

**Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education**

Department for Education  
Sanctuary Buildings  
20 Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

Cc: Owen Paterson MP, Defra; David Heath MP, Defra; Joan Walley MP, EAC

16 April 2013

Dear Michael Gove

We are writing to urge you to keep sustainability in the National Curriculum objectives. In 2000, the following values, aims and purposes were introduced:

*"Pupils should develop awareness and understanding of, and respect for, the environments in which they live, and secure their commitment to sustainable development at a personal, national and global level."* (pg 11, <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/QCA-99-457.pdf>)

This has allowed pioneer schools to create local whole school curricula that make core knowledge relevant and motivational. Schools embedding sustainability in their practice have been shown by Ofsted in many research reports to be Good or Excellent and with good links to improved achievement. But this practice is not yet across all schools.

Sustainability skills are commonly cited as needed by:

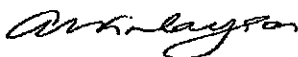
1. Students (over 80% of 7-14 year olds want to learn more about global issues at school and rank this 3rd after numeracy and literacy – The Cooperative 2011 Ipsos Mori, quoted in their Sustainability Guide);
2. University students (over 85% believe they need 8 sustainable development competencies in order to get jobs – HEA/NUS 2010, 2012),
3. Teachers wanting to prepare their students for a sustainable future (see for example the Keep Britain Tidy Eco-Schools survey in 2013 where 92% wanted to keep sustainability in the curriculum, SEEd's Teachers Needs Survey and baseline audits 2009, 2010, 2011)
4. Businesses wanting both an understanding of, and skills for sustainability (many CSR reports and longer term sustainability strategies require these skills to underpin public commitments)

Keeping sustainability as an objective in the National Curriculum would allow many other schools to address topics that are part of sustainability without having to add more content to the pared down National Curriculum. This would reinforce the Department for Education's endorsement of the Sustainable Schools Alliance, programmes such as Eco-Schools and other sustainable development initiatives in the Natural Environment White Paper 2011.

The 'green economy' has been growing in this country despite the recession; our students need the skills, innovation and creativity required for an environmentally, economically and socially better future.

The environment underpins our economy and society. Therefore we believe understanding this should be the entitlement for all children through retaining sustainability within the objectives of the national curriculum.

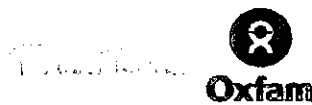
Yours Sincerely,



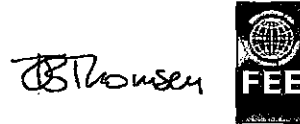
Ann Finlayson  
Chief Executive Officer, SEEd



Phil Barton  
Chief Executive Officer, Keep Britain Tidy



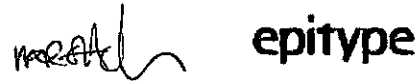
**Richard Baker**  
Head of Education and Youth, Oxfam GB



**Finn Bolding Thomsen**  
Managing Director, Foundation for Environmental Education



**Ruth Bond**  
Chair of the Federation of Women's Institutes



**Martin Roach**  
Creative Group Director, Epitype



**Melanie Leech**  
Director General, Food and Drink Federation



**Middlesex University**  
Dr Diane Purchase  
Principal Lecturer in Environmental Health/Biology, Middlesex University



**David Palmer-Jones**  
Chief Executive Officer, Sita-UK part of Suez Environment



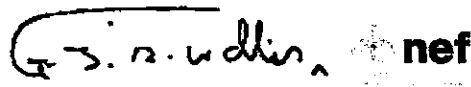
**Professor Sally Inman**  
Director Teacher Education for Equity and Sustainability UK Network (TEESNet)



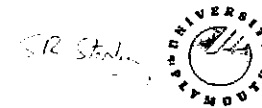
**Craig Bennett**  
Policy Director, Friends of the Earth



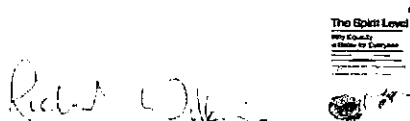
**Kat Thorne**  
Head of Sustainability, University of Greenwich



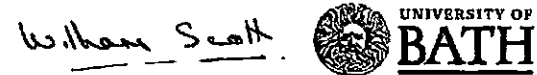
**Stewart Wallis**  
Executive Director, new economics foundation



**Stephen Sterling**  
Professor of Sustainability Education, University of Plymouth



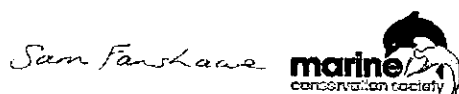
**Richard Wilkinson**  
Author of The Spirit Level



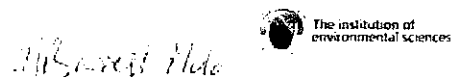
**Bill Scott**  
Emeritus Professor William Scott, University of Bath;  
President of NAEE: the National Association of Environmental Education



**Daniel Crossley**  
Executive Director - Food Ethics Council



**Sam Fanshawe**  
Chief Executive, Marine Conservation Society



**Dr Heather Barrett-Mold**  
Chair of Council, Institution of Environmental Sciences



Catrin Maby  
Chief Executive, Severn Wye Energy Agency



Clare Flenly  
Coordinator, Eco Active



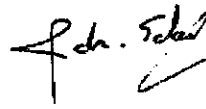
Mike Tones  
Chair of North East Environment Network (trading as Outdoor and Sustainability Education Specialists, OASES).



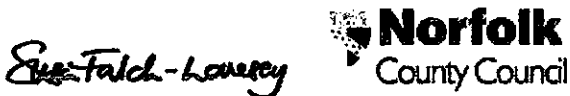
Hugo Tagholm,  
Executive Director, Surfers Against Sewage



Rich Hurst  
Lead for Sustainability Education, Durham County Council, Coordinator for North East Strategic Partnership for Sustainable Schools.



John Eckersley  
Managing Director  
Gaela – Global and Ethical Investment Advice



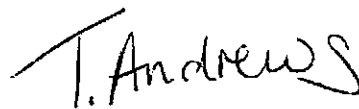
Sue Falch-Lovesey  
Advisor, Norfolk Integrated Education Advisory Service, Norfolk County Council.



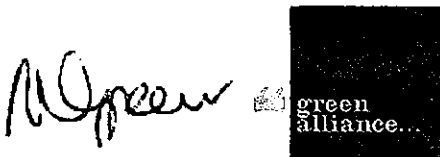
Pablo Guidi  
Director  
Liverpool World Centre



Iain Patton  
Chief Executive, EAUC (Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges).



Tom Andrews  
Chief Executive, People United.



Matthew Spencer  
Director, Green Alliance



Ed Gillespie,  
Co-Founder, Futerra