural resource and damage to biodiversity. The destruction of the rainforests is a major contributor to global warming and climate change. It also destroys the lives of native peoples and subsistence farmers.

# Possible consequences cards



## Consequence 1

By 2057, all water is metered and people have to pay according to how much water they use. There are tougher penalties for people found wasting water, e.g. through breaking house pipe bans. More stand pipes and water wagons are used to distribute water in the hot summers.

## Consequence 2

By 2057, the countryside is left to run wild as farmers have been put out of business and most fresh food is imported. Fresh foods are a lot more expensive as oil stocks have run low, and there have been big reductions in flights and an increase in the costs of air transport. Global warming has led to warm wet winters and hot dry summers.

## Consequence 3

By 2057, global warming has added to the risk of floods and there is regular damage to property. Some rivers are effectively dead, and many animal and bird species are extinct or endangered. Many low-lying coastal cities around the world are under water.

## Consequence 4

By 2057, many species of fish have disappeared from the oceans. Only a limited number of varieties of farmed fish remain left for the next generation to eat – no cod and chips on the menu!

## Consequence 5

By 2057, we look back nostalgically at the time in which people were able to waste so much energy in the homes. This age of waste has come at the price of an overheated planet with all the resulting problems in rising sea levels and extreme weather conditions.

## Consequence 6

By 2057, landfill sites are all full and there are heavy charges for removing waste and fines for not recycling. Global warming has caused severe flooding and the coastline to shift miles inland in some areas of Britain.

## Consequence 7

By 2057, the rain forests have all but disappeared along with certain types of trees and the biodiversity found in these forests has gone forever. The destruction of the rainforest and burning of trees and shrubs has led to new vast areas of desert – and added greatly to global warming. Native peoples and their languages have disappeared.

## Consequence 8

By 2057, landfill sites are all full and there are heavy charges for removing waste and fines for not recycling. Everyone has to use their own reusable bags for shopping. Oil has nearly run out and vehicles and energy are produced with bio-fuels. The production of bio fuels such as sugar has led to more rainforests being cut down.

## Consequence 9

By 2057, air quality in Britain's cities is poor, leading to a rise in asthma and other respiratory diseases. A high percentage of the population is obese and there has been a rise in related diseases such as heart disease and diabetes.

## Activity 4: Green taxes

### Background, organisation and resources

'Green' or 'environmental' taxes are a high-profile political issue and UK parties are seeking ways of encouraging practices by households, businesses and local authorities that are good for the environment, while also discouraging the bad. Hence in Britain we already have the climate change levy, landfill tax, vehicle excise duty, the aggregates levy and air passenger duty. The debate is how the tax system can be used in the future to promote sustainable development. In stage 1 of the activity young people discuss and research the issue of green taxes. In the second stage of the activity they take on a role representing young or older consumers, businesses or government to agree a range of new green taxes.

### Aims of the activity

- To understand what green taxes are and the arguments for and against different approaches to green taxes
- To develop their own views on the desirability or not of green taxes
- To communicate their views on green taxes to local and national government.

### QCA targeted learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Show understanding of key citizenship concepts
- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others
- Represent a point of view on behalf of others
- Exercise responsible action towards and on behalf of others.

### Tasks

#### Stage 1

The first part of the activity aims to increase young people's awareness of some of the arguments used in the debate about green taxes. Ask young people to work in groups of four or five and to study the quotations on the handout 'Green taxes' (page 22). They should discuss and try to agree in the following questions:

- *Which are statements of fact and which are opinions?*
- *Which statements could have been made by business people?*
- *Which statements could have been made by environmentalists?*
- *Which statements could have been made by householders or consumers?*

When they have completed their discussions, they should summarise the arguments for and against green taxes.

#### Stage 2

The second part of the exercise follows on from the first. Young people could be asked to carry out some further web-based research prior to the second stage. They are asked to take on one of four roles (more detail is on the role cards, see page 23):

- Young consumers (assuming they do not own their own home and rely more on public transport and cycling)

- Older consumers (assuming that many own their own home and use their cars much more)
- Businesses (large and small)
- Government (responsible for measures to combat climate change and raising tax revenues).

They could carry out research looking at the issue of green taxes from the perspective of their role. Some sites to visit as a starting point are:

**[www.idebate.org/debatabase/](http://www.idebate.org/debatabase/)** – arguments for and against congestion charging, tax on aviation fuel, low polluting cars

**[www.en.wikipedia.org](http://www.en.wikipedia.org)** – green taxes

**[www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving)** – practical tips on green policies and practices

**[www.taxpayersalliance.com](http://www.taxpayersalliance.com)** – pressure group supporting lower taxation.

The group should be divided into four representing: young consumers; older householders; businesses; and government. Each group should sit at a different table. A copy of the role card should be distributed and groups should be given four or five minutes to familiarise themselves with their role. The task is to discuss the list of possible green taxes (page 24) and to agree the top three taxes they would like to see introduced together with their reasons. Allow 20 minutes for the groups to complete the task.

### Debriefing and follow up

Debrief the exercise by asking groups in turn to give their top three green tax choices and the main reasons for choosing those taxes. Sum up by re-stating the most popular choices and saying for each tax, who will the winners and losers be. End by taking a vote on support for the top three taxes.

Ask young people to communicate their views on green taxes by writing to their local council and to their MP.

### Assessment opportunities

Young people could write a report on green taxes including making a case for and against new green taxes.



## Green taxes

**A**

The climate levy is a carbon tax paid by businesses linked to their use of energy (electricity, fuel) created from fossil fuels (which are non-renewable and add to global warming).

**B**

The aggregates tax is on sand, gravel and rock extracted from the land for use in building which damages the environment (creates noise, dust and reduces biodiversity). Cement, which is made from limestone, is a huge contributor to CO<sup>2</sup> emissions, about 1.5 billion tonnes annually.

**C**

Poor families spend a higher proportion of their income on gas, electricity and water and so green household taxes would hit them harder than richer families.

**D**

Landfill tax is paid by businesses and local authorities for waste materials that are put into landfill sites.

**E**

There should be a shift in taxation away from taxes on income, profits and employment ('good things') to a tax on pollution and waste ('bad things').

**F**

Green taxes aim to make the price we pay for things reflect the 'real cost' of producing them including all the environmental costs (waste, pollution).

**G**

The money raised from green taxes should be used to reduce other taxes such as income tax on people and corporation tax on businesses.

**H**

People would be willing to pay more green taxes if the money raised was only used to benefit the environment rather than going into the general government pot.

**I**

Government should introduce more 'feebates' that is charging fees or duties on people who damage the environment and reward with rebates (tax allowances or reductions) for people who make environment-friendly choices (e.g. SUVs vs. 'hybrid' vehicles).

**J**

Vehicle license duty or 'car tax' for cars registered after 2001 are charged according to their CO<sup>2</sup> emissions with 'gas guzzlers' paying more tax.

**K**

Air passenger duty is a tax on passengers who fly and add to global warming.

## Green taxes – role cards



### Government

A think tank has come up with a list of ideas and you must choose the top three taxes to implement. You will need to be clear about your reasons for suggesting the taxes you choose. You need to make sure that taxes are seen as fair by people. Taxes should also be paid by consumers and businesses. A key principle of green taxes is that the person who pollutes the environment should pay.

### Young consumers

You represent a group of young people set up to advise the UK government on the introduction of new 'green' or 'environmental' taxes. A think tank has come up with a list of ideas and you must choose the top three taxes to recommend to the government. You will need to be clear about your reasons for suggesting the taxes you choose. You will want to make sure that taxes are fair and that people who create more waste, use more energy and damage the environment pay more tax. You will want to make sure that the taxes you recommend would help young people and the environment.

### Householders

You represent groups of consumers and householders set up to advise the UK government on the introduction of new 'green' or 'environmental' taxes. A think tank has come up with a list of ideas and you must choose the top three taxes to recommend to the government. You will need to be clear about your reasons for suggesting the taxes you choose. You will want to make sure that businesses pay their fair share of any new taxes and that people owning their own houses are not unfairly treated.

### Businesses

You represent groups of business people set up to advise the UK government on the introduction of new 'green' or 'environmental' taxes. A think tank has come up with a list of ideas and you must choose the top three taxes to recommend to the government. You will need to be clear about your reasons for suggesting the taxes you choose. You will want to make sure that new green taxes do not damage the competitiveness of British businesses by increasing costs to business which will lead to increased prices and reduced profits.

## Green Tax Think Tank Report – options

- A. There should be VAT (at 17.5%) on aviation fuel to increase the cost of domestic and international air travel.
- B. Airport charges for planes taking off and landing should be raised to increase the cost of air travel and reduce the number of people choosing air travel.
- C. Give people a rebate on the stamp duty they paid when they bought the house if they take action from a list of measures to make their houses more energy efficient (e.g. better insulation, low energy light bulbs, cavity wall insulation) .
- D. Homes should be charged to be fitted with 'smart meters' which would help them choose low-cost energy and would cut UK emissions by 8%.
- E. Offices that meet high standards of energy efficiency should pay lower business rates (a tax on company premises paid to the local authority).
- F. Houses which are built to the highest environmental standards should receive a reduction in the council tax they have to pay.
- G. There should be an extension of congestion charges to discourage people bringing cars into cities across the country.
- H. There should be more charges for travelling on the most congested parts of the motorway network.
- I. There should be a much higher rate of vehicle tax on larger, less efficient cars and less tax on smaller, cleaner cars.
- J. There should be a £2,000 charge for people buying sports utility vehicles to compensate for the environmental damage they cause.
- K. Sports utility vehicles and other 'gas guzzlers' should pay higher charges for resident's parking by local authorities.
- L. There should be discounts on the council tax bill to encourage households to recycle.
- M. All unsorted (into plastics, paper, card, food etc) household waste should be weighed and people should be charged according to how much rubbish they throw away.
- N. There should be subsidies to further reduce the cost of rail travel.
- O. There should be no VAT on cycles to encourage people to use this non-polluting form of transport.
- P. There should be reduced business taxes for supermarkets stocking local produce.
- Q. There should be a tax of £300 for people driving their cars to work in the town or city and parking them on the company premises.
- R. There should be a tax on car parking spaces in out-of-town supermarkets to encourage people to shop in their own town centres and reduce car travel.

ELECTRIC  
VEHICLE  
CHARGING  
STATION



## Activity 5: Sustained argument

### Background, organisations and resources

This activity is a two-person role play where one person, in the role of persuader, attempts to use the power of argument to encourage their partner to change their behaviour by making a sustainable choice. Six scenarios are provided touching on current hot issues such as sports utility vehicles, food miles and wind farms. A third young person acts as an observer and offers feedback on their powers of persuasion. The group is divided into threes and the exercise can accommodate relatively large numbers. The activity could take around 45 minutes to one hour. The activity can be modified by changing the scenarios, and young people could be given time before the session to research and prepare stronger arguments

### Aims of the activity

- To demonstrate the skills involved in arguing persuasively
- To consider the arguments for making sustainable choices on a range of sustainable development issues.

### QCA targeted learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others.

### Tasks

Go around the room giving each person a number 1, 2, or 3. Then ask all the 1s to sit together, then the 2s and the 3s. Distribute the role cards that explain the roles of persuader, subject and observer. Allocate a scenario to each group. Explain that they have ten minutes to prepare their arguments to use in their role of persuader. The advantage of doing this in a group is to pool knowledge and develop a range of arguments. Now ask groups to form into threes so that there is a 1, 2 and 3 in each group.

Explain that in the first role play 1 will be the persuader, 2 the subject and 3 the observer. Then they swap so that 2 is the persuader, 3 the subject and 1 the observer. Finally, 3 is the persuader, 1 the subject and 2 the observer. Read out the first scenario and allow the persuader four minutes to hold forth. Then allow the observer two minutes to feedback their thoughts on the questions on their role card. If there is more time, repeat the exercise for the final three scenarios, but they should stay in their threes for five minutes of preparation time to marshal their arguments.

### Debriefing and follow up

Ask the whole group for responses to the following questions:

- *Did any persuasive techniques work more effectively than others?*
- *How easy or difficult is it to persuade people to make sustainable choices?*
- *How important is it to know what you are talking about before trying to persuade people to change their behaviour?*

As a follow up, young people could use the internet links listed (see page 32 and also page 39) to find out more about these sustainable development issues.

### **Assessment opportunities**

Young people when taking on the role of observer are providing an assessment of the persuasive skills of the colleague through their feedback.



## Sustainable development scenarios



Persuade a school head teacher or college principal that the food served in the canteen should, as far as possible, be locally produced (to reduce carbon emissions through driving or flying food long distances).



Persuade someone who has a 4x4 (Sports Utility Vehicle aka 'Chelsea tractor' or 'Gas Guzzler') to sell it and walk their children the half mile to school.



Persuade a supermarket boss to stop giving out free plastic bags so people have to bring reusable bags when they go shopping.



Persuade a local council leader that they should turn the town into a cycle-friendly place with cycle lanes, free bikes for people to use, and cars banned from the central area.



Persuade a government minister that they should not expand airports around London by building extra runways.



Persuade a local resident that they should vote for a wind farm on their nearby hills.

## Role cards



### Role A: Persuader



Your role is to think through some good arguments that may persuade your subject to do something they may not have thought about or may not want to do. You may want to think about using some of the following persuasive techniques:

- *Explain how this will benefit them, others, the planet, their children and their children's children*
- *Make them feel guilty about not thinking or caring about the environment*
- *Use emotive language to touch their feelings, e.g. 'choking the planet'*
- *Flatter them and appeal to their better nature*
- *Assume that all right thinking people agree with you*
- *Be stubborn and relentless to keep pressing home the message.*

### Role B: Subject



Your role is to listen to the persuader, but you can argue with them if you disagree with what they are saying. You may want to tell them why you do not want to do what they are suggesting. You may feel persuaded by them or you might agree anyway. But remember you are also in a role and you have to think what that person would make of the arguments being used.

### Role C: Observer



Your role is to watch and listen to the exchanges between the persuader and the subject. Try to note down any particular arguments or techniques used by the persuader. Manage the discussion after the role play finishes by first asking the persuader:

- *How persuasive do you think you were?*
- *What techniques did you try to use?*
- *How could you have argued better?*

Then ask the subject to add anything they would like to what the persuader has said in response to the three questions. Finally, add in any observations of your own on the arguments and techniques used.

## Activity 6: Campaign

### Background, organisation and resources

Active citizenship ultimately involves being prepared to take action in support of something you feel strongly about. In this series of activities young people consider national campaigns on sustainable development issues run by some of the established pressure groups. They then examine campaigns set up by individuals and groups on the BBC's Action Network. Finally, they plan a campaign strategy on a sustainable development issue of their choice – with the possibility of taking action. The groups will need access to the internet for their research.

### Aims of the activity

- To understand the range of actions that can be undertaken during a campaign
- To plan a campaign on a sustainable development issue.

### QCA targeted learning objectives

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues
- Show understanding of key citizenship concepts
- Analyse sources of information, identify bias and draw conclusions
- Discuss and debate citizenship issues
- Express and justify a personal opinion to others
- Demonstrate skills of negotiation and participation in community-based activities
- Exercise responsible action towards and on behalf of others.

### Tasks

#### Stage 1 – Investigating national campaigns

The first task involves investigating the current campaigns being run by the UK's established environmental pressure groups to raise public awareness, change behaviour and/or influence decision makers. This is a research activity that can be undertaken in small groups of two or three. Distribute the handout 'Sustainable development campaigns' (page 32) which has the list of websites. The brief is to visit these sites and note down the campaign theme, its aims and the campaigning methods being used. Groups should come together when the research has been completed and consider the following questions:

- *What sustainable development topics or themes are the subjects of campaigns currently?*
- *Are the campaigns largely aimed at (a) raising public awareness, (b) changing people's behaviour, (c) influencing decision makers (e.g. national or local government, businesses)?*
- *What are the types of methods being used (can they be categorised)?*
- *Which campaigns seem most effective in grabbing attention? What makes these campaigns seem effective?*
- *What are the features of an effective campaign on an aspect of sustainable development?*

#### Stage 2 – Investigating small-scale campaigns

In the next stage of the activity young people can investigate the campaigns started by individuals on a range of sustainable development issues. You can refer young people working in the same groups as in Stage 1 to the BBC's Action Network website ([www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork](http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork)). Alternatively, you can use the handout 'Sustainable development campaigns 2' (page 33) to stimulate discussion.

### Stage 3 – Planning a campaign

The Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme has published *Citizenship through voluntary and community-based activities* which has more information about moving from talking about issues to community action, including campaigning. The final stage of the activity involves using the handout ‘Campaign planner’ (pages 34–37) to develop their ideas. Each small group from the previous activities can work through the planning tool to develop their campaign. The main criterion is that ideas should be realistic and doable. They can be given up to an hour to plan their campaign and develop a brief presentation to the rest of the group. They should use a piece of flip chart to illustrate their campaign ideas. At the end of the session groups can make their presentations and the whole group can vote for the ‘best’ campaign.

### Debriefing and follow up

Suggested debriefing questions are included above for stages 1 and 2. For the final stage if there is sufficient time the audience could ask questions of each set of presenters. This could lead on to the whole group backing and implementing the most popular campaign idea. Individuals and small groups could join BBC’s Action Network to launch their campaign.

### Assessment opportunities

The question and answer session, and vote by the audience, provide a form of peer assessment. The campaign plans could be assessed.



## Sustainable development campaigns

All the national pressure groups that support sustainable development and the environment run campaigns on topical and ongoing issues. Visit some of the following selection of sites to find out more about current campaigns. These are listed under headings such as campaigns, projects, get involved and actions. While you are looking at the sites record your findings on the following questions:

1. *What sustainable development topics or themes are the subjects of campaigns currently?*
2. *Are the campaigns largely aimed at (a) raising public awareness, (b) changing people's behaviour (c) influencing decision makers (e.g. national or local government, businesses)?*
3. *What are the types of methods being used? Can they be categorised?*
4. *Which campaigns seem most effective in grabbing attention? What makes these campaigns seem effective?*
5. *What are the features of an effective campaign on an aspect of sustainable development?*

**www.amnesty.org.uk** – Amnesty International UK specialises in campaigning for human rights

**www.ctc.org.uk** – UK's organisation campaigning on behalf of cycling

**www.fairtrade.org.uk** – Campaigns for fair trade with developing countries

**www.foe.org** – Friends of the Earth

**www.greenpeace.org.uk** – Greenpeace

**www.icount.org.uk** – Stop Climate Chaos – a coalition of over 50 organisations

**www.nea.org.uk** – National Energy Action campaigns for warm homes

**www.oxfam.org.uk** – Oxfam

**www.panda.org** – WWF campaigns to protect the planet

**www.peopleandplanet.org** – UK university students' campaigning site

**www.pricedout.org.uk** – Campaigns for affordable housing

**www.soilassociation.org** – Promotes organic farming

**www.survival-international.org** – Campaigns on behalf of indigenous people at risk through development

**www.sustainweb.org** – Various healthy food campaigns and projects

**www.traidcraft.org** – Combating global poverty through fair trade

**www.turnuptheheat.org** – George Monbiot, the environmental campaigner's site.

## Sustainable development campaigns 2

The following examples are all taken from the BBC's Action Network ([www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork](http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork)), a facility to help people wanting to make a difference to get in touch with like-minded people. They all concern environmental or sustainable-development issues and illustrate what individuals are trying to do. You can visit the site to see all the current campaigns.

- *Which of these campaigns would you support and why?*
- *What campaign ideas have you got to make difference on an issue that concerns you?*
- *Draft some text setting out the aims of your campaign as if you were planning to upload this to the BBC's Action Network site.*

### **Examples of campaigns**

**Keep 4x4 Vehicles Off the Road** – aims to get the government to increase road tax for these vehicles and to make drivers take an advanced driving test.

**Low Carbon Fortnight** – is a campaign for UK to adopt an annual low carbon fortnight to raise awareness and reduce emissions.

**Network Rail Tree Felling** – aims to stop a rail company cutting down trees along the railway lines.

**Overpackaging** – campaign to make manufacturers and retailers reduce the amount of wasteful, unnecessary packaging, especially of fruit and vegetables.

**Save the Orchards** – aims to restore subsidies to apple and pear orchards to prevent farmers cutting down these ancient and often rare varieties.

**Stop Bristol Airport Expansion** – a campaign based on the damage that aviation does to the environment locally, nationally and globally.

**Turn Off Non-Essential Street Lighting in the Early Hours** – a money- and energy-saving idea for councils to take on board.

**Two Feet Clean** – seeks to raise public awareness of the problem of litter on Welsh beaches leading to better action by local government and landowners.

**Windfarms Kill Birds** – raises awareness of the little known 'fact' that windfarms damage biodiversity by killing birds, including rare and endangered species.

# Campaign planner

Now that you have an idea for your campaign, complete this exercise to plan more details of how it will work.

## 1. Name

What will be the name of your campaign?

*(Try to make it memorable but also clear what the campaign is about)*

## 2. Investigate the issue

How will you investigate the issue?

*(You need to make sure you know what you are talking about if you are to convince people to take you seriously. What research are you going to do? What will your main sources of information be?)*

## 3. Define your aims and objectives

What are your long-term goals or hopes, and what objectives do you realistically want to achieve?

*(You should have one or two broad aims and three or four achievable and measurable objectives)*

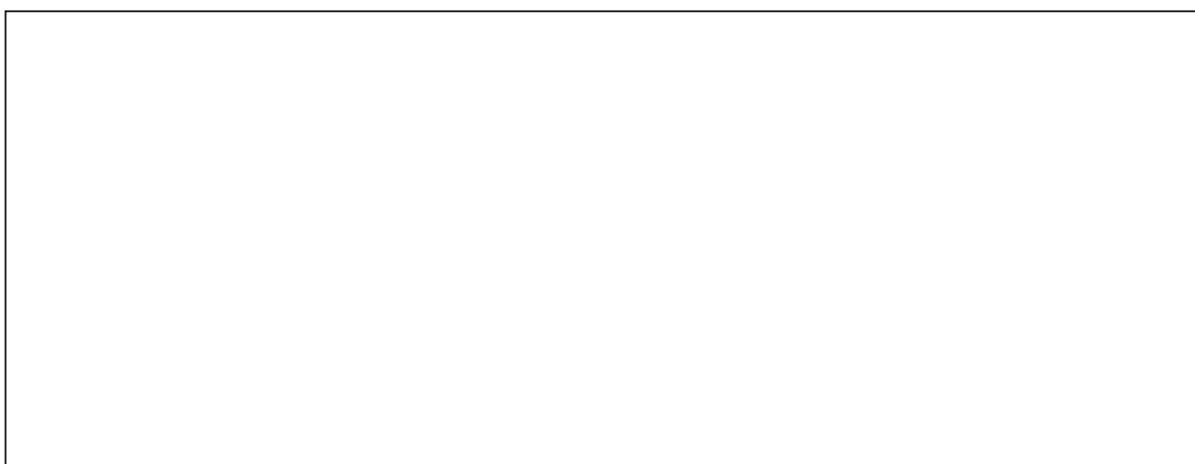
#### 4. Get organised

How will you divide up the work among your campaign team? How will you make decisions and run meetings? (e.g. What roles will there be? How will a leader be chosen, if you need one? Will meetings be democratic? Can new people join, if so how?)



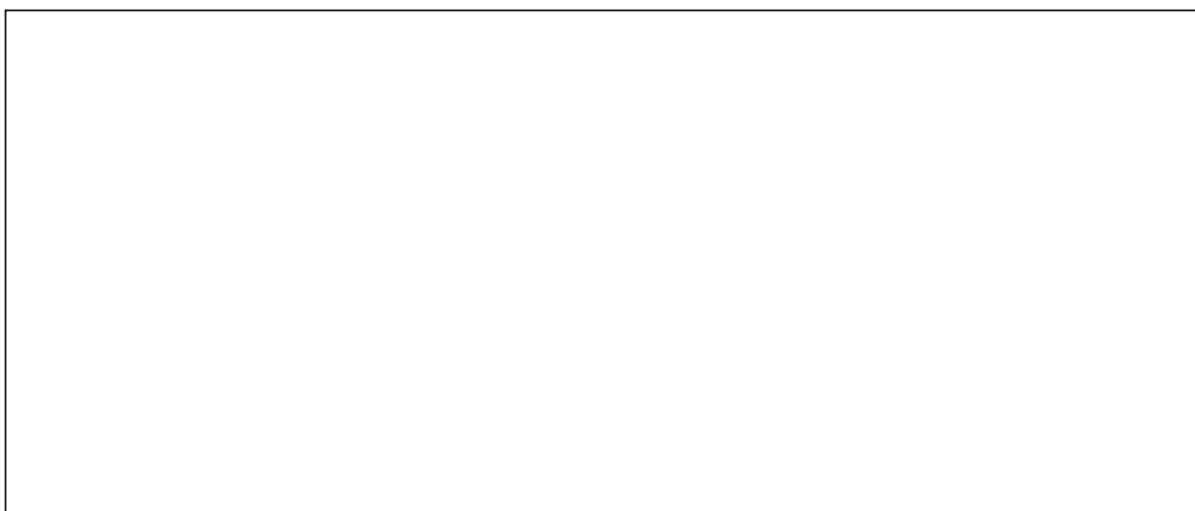
#### 5. Targets

Who are the people and organisations you want to influence?  
(Can you make a list of these and think about the best ways of influencing each audience?  
What do you hope they will do or change if your campaign is successful?)



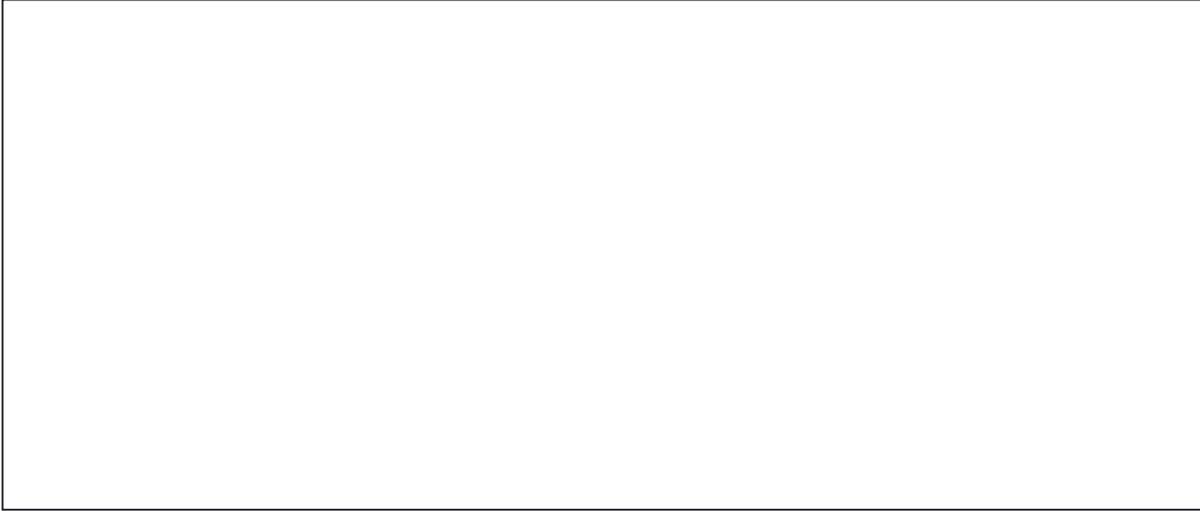
#### 6. Campaign methods

What methods will you use to influence the decision makers and the public?  
(The web research you have undertaken should have given you some ideas)



**7. Gaining supporters**

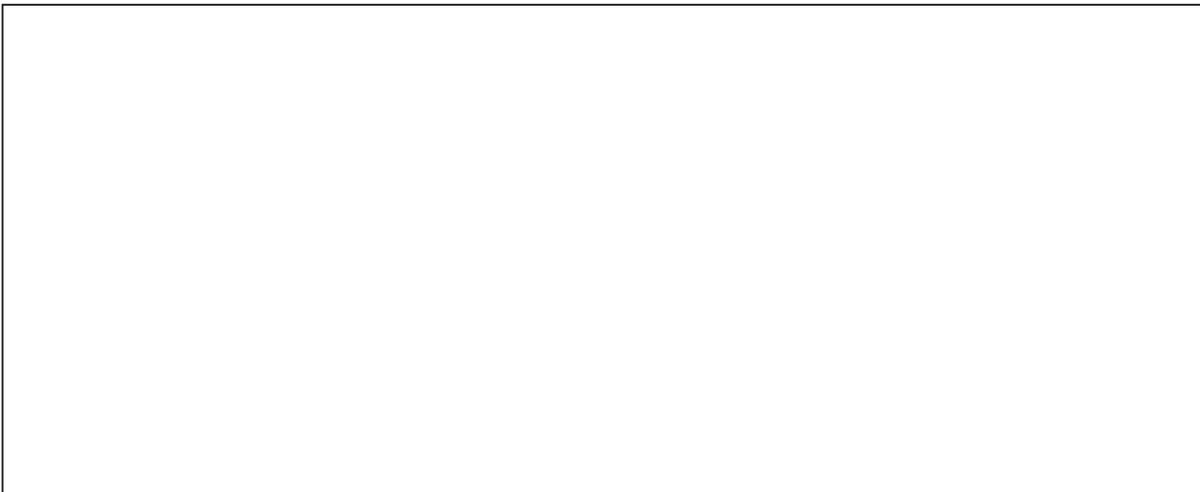
How can you increase the number of supporters actively backing your campaign?  
*(What materials and resources will you need to help recruitment?)*

**8. Media and public relations**

How do you plan to gain publicity for your cause? How can you grab media interest?

**9. Funding**

What are the estimated costs of your campaign over three months?  
How might you be able to raise this amount of money?





# Free resources from the Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme

- Post-16 Citizenship: what? why? how?* (VHS video and CD-ROM), LSDA (now LSN), 2004
- Citizenship Uncovered* (DVD), LSDA (now LSN), 2006
- Make it happen: effective practice in post-16 citizenship* (VHS video/DVD), LSDA (now LSN), 2005
- Making it click: an interactive guide to post-16 citizenship* (CD-ROM), LSDA (now LSN), 2005
- Staff development for post-16 citizenship*, LSDA (now LSN), 2005
- Agree to disagree: citizenship and controversial issues*, LSDA (now LSN), 2005
- The real picture: citizenship through photography*, LSDA (now LSN), 2004
- More than words: citizenship through art*, LSDA (now LSN), 2005
- Get up, stand up: citizenship through music*, LSDA (now LSN), 2005
- Reality check: citizenship through simulation*, LSDA (now LSN), 2006
- Choosing an angle: citizenship through video production*, LSDA (now LSN), 2006
- Getting the show on the road: skills for planning and running citizenship events*, QIA, 2006
- For the sake of argument: discussion and debating skills in citizenship*, QIA, 2006
- 'We all came here from somewhere': diversity, identities and citizenship*, QIA, 2006
- Getting started with post-16 citizenship*, QIA, 2006
- A case for action? Skills for active citizenship research*, QIA, 2007
- More than profit: work, social enterprise and citizenship*, QIA, 2007
- Post-16 citizenship in school sixth forms: an introduction to effective practice*, QIA, 2007
- Post-16 citizenship in colleges: an introduction to effective practice*, QIA, 2007
- Post-16 citizenship in youth and community groups: an introduction to effective practice*, QIA, 2007
- Post-16 citizenship in work-based learning: an introduction to effective practice*, QIA, 2007
- Post-16 citizenship: a guide for leaders and coordinators*, QIA, 2007
- Six Approaches to Post-16 Citizenship*, QIA, 2007
- 1. *Citizenship through learner voice and representation*
  - 2. *Citizenship through qualifications and personalised programmes*
  - 3. *Citizenship through group tutorial and enrichment programmes*
  - 4. *Citizenship through voluntary and community-based activities*
  - 5. *Citizenship through single events*
  - 6. *Citizenship through research projects*

All the above are available free of charge via the Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme website **[www.post16citizenship.org](http://www.post16citizenship.org)**

# References and web resources

DEFRA (2005) *Securing the Future*, Cmnd 6467, The Stationery Office, London

Martin, S. et al (2006) *Sustainable development in the learning and skills sector: National baseline survey*, LSDA (now LSN), London

Porritt, J (2006) *Capitalism as if the world mattered*, Earthscan ([www.earthscan.co.uk](http://www.earthscan.co.uk))

Webster, K (2004) *Rethink, Refuse, Reduce...: Education for sustainability in a changing world*, FSC Publications, Shrewsbury

## Web resources

See page 32 for websites of environmental campaigning organisations.

### **[www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork](http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork)**

BBC's Action Network to help in setting up campaigns

### **[www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving)**

Practical tips on green policies and practices

### **[www.limun.org.uk](http://www.limun.org.uk)**

Website of the London Institute Model United Nations General Assembly (MUNGA) has downloadable rules and procedures

### **[www.idebate.org/debatabase](http://www.idebate.org/debatabase)**

Arguments for and against congestion charging, tax on aviation fuel, low polluting cars

### **[www.sustainable-development.gov.uk](http://www.sustainable-development.gov.uk)**

Government site with policy documents

### **[www.teachernet.gov.uk/sustainableschools](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/sustainableschools)**

Useful A-Z links

### **[www.un.org/pubs/cyberschoolbus](http://www.un.org/pubs/cyberschoolbus)**

UN education site to help young people prepare for MUNGAs

### **[www.wfuna.org](http://www.wfuna.org)**

World federation of country UN associations most of which have links to MUNGA sites.

