PedRIO Papers

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Widening Participation: PedRIO Horizon Scanning Report
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The Gender and Ethnicity Attainment Gap Research Project
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Paper 3
Community Engagement Towards a Sustainable Future
Joanna Blake

Paper 4
Getting it together. Interdisciplinarity and Sustainability in the Higher Education Institution
Joanna Blake, Stephen Sterling and Fumiyo Kagawa

Community Engagement Towards a Sustainable Future
Joanna Blake

PedRIO paper 3
http://hdl.handle.net/10293/1607
www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/pedrio
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Aims and objectives

The briefing paper is aimed at all those involved in sustainability and community university engagement at the University of Plymouth. An overarching aim of the document is to contribute to institutional memory, and institutional learning. Institutional learning takes place where reflections on past initiatives feedback iteratively into the development of future plans. Sustainability is an explicit priority of the University of Plymouth. Sustainability is also the thread that runs throughout the five themes that comprise the University’s first, Draft Community Engagement Strategy, due to go to Academic Board in July 2010. The development of the Community Engagement Strategy coincides with the end of the CETL-ESD, the Centre for Sustainable Futures (CSF). Whole-institution learning was an aim of the CETL-ESD (endorsed by HEFCE) and an integral part of CSF’s holistic, 4 ‘C’ approach. The briefing paper has four objectives:

1. Frame the relationship between sustainability and community engagement at the University of Plymouth within the academic literature and policy context.

2. Provide an evidence base for key, university initiatives taking place at the interface between community engagement and sustainability under the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE’s) seven dimensions.

3. Provide an initial analysis of the most and least covered dimensions.

4. Relate the NCCPE’s seven dimensions of public engagement to the University of Plymouth’s Draft Community Engagement Strategy, and reflect upon future potentials for practice at the interface between sustainability and community university engagement.

The writing of the background paper coincided with the University of Plymouth’s Community Engagement Cafe Forum April 12 2010 and the internal circulation and consultation of the draft Community Engagement Strategy 2010.

Key points:

- Sustainability and community engagement are linked at a theoretical and conceptual level.

- At all levels of policy; international, national, regional and at the University of Plymouth explicit connections between sustainability and community engagement are made.

- There is at present no information point for sustainability and community engagement activities and initiatives at the University of Plymouth.
With reference to the academic literature around the different types of activities that fall under community university engagement, student learning in the community and community-based research respectively are by far the most, well-covered areas of community engagement at the University of Plymouth.

According to the different types of activities that fall under community university engagement, faculty engagement with community projects is the least covered aspect of community engagement at the University of Plymouth.

The CETL-ESD project ends in Summer 2010 and there is yet to be a strategy to continue the sustainability-community university engagement interface.

As regards to community access to facilities, the CETL-ESD £1 million capital spend on The Gateway has not yet enabled target, community groups to affordably access the Roland Levinsky Building.

There is considerable overlap between the key dimensions of the NCCPE’s draft framework for public engagement and the five key themes of the University of Plymouth’s draft Community Engagement Strategy.

One important, short term way forward with the draft strategy consultation process would be to invite all communities immediately relevant to community engagement at the University of Plymouth to be involved in the process of consultation around the implementation of the Community Engagement Strategy.

Acknowledgments

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Theoretical background</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Community-university engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 Student learning in the community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Community-based research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Policy background</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 International context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.11 UNESCO Decade for Education For Sustainable Development (UN-DESD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.12 The Halifax Declaration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.13 The Talloires Declaration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.14 The PASCAL Observatory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 National context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.21 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.22 Sustainable Communities Plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.23 The Egan Review - Skills for Sustainable Communities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.24 The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Regional context</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.31 Sustainable Communities South West</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.32 South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.33 Creating Excellence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4 University of Plymouth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.41 Centre for Sustainable Futures (CETL-ESD)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. NCCPE Dimensions of public engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Public access to facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 Public access to knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3 Student engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4 Faculty engagement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 Widening participation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6 Encouraging economic regeneration and enterprise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7 Institutional relationship and partnership building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Key points and future potentials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Conclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. References</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Theoretical background

One of the eleven core values of the University of Plymouth is ‘Encouraging sustainability through shared practice’. Furthermore, one of the university’s five ambitions, as set out in the Corporate Plan is:

*Sustainability.* To be a customer focused, socially responsible organisation, demonstrating sustainability in our activities and ensuring our graduates are aware of economic, environmental, social and ethical issues including the importance of social enterprise, community engagement and volunteering. (University of Plymouth *Creating Our Future* 2009-2012, 4)

Sustainability and community university engagement are necessarily interwoven enterprises. In 2001 Universities UK stated that Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that engage in local and regional community partnerships can contribute to economic prosperity, environmental sustainability and social and cultural development in the area (Charles and Benneworth 2001). The connection between sustainability and community engagement in higher education primarily hinges on the notion that higher education environments are fully-embedded in the towns, cities and regions in which they are located. Therefore, the sustainability of the institution is necessarily tied up with the sustainability prospects of the neighbourhood and region. For Millican (2005) community-university partnerships have the potential to contribute to community development and personal learning by exploring ways to ensure that students have the knowledge, skills and values to achieve a more just and sustainable society. Barry (2007) argues that an ‘engaged’ university would be outward rather than inward looking, interested in its communities and seeing itself as part of rather than apart from local (and regional, national and international) networks for sustainable development.

The exigency placed on HEIs to commit to engage in partnerships with the community in which they sit has a long history. Settlements and social action centres developed in the nineteenth century from the idea that social inequality might be addressed if university people lived alongside the poor of London. The first university settlement was Oxford House, in Bethnal Green established in 1884. The Women’s University Settlement (now Blackfriars) began in 1887 and The Cambridge University Medical Mission in Bermondsey (now the Salmon Youth Centre) was founded in 1907. By the 1930s settlements were established in most urban centres in the UK, and in North America. Post-war, in the US, the 1958 publication by Theodore Caplow and Reece J. McGee, *The Academic Market Place* urged readers to consider the ‘university as a social institution’ with responsibilities to move away from providing expertise ‘for’ a community and become more involved ‘with’ a community through the interaction of staff and students (Sills, 1978, 95).

In the UK the Centre for Adult Education was set up in 1969 with the express purpose of increasing community-university engagement (James, 1974) and in 1970 Daedalus published an article entitled ‘The University: Ivory Tower, Service Station, or Frontier Post?’ in which the authors, Luria and Luria argue that the key question for a university
is its ethical interaction with the society in which it operates (Luria and Luria, 1970) (Blake, forthcoming 2010, 3). In recognition of the long history of engaged universities, Goddard (2009) argues that universities need to „re-invent’ themselves as civic institutions. However, his vision of a „civic’ or „engaged’ university that works with outside actors and agencies to ensure the maximum impact of teaching and learning would require significant reallocation of resources by funding councils.

A number of theorists have framed the issues surrounding community engagement faced by the modern university, and a few are highlighted below. Flicker et al (2007) develop community-university engagement into a four-part model:

- **Faculty skills & knowledge**: Staff acquire experiential learning skills and knowledge
- **Institutional infrastructure**: Establish infrastructure to work with communities
- **Academic Culture**: Creating a culture supportive of faculty experiential pedagogies
- **Partner relationships**: Strengthening institutional partnerships with community organisations

According to Community University Partnership Programme (CUPP) based in Brighton, community-university partnerships take three broad overlapping yet distinguishable forms:

1. **Community-university engagement**
2. **Student learning in the community**
3. **Community-based research**

### 1.1 Community-university engagement

CUPP asserts that the concept of community-university engagement has gained substantial ground in other countries, particularly in America and Australia, and relates to the notion that Higher Education institutions have much to offer and learn from their local communities. In the UK, whilst there have been many community outreach initiatives, there has been little activity on such a strategic level.

In his rationale for the Higher Education, Community Engagement & Civic Responsibility Project & Network, Bruce Muirhead, Director of the Community Service and Research Centre at the University of Queensland defines community-university engagement as:

a collection of practices loosely grouped under a policy framework designed to connect...a university with its naturally constituent community.

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1 CUPP (Community University Partnership) [http://www.brighton.ac.uk/cupp/resources/cuecupp.htm](http://www.brighton.ac.uk/cupp/resources/cuecupp.htm)
He also illustrates the difference between ‘community service’ and ‘community-university engagement’, emphasising that:

Regardles of the vast resources and expertise base of universities, effective community development cannot be “done to” nor “done for” a community. CUPP².

Instead, effective community development requires partnership working between universities and communities towards a mutual outcome or solution. In addition, further rationale behind ‘community-university engagement’ is as follows:

[To] support the capacity-building of community organisations whereby HEIs provide expertise, volunteer resources of staff and students, clout with certain constituencies and amenities that are not readily available from other community institutions. In addition HEIs can serve as powerful allies and advocates on community issues to help sustain long-term community-building efforts. (Leiderman et al 2002, 3)

1.2 Student learning in the community

The second form of community-university partnership centres on the enhancement of student learning. Education for (social) sustainability or education for social justice share an approach that is broadly described by Paulo Freire (1970) as ‘praxis’, that is, personal reflection leading to social action leading to further reflection. In her paper for the Education for Sustainable Development conference at the University of Bournemouth September 2005, Millican describes student learning in the community as follows:

Adult Education institutions have acted as agents of social change by encouraging adults to reflect on personal experience and the justice and injustice they have encountered. Higher Learning institutions committed to engagement and diversity can and should deal with these issues at a pedagogic as well as a policy level. But younger adults, who have had less life experience and different immediate concerns will invariably need a different approach. This approach could involve helping to create an experience that encourages student engagement with people who have different personal histories, and the opportunity to learn from that difference…The opportunity to do this at a local level, in a safe environment, opens doors to broader global issues of social justice and sustainable development. (ibid.)

Allen-Gil et al (2005) describe learning in the community opportunities as a “place-based approach” that facilitates:

- Learning through dialogue, collaboration, community

²CUPP (Community University Partnership) http://www.brighton.ac.uk/cupp/index.htm
• Student-centred reflective learning and development of critical thinking
• Learning by doing and serving
• Systems learning
  (Allen-Gil et al 2005, 397)

Additionally, Leiderman et al (2002) maintain that student learning in the community offers opportunities to:

  Deepen commitments to student learning through the application of learning to „real world“ situations, to develop an understanding of current social injustice issues and to grow through civic, ethical, political and philanthropic activities.  
  (Leiderman et al 2002, 2)

1.3 Community-based research

Community-based research (CBR) is rapidly gaining recognition as an important tool in addressing complex environmental, health and social problems (Flicker et al, 2007). CBR strives to marry the twin goals of community development with knowledge generation to achieve social justice ends. This approach can be traced back to action research and participatory research (Chambers, 1983; Greenwood and Levin, 1998). Heavily influenced by Freire’s theories of empowerment (Freire, 1970), both traditions place an emphasis on meaningfully involving stakeholders in applied social research and concerned with problem-solving and change. Complementarily, Bec Henley for the Toronto Seminar Group produced a report entitled, „Research as empowerment?” (2005) from a series of seminars, which outlines four key areas that overlap with CBR:

• Involving service-users in traditional or mainstream research
• Involve service users in peer review
• Involving people from black and minority ethnic communities in research
• Emancipatory research
  (Henley 2005, 7)

The following section situates community university engagement initiatives within key policy developments at macro, meso and micro levels.

2. Policy Context

The twinned priorities of sustainability and community engagement within the higher education sector emerge from a broad-based policy context. This section outlines key policies and documents that underlie the impetus behind the various initiatives.

2.1 International Policy Context

2.11 UNESCO Decade for Education For Sustainable Development (UN-DESD)

Universities must function as places of research and learning for sustainable development, and as initiators and poles of activity in their communities and nationally…Sustainable development needs to become a central preoccupation in determining areas of educational research and development. (UNESCO, 2006, 23)

And advances a vision of higher education that:

Will provide high quality and regionally relevant resources and tools to individuals around the world who are striving to make education for sustainability a central focus of higher education curricula, research, physical operations, student life and outreach to local, regional, and global communities. Higher education should also provide leadership by practicing what they teach through sustainable purchasing, investments and facilities that are integrated with teaching and learning. (ibid.)

At the UK Launch Conference for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in 2005, a presentation entitled ‘Culture, Community and Education for Sustainable Development’ advocated that:

The Government will have a strong set of sustainable development indicators including Sustainable Development Education (to be developed to monitor the impact of formal learning on knowledge and awareness of sustainable development…There is also a need to strengthen the involvement of civil society in governance at multiple levels (e.g., school, community, region, country). (Baker and Gilligan, 2005)

The Centre for Sustainable Futures (CSF), the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Education for Sustainable Development (CETL ESD) at the University of Plymouth, was developed in direct response to UN-DESD. Parallel with the formal approval of the University of Plymouth’s Sustainability Policy and Strategic Action Plan, and on the recommendation of CSF, in 2007 the Acting Vice Chancellor signed or otherwise affirmed commitment to a range of international concordats on sustainability on behalf of the University. Two of the concordats make specific reference to the ways that a University could most effectively advance its own and the region’s sustainability agenda in partnership with regional communities, groups and networks. The Halifax Declaration and the Talloires Declaration make specific reference to community engagement, the details of which are highlighted below.
2.12 The Halifax Declaration


- Assessing community needs for environmental information, assessment, and technology transfer and seeing how university programs might respond
- Adjusting the university reward system to account for community service and outreach as a balance for other criteria for tenure and promotion

2.13 The Talloires Declaration

The Talloires Declaration (1990) of the Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future is a declaration for sustainability created for and by presidents of institutions of higher learning. The document is a declaration that institutions of higher learning will be world leaders in developing, creating, supporting and maintaining sustainability. The 10 Point Action Plan includes the following, relevant points:

- **Involve All Stakeholders**
  Encourage involvement of government, foundations, and industry in supporting interdisciplinary research, education, policy formation, and information exchange in environmentally sustainable development. Expand work with community and nongovernmental organisations to assist in finding solutions to environmental problems

- **Broaden Service and Outreach Nationally and Internationally**
  Work with national and international organisations to promote a worldwide university effort toward a sustainable future
  [http://www.ulsf.org/programs_talloires.html](http://www.ulsf.org/programs_talloires.html)

2.14 The PASCAL Observatory

The PASCAL Observatory is an international research and policy development alliance which aims to develop, communicate and explain new and emerging ideas in the areas of place management, social capital and learning regions.

The central purpose is to enable the effective delivery of policies that improve the quality of living and working circumstances at local and regional levels, recognising the importance of learning, social capital and the necessity of partnership for the successful implementation of policy.
PASCAL operates globally from three centres at RMIT University, University of Glasgow and the Northern Illinois University. It is co-directed by Professor Mike Osborne in Glasgow, Professor Bruce Wilson in RMIT and Dr Robert Gleeson at NIU. Chief Executive is Mr John Tibbitt, based at Glasgow University.

PASCAL’s overarching research themes are:

- **Social Capital** - concerned with the resources available to individuals, community groups and business organisations deriving from participation in networks.

- **Learning Regions** - places which have recognised that multiple players have a role in promoting and facilitating learning that develops the social and economic wellbeing of the locality. The concept can refer to a region, city, urban or rural area, regardless of whether its identity is defined in administrative, cultural, geographical, physical or political terms. Learning regions are about lifelong and life wide learning, and as such embraces learning across the lifespan, and encompasses a range of knowledge and skills going beyond basic literacy and numeracy. Learning regions provide an underlying environment or infrastructure which facilitates the flow of knowledge and ideas between and within organisations and communities.

Drawing on these research themes, PASCAL is developing work on several key policy themes. These are:

- The implementation of lifelong learning
- Governance and reform in regional administration
- Research and Development and Innovation
- The „third’ mission of higher education institutions in regional engagement

2.2 National Policy Context

2.21 Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

In November 2009 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (DBIS) set out its vision for British higher education in a paper entitled: *Higher Ambitions: The future of universities in knowledge economy* (2009). The document details the ways that universities can remain world class and competitive, while continuing to attract the brightest students and researchers. The DBIS explicitly links a „strong university system’ with community and civic engagement in their overall vision for higher education:

A strong university system is essential to a country’s economic success and the vibrancy and depth of its intellectual and cultural life. Universities embody both our values and our aspirations. They play a huge role in our communities through the provision of cultural and sporting amenities and in passing on and preserving
a set of shared societal values, including tolerance, freedom of expression and civic engagement.
(DBIS 2009, 18)

2.22 Sustainable Communities Plan

Sustainable Communities, Education for Sustainable Development and increased public engagement across the Higher Education sector are important, and connected initiatives for the current British government. In February 2003, the Government published the £38 billion Sustainable Communities Plan, a comprehensive programme of investment in homes and neighbourhoods. Key policy areas are listed below in hyperlinked form for easy access to the full documents:

The Sustainable Communities Plan
The Academy for Sustainable Communities
Cleaner safer greener communities
Homes and Communities Academy Awards
The Egan Review of Skills
Publications about Sustainable Communities
The Delivering Sustainable Communities Summit 2005

2.23 The Egan Review – Skills for Sustainable Communities

In April 2003, Sir John Egan was asked by the Deputy Prime Minister to conduct a review to consider the skills needed to help deliver the vision and aims of the Sustainable Communities Plan. Sir Egan’s overall approach to the Review was to consider:

- the attributes and qualities which make communities sustainable and how these elements can be measured in terms of success and failure
- the processes necessary to deliver success
- the professional skills needed for those processes and how they differ from what we have available now
- the necessary changes to processes and professional skills

The review asserts that:

The Government should work with professional institutions, local authorities, education institutions, Sector Skills Councils and Regional Centres of Excellence to develop professional campaigns that will raise the profile of core occupations and understanding of their role in sustainable communities and in turn encourage entrants into these occupations.
(OPDM 2004, 13)
Furthermore, the Egan Review called for the creation of the Homes and Communities Academy to help create the Government's definition of a sustainable community. The eight components of a sustainable community are defined by the academy as:

- Governance - Well-run communities with effective and inclusive participation, representation and leadership
- Transport and Connectivity - Well-connected communities with good transport services and communications linking people to jobs, health and other services
- Services - Public, private and community and voluntary services that are accessible to all
- Environmental - Providing places for people to live in an environmentally-friendly way
- Equity - Fair for everyone in our diverse world and for both today's and tomorrow's communities
- Economy - A thriving and vibrant local economy
- Housing and the Built Environment - High-quality buildings
- Social and Culture - Active, inclusive and safe with a strong local culture and other shared community activities

[http://www.hcaacademy.co.uk/what-makes-a-community-sustainable](http://www.hcaacademy.co.uk/what-makes-a-community-sustainable)

2.24 The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE)

The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE), funded by the UK Higher Education Funding Councils, Research Councils UK and the Wellcome Trust is central to an initiative that aims to make universities more welcoming and accessible, and to deepen the social impact and relevance of their work. The NCCPE was established in 2008 as part of the £9.2m Beacons for Public Engagement initiative. It consists of a network of six beacons across the UK which are university based, collaborative centres that help support and build capacity for public engagement work. The NCCPE co-ordinates learning between the beacons and across UK higher education institutions (HEIs) and research institutes. The seven dimensions of Public Engagement that will inform the structure of the University of Plymouth’s Draft Community Engagement Strategy emerge from NCCPE recommendations.

2.3 Regional Policy Context

2.31 Sustainable Communities South West

As a major local and regional employer, the University’s decisions and actions are deeply bound up with the sustainability prospects of the South West. One of the key principles behind the Sustainable Communities Plan is that different parts of the country face different problems, and that new ways of working at the neighbourhood, local, sub-regional and regional levels are needed in order to share in the nation’s prosperity. Therefore, there is a Sustainable Communities Plan for the South West: Sustainable communities in the south west. Building our future (ODPM: 2003). The Government Offices, the voluntary Regional Assemblies, the Regional Development Agencies, the
Learning and Skills Council and other regionally-based organisations are currently working together to create sustainable communities, reflecting regional priorities in the South West. According to the Sustainable Communities in the South West. Building Our Future (2003) creating sustainable communities is about:

- Increasing jobs and economic growth, promoting social justice and improving the quality of life.
- Encouraging people to get involved in the decisions which affect their community.
- Delivering better public services.
- Building schools, hospitals and transport as an integral part of development, not an afterthought.
- And improving the environment, for example by making streets, parks and squares cleaner, safer and greener, and building more environmentally friendly buildings.

(OPDM 2003, 3)

2.32 South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA)

The South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) took the lead on production of The Way Ahead, the region’s proposal to help deliver key themes in the Sustainable Communities Plan and reduce intra-regional disparities. SWRDA receives funding to provide economic leadership in the South West, and partners are closely working together to close the gap in productivity and prosperity. SWRDA is also driving delivery of the Regional Economic Strategy and the process of revision.

2.33 Creating Excellence

Creating Excellence is supported by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the South West Regional Development Agency. It provides people involved in regeneration and sustainable communities with key information, learning and expertise. Creating Excellence shares advice about best practice through this web site and publications, and creates case studies and learning events to provide skills development and inspiration.

2.4. The University of Plymouth

As „the enterprise university”, the University of Plymouth is explicit in its commitment to social responsibility and responsible business ethics. The university supports schools, not-for-profit, voluntary and community groups with an extensive programme of community and public engagement. Furthermore, the university is a member of Business in the Community. The University of Plymouth's commitment to social responsibility entry has been nationally recognised as demonstrating excellence in sustainability and was short listed for Stage 2 of the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) 2009 Green Gown Awards. The project entry Shattering Glass Walls to Deliver Sustainable Community Enterprise is a demonstration
of the university's close partnership working with the Mutley Greenbank Trust community group, marking the success of the annual and socially inclusive Open House community campaign initiative.

Key University of Plymouth policies and documents that relate to sustainability and community engagement are listed below in hyperlinked format, where available:

Corporate social responsibility report (PDF document)
Sustainability policy (Word document) and action plan (Excel document)
Sustainable procurement policy (Word document)
Widening participation strategy (Word document)
Active in Communities
The University of Plymouth Green Agenda
Equality and Diversity policies
Teaching and Learning Strategy 2009-2012
Business in the Community
People and Planet's Green League Table
Plymouth Better Together

2.41 Centre for Sustainable Futures - Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

CSF takes a holistic view of education for sustainable development and has a model of institutional change that includes curriculum, campus, community and cultural change. In the CETL-ESD HECE bid document (Dyer and Selby 2004) there is sporadic reference to community engagement. The references that are to be found are framed in terms of enhancing the student learning experience through community engagement and action research in South West communities (Dyer & Selby, 2004:11&18). In 2007 the CSF developed the University of Plymouth’s first Sustainability Policy and corresponding Sustainability Strategic Action Plan, and the Sustainability Policy Elaboration Document. The policy was approved by the Academic Board 12 March 2008. One of four sections is devoted to the community ‘C’ of CSF’s 4-C approach to institutional transformation towards sustainability:

Community

The university

- Commits to the corporate social responsibility agenda;
- Recognises its role and responsibilities in advancing the sustainability agenda across the region and more broadly;
- Welcomes opportunities to provide and participate in sustainability partnerships across the region;
• Seeks opportunities for national and international engagement with the sustainability agenda through collaboration with other relevant organisations and agencies, including higher education institutions. 

http://csf.plymouth.ac.uk/?q=policy

Below are the points from the Sustainability Policy Elaboration Document that relate to the tripartite framework of community university partnerships, namely community-university engagement, student learning in the community and community-based research:

I) Aspects of the Sustainability Policy Elaboration Document points that relate to community-university engagement:

6.1 The University recognises that its staff and students are part of both an internal community, as well as members of a wider community within which the University operates. The University is committed to act in a socially responsible way and, in accordance with its Corporate Plan, will both seek to mitigate any adverse community impacts and seek to improve its contribution to the wider community.

6.2 The University acknowledges that it has a leading role to play in advancing the sustainability agenda in the South West of England through partnerships with local and regional government, schools and other educational providers, non-governmental organisations, the corporate sector and local and regional faith and issue groups. It intends to fulfill that role by creating and contributing to local and regional sustainability networks, through community and regional sustainability research and development partnerships, through distance learning, by providing arenas for best practice and knowledge exchanges and transfers and special events open to the public, and by offering outreach community learning programmes.

6.3 The University is working particularly through local schools and community outreach programmes to widen access to and levels of participation in higher education, for the benefit of individuals and the wider community. The University will continue to seek to overcome barriers to participation in higher education by socially marginalized and excluded groups.

II) Aspect of the Sustainability Policy Elaboration Document that relates to student learning in the community:

6.4 The University recognises and values the huge potential offered by community and regional sustainability initiatives for student off-campus learning and for enhancing the student learning experience. To this end, programmes and modules are being designed or amended to enable students to locate field and placement experiences with such initiatives.
III) Aspect of the Sustainability Policy Elaboration Document that relates to community-based research:

6.5 The University recognises and values the rich potential for leading-edge sustainability research available to its academic staff within the South West region through community, corporate and regional sustainability initiative.

3 NCCPE Dimensions of public engagement

In their research summary, *Summary: Auditing, Benchmarking and Evaluating Public Engagement*, The National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE) states that its vision is of a „higher education sector making a vital, strategic and valued contribution to 21st century society through its public engagement activity“ (2009, 2). The NCCPE’s mission is to „support universities to increase the quality and quantity of their public engagement activity“ (ibid.). Part of this work involves developing a research base that supports people in their public engagement work. Furthermore, a framework outlining the dimensions of public engagement is proposed as a starting point when considering ways to measure engagement. However, the framework is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to public engagement. The seven dimensions are as follows:

1. Public access to facilities
2. Public access to knowledge
3. Student engagement
4. Faculty engagement
5. Widening participation
6. Encouraging economic regeneration and enterprise
7. Institutional relationship and partnership building

The NCCPE’s seven dimensions have contributed to the framework for the University of Plymouth’s community-engagement strategy. Sustainability is a thread that runs throughout the Draft Community University Engagement Strategy.

The aim of this section is to provide an evidence base for the ways that sustainability is interwoven in current community engagement initiatives at the University of Plymouth. Specific past and present Plymouth initiatives are detailed in order to highlight existing excellence in these areas. Section 3 follows a sequential format followed; that is each aspect responds to each of the NCCPE’s seven dimensions numerically.

As regards to the methodology employed in collating information on the initiatives below, data was gathered through CSF’s close associations with particular staff, colleagues in the community and initiatives, and through extranet and intranet searches. The author acknowledges that the level of detail provided varies. This does not denote importance but instead, relates to the availability of data at the time of writing. Because there will be key initiatives not covered in the briefing paper the document is a live resource and is attended to be amended in the futures as people see fit.
3.1 Public access to our campus and facilities

The sustainability dimensions of public access to the University of Plymouth campus have taken two forms: sustainability-focussed events, and campus development projects that have been congruent with sustainability precepts and principles. As regards to the former, the CSF has organised approximately 100 events free events, such as public lectures, exhibitions and performance including through Peninsula Arts. Of particular import, in November 2009 Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change, Ed Miliband, MP joined University experts in a public question and answer session on topical issues ahead of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

Kirkby Lodge
From 2005 the building attracted groups from all areas of the university, as well as local and regional sustainability organisations, as a comfortable and interesting space for meetings. A continuing series of events, lectures and seminars based on sustainability themes, including the Wednesday seminars, has been a feature since opening. The building has become the hub of what, in shorthand, is called the CSF Community (including the Core Team, Centre Fellows, other academics and students working closely with the Centre).

Roland Levinsky Building
One of CSF’s proposals was for a strong sustainability presence within the University Gateway in the Roland Levinsky Building. This presence was envisaged as a sustainability „shop window’ and information point linking to all university sustainability developments, including the use of conference, lecture, performance, exhibition and gallery facilities for ESD purposes and the location of a Sustainability Speakers Corner in the facility. The Roland Levinsky complex was planned to be a strong feature in the delivery of the „Community’ strand. Evaluation of the use of the building in 2010 suggests that this has not been fully achieved, and remains a key aspiration of the CSF legacy.

Campus as a Learning Resource Project (CAALR)
The University has embarked on a range of interactive activities and trails designed to link the campus with the city centre, and to encourage people to walk through the campus and celebrate the heritage of the cityscape. Furthermore, it is hoped that the activities and trails will enhance the city’s economy and draw in visitors from outside the area.

Drake’s Reservoir and Drake’s Place Gardens
Science, City of Plymouth and Greenbank Community Association
The CSF-enabled landscaping of Drake’s Place project created one of the few, large green spaces now available to the university community. Associated with Sir Francis Drake and the reservoir built in his name, the park was owned by Plymouth City Council. Working closely with local residents and community groups, CSF funded the replacement of railings and gates to secure the park and the installation of lighting and
security cameras. Future projects involve a Heritage Lottery bid for potential development funding that will enhance the site to provide a tranquil green space for the community, local residents, and university staff and students. The area is planned to host community events and activities including performances and meeting places/social spaces. This is linked to the Nature Trail and Geological Trail detailed below.

**Geological Trail**  
**Geology, Architecture and Plymouth City Museum**  
This project involves the development of an educational trail that will highlight key points of interest across the city and campus buildings. Providing a new twist on the urban cityscape for schoolchildren (Key Stage 3), residents and tourists, this trail will celebrate fossils and the unique stone constitutions related to the quarries and vernacular building materials of the South West. The trail will begin from a giant ammonite positioned within the City Jigsaw Garden and will link to the nature trail. Furthermore, paper-based and digital locations systems technology will be made available for participants.

**Nature Trail**  
**Active in the Communities, Science, Education and Plymouth City Council**  
The Nature Trail will wind through the city centre’s parks and green spaces to provide an educational resource for schools and an activity for residents and visitors to the city to enjoy. Linking six parks and beginning at the City Jigsaw Garden, the trail will encompass environmental and sustainability education by highlighting wildlife, insects and plant variation, and promote biodiversity.

**City Jigsaw Garden**  
**Active in the Community, Plymouth City Centre Company, Groundwork, Kandahar and M&S**  
This initiative aims to create a temporary community green space that will celebrate art and cultural diversity. It involves regenerating a piece of wasteland in the heart of the city centre and forming part of the city’s Cultural and Educational Quarter. Emerging from a partnership between university design students and created by volunteers, the site will be developed in Spring 2010 and was opened during the university Open House in May 2010. An amphitheatre and art installations will feature in this city show case piece, serving as a link to campus with the city centre.

3.2 Public access to knowledge

The University of Plymouth is explicit in its commitment to determining the social and economic impact of university activity on the community advancing the region’s sustainability agenda in partnership with the wider community.

**Community Research Award Scheme**

The University is committed to providing community and voluntary group access to funded research to support intelligence gathering and future funding proposals. In particular, the Social Research and Regeneration Unit (SERIO), one of the University’s
Centres of Expertise, undertakes a wide range of applied research and has an established record of working with public, voluntary, charity and community organisations.

In 2008, the University asked people working with a community group or charity in Plymouth or the South West whether there was something they would like to know to help achieve their aims. This developed into the annual, competitive Community Research Awards. The University selects projects that appear to be achievable within the available resources, and which would have the greatest impact. Funding is made available to the selected research teams so there were no costs incurred by the community groups.

Outside of the Community Research Award Scheme the sections below highlight available information on explicitly sustainability-focussed research and development work undertaken alongside communities in the South West region.

**Green Village Project**
CSF formed a partnership with Westden, a local non-governmental sustainability organisation, in an initiative called Green Village. Through the year-long initiative (May 2006-May 2007), CSF and Westden worked together with the residents of Belstone, a Dartmoor village of around 250 people, to introduce practical changes to make life in the village more sustainable. An action research approach was used for the project, making it a shared journey where all partners are both experts and learners.

Dissemination/publications:


**Sustainability, Society and Health, Faculty of Health and Social Work**
This is a cross-Faculty, multi-disciplinary group that explores issues and seeks solutions to the challenges sustainability (climate change, fossil fuel and food security) presents to society and health. The challenges are approached through research, education, information and action. Some of this work has been supported through CSF Centre Fellowships. The group’s work with external organisations is focused on actions that help to build Sustainable Communities

The group is currently undertaking a systematic review of the literature on individual and community resilience and to explore its relevance to health and sustainability, and plans to embed this literature into the curriculum. The group initiated and are leading the Totnes Healthy Futures Project; a working example of the integration of local food production with physical activity and the promotion of health and wellbeing. The project
is a partnership initiative promoted by, Totnes Development Trust, Transition Town Totnes (Food Group and Health and wellbeing Group), Totnes Leatside Surgery and the Faculty of Health and Social Work at the University of Plymouth with Professor Janet Richardson. Working with Devon PCT and Transition Town Totnes the group have carried out and Integrated Health Impact Assessment of a proposed development in Totnes, with a specific focus on sustainability impacts.

**Older people in rural civic society**
Professor Catherine Hennessy from the School of Nursing and Communities Project leads a multi-centre study entitled „Grey and pleasant land? An interdisciplinary exploration of the connectivity of older people in rural civic society‘. The study will focus on the quality of life of older people in rural areas by analysing the extent of their involvement in their communities, leisure patterns and cultural interests. It will also address the barriers and opportunities for participation that they experience and their attitudes to the countryside as a social, cultural and environmental spa. Clearly climate change will have a major impact on the lives of older people living in rural areas.

**Stepping Stones to Nature Project**
This is a Lottery-funded project run in partnership with Plymouth City Council. The aims of the Stepping Stones to Nature project is to engage people from areas Plymouth in accessing nature. The Sustainability, Society and Health group we will be involved in the evaluation.

Dissemination/publications:

Sustainable Health Impact Assessment of Baltic Wharf
[http://totnes.transitionnetwork.org/healthandwellbeing/HIAintro](http://totnes.transitionnetwork.org/healthandwellbeing/HIAintro)


Doris F, Jones RB. Live interactive webcasting as an alternative to face-to-face education in midwifery. (submitted Midwifery).

A 2000 word paper on sustainability and nursing for the Nursing Standard which will be submitted soon. (Benny Goodman)

Established a connections page on The Climate Connection website. (http://www.theclimateconnection.org/)

Organised a meeting and presentations at Dartington Hall March 2008 http://totnes.transitionnetwork.org/node/765 and associated webcast: http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/health/webcasts (go to the archive section).

Established a connections page on The Climate Connection website. (http://www.theclimateconnection.org/)

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**University of Plymouth Food Initiative**
The ecological and environmental consequences of the food system and consumption patterns, highlighted in the recent 2030 report (DEFRA, 2010) are now priorities for the University. This stemmed from a collaborative process facilitated by Barefoot Partnership and involving stakeholders from within and outside the University. The aim was to successfully deliver a coherent and holistic Food Initiative that would be a major test of sustainability in practice. In doing so, the proposed Food Initiative was anticipated to help communicate the vision of the University of Plymouth as both sustainable and enterprising. A one day workshop was run with all participating stakeholders at Schumacher College in 2009 which has resulted in subsequent action in the creation of a Food Initiatives working group having support from the highest level at the University, with positive signs of change already. As a follow up is the proposed development of a Plymouth-wide Food Initiative. Currently in its infancy, a steering group, facilitated by the Soil Association will be meeting June 2010. If this project is
successful, it should have far reaching positive benefits for the city of Plymouth in terms of creative food related opportunities, improving community cohesion and engagement.

Dissemination/publications:

Pettinger C Holdsworth M & Gerber M (2006) Food availability and shopping practices in Mediterranean France and Central England Public Health Nutrition Abstracts of the I World Congress of Public Health Nutrition 9(7) p68 (although predominantly a cross-cultural study, it highlights some key methodological issues in relation to mapping of the food environment, a key consideration with regard to food sustainability)


Community Psychology Conference:
Change Challenges: exploring the links between environment, equality, sustainability & community well-being 1 – 2 July 2010, University of Plymouth
With a focus on the environment, equality, sustainability and community wellbeing, the two day conference will explore and debate these issues in a participatory, challenging, and inclusive event. The conference will bring together community psychologists and other psychologists with community activists, along with people from the business sector as well as local and national government to explore how we can use and change psychology together for sustainability, well-being and justice.

3.3 Student engagement

Student learning through volunteering opportunities

The Volunteering in Plymouth (ViP) programme and the university’s Active in Community (AiC) programme aims to enhance student learning and employability. In Summer 2008 CSF employed a Student Sustainability Liaison who worked with University of Plymouth Student Union (UPSU) volunteer coordinators and other staff with responsibility for student work based placements or volunteering. Resultantly, the University is better equipped to advise students on volunteering and work-based placements with a sustainability focus. The development of the Student Greenhouse on the CSF website is seen as a powerful tool in this development.

One of the more established sustainability student volunteering opportunities is the Volunteering in Plymouth (ViP) Moor Trees Project. Moor Trees is a Devon-based environmental charity focussed on Dartmoor National Park and its surrounding area. It works with local people to create and restore native woodland aims to:

- Create new, and enable natural regeneration of, native woodland
- Build social cohesion through volunteering
- Provide high quality education and training
Volunteers work with local individuals, groups and businesses to collect local seed to grow local provenance trees in our community tree nurseries before planting in our woodlands. Furthermore, the Woodlands Service gives free advice and trees to landowners for the planting and regeneration of native woodlands. Other student engagement has involved dietetic students volunteering in food related community projects, including the annual Respect Festival, North Prospect Food co-operative and child weight management programmes.

Student learning in the community

The University of Plymouth is committed to sustainability-focussed student learning in the community. The Teaching and Learning Strategy 2009-2012 (University of Plymouth, 2009) incorporates sustainability as a Key Theme:

- We will champion the importance of developing sustainability literate graduates, who possess the skills needed to engage with the sustainability agenda as professionals, citizens and in their personal lives
- We will encourage all disciplines to embed sustainability within their curricula and utilise the learning and research opportunities provided by campus and community sustainability initiatives

Additionally, in the Sustainability Policy Elaboration Document (University of Plymouth, 2008):

6.4 The University recognises and values the huge potential offered by community and regional sustainability initiatives for student off-campus learning and for enhancing the student learning experience. To this end, programmes and modules are being designed or amended to enable students to locate field and placement experiences with such initiatives.

The University has an excellent track record of innovative sustainability-focussed student learning opportunities in the community. The impact of which is well-researched and disseminated in a variety of publications. Below is a summary of key initiatives:

The Sustainability, Society and Health, Faculty of Health and Social Work
In addition to their research portfolio, the cross-Faculty, multi-disciplinary group, the Sustainability, Society and Health in the Faculty of Health and Social Work works towards raising sustainability consciousness within the student population. They do this through curricula development towards sustainability, web casting as a sustainable
method of supporting teaching and learning, and creating an outdoor teaching and learning space for sustainability.

Students and Refugees Together START Project
The START project is a service to refugees and asylum seekers, a group that experience acute social exclusion and media-induced hostility. START seeks to advance the education of social work students in training by providing learning experiences, which contribute to their personal and professional development. The project has won the South Region Social Care Category of the annual Health and Social Care Awards after helping over 300 refugees and asylum seekers in Plymouth since it began in 2001. It is a registered charity funded largely by Plymouth City Council 'Supporting People Programme' and the Big Lottery and its success was recognised at the Health and Social Care Awards in 2005.

Dissemination/publications:

Sustainable community development and Social Work
The Sustainable Communities Project started as a small-scale, experimental initiative in which sustainability themes and processes were embedded into the Community Development Project (CDP) aspect of a group of year 1 BSc (Hons) Social Work students' practice learning, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009. Through a CSF Centre Fellowship qualitative research into the potential ways that community-university partnerships in the form of student CDPs, can help take forward the local sustainability agenda was integral to the design, development and implementation of the project. Students, community development agency supervisors and staff were invited to participate with the research process. The project continues to be developed through the new BA (Hons) Social Work programme:

Dissemination/publications:


Trebullo Farm Project
CSF Centre Fellow John Burnett, Head of Steiner Education at the University of Plymouth initiated the Trebullo Farm Project in North Cornwall. The project, which was launched in September 2006 by tutors and students from the University of
Plymouth, aimed to develop a teaching and learning centre in rural Cornwall as a resource for higher education students wishing to develop skills and learn about sustainability issues in a practical ‘hands-on’ environment. The Trebullom Farm Project looked at community volunteering, and the interface between the predominately urban cultures of Higher Education Institutions and the needs and aspirations of local rural communities. The project’s three-fold social model: cultural/social/economic was discussed with some initial consideration of the holistic philosophy of sustainability underpinning the project.

Dissemination/publications:


**Minimal impact communities**

CSF Centre Fellows Roger Cutting and Robert Cook, from the Faculty of Education developed opportunities for University of Plymouth students to gain experience of, and develop research with, ‘minimal impact communities’ in the South West. These communities are focused on developing and promoting self-reliance, simplicity and a minimised “global footprint”. The CSF fellowship enabled the development of learning experiences for students through visits to, and collaboration with, these communities and their networks of associated organisations and individuals. This would enable students from across the university to engage closely in the practical application of sustainable development theory through the initiatives associated with the communities, and also to promote opportunities for their own project and research development.

Dissemination/publications:


**Dietetic (and public health nutrition) student related community involvement**

Community champions from the North Prospect Food Co-operative have been involved in ‘skills sharing’ with 3rd year dietetic students, through discussing the aims and objectives of their project. This enables the students to learn, first hand, how community project work ‘at grass roots’ level. This session has always been evaluated most highly by students.

Opportunities also exist in the community for dietetic honours project (School of Health Professions, Faculty of Health). In 2009 Dr Clare Pettinger supervised 2 students who carried out an extensive mapping project to investigate the proximity of fast-food outlets to secondary schools in Plymouth, in an attempt to relate these to socioeconomic deprivation and childhood obesity. In 2010 a student dietetic research group are carrying out an exploratory study of the impact of a community gardening project on children’s perceptions and behaviour towards the consumption of fruit and vegetables.
As the Plymouth Food Initiatives project gains momentum, it is expected that there will be more of such community food projects available for student participation, and further Masters developments may increase such opportunities.

3.4 Faculty engagement

Faculty members engage with sustainability-focussed, communities initiatives in myriad ways. The majority of these initiatives are outlined above as regards to teaching and learning and research. A key aspect of the university’s current remit is to enhance community and voluntary sector activity through the involvement of staff and student volunteering. One key project outlined in The University of Plymouth’s Strategic Plan, *Creating Our Future 2009-2012* Key projects 2009 – 2012 is to „Credit volunteering and work placement opportunities for our students and staff“ (University of Plymouth 2009, 13). Furthermore, faculty engagement was a stated aim of the university’s Active In Communities (AiC) project:

- To promote and support volunteering within the University’s wider strategy for widening participation and community engagement.
- To sustain, embed and extend staff volunteering activity across the University of Plymouth

At present, however, there are no announced, planned faculty engagement opportunities. Many staff volunteer outside of their working hours and it is not currently possible to measure the extent of this activity.

3.5 Widening participation

Widening Participation (WP) and sustainability are explicitly linked priorities of the university. WP’s priorities are:

- Working with target schools and providing financial support for students in line with our Access agreement
- Managing Aimhigher within the Peninsula Area
- Undertaking community outreach activity

During 2007-8, the University approved a Sustainability Policy and Action Plan and undertook a review of its performance using the Business in the Community’s established national benchmark, the Corporate Responsibility (CR) Index 1. The CR Index is a voluntary, business-led benchmark of responsible business practice. The university was given a silver banding relative to its regional peers and a gold banding for its environmental performance. In both 2007 and 2008 the University was identified as the second greenest university in the UK, in a survey compiled by People & Planet, the largest student network campaigning to protect the environment.

Section 5 of the CR Index report highlighted the ways in which the University’s Widening Participation strategy promotes and provides opportunities for participation in
higher education through a variety of activities for schools, parents and teachers, and community groups. In 2006-7 the University worked with 46,512 people in the South West Peninsula engaging them in a wide portfolio of widening participation/community outreach activities which help to raise awareness, aspirations and achievement for Higher Education.

**Sustainability and Schools**

The CSF has been closely involved with the development of the Sustainable Schools agenda in the South West, particularly through the work of Alan Dyer. Dyer is a founding member of the Devon Education for Sustainability Working Group (DESWG), which is run through Devon County Council education and advisory service. DESWG brings together practitioners and providers, advises on strategy, organises conferences, courses, workshops and generates resource materials. Additionally, CSF is the founding member of the South West Learning for Sustainability Coalition which was established to work with all key regional bodies to co-ordinate and facilitate learning for sustainability in the South West Region within and across all social sectors and educational phases. After initial informal success, the coalition is now registered as a Community Interest Company and has received funding from the Government Office of the South West, and has run a series of three-day training worships for teachers, head teachers and governors across the region. Since its inception in 2005 the CSF has run a large number of workshops for teachers, has advised schools on sustainability curriculum issues and Ecoschool accreditation. As regards to dissemination Alan Dyer has given numerous keynote addresses to regional and national conferences and regional Head teacher Associations. The CSF has been able to assist with student placements and attachments that have enabled schools and field centres provide sustainability experiences for children. Sustainability courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level have been established in the Faculty of Education through the CSF.

**Active in Communities Project (AiC)**

AiC sought to engage and support the community and Third Sector with aspiration-raising, educational, interactive, on-campus activities and events. AiC funding ended in 2009 and its activities have since been covered by central university funds. AiC was a key part of the university’s community engagement strategy and corporate social responsibility initiatives. AiC projects have included work with volunteering, fundraising, in-kind donations and mentoring activities, as well as community events. Many of the projects had a strong and explicit sustainability theme; looking environmental and social justice concerns. Activities include beach cleans, litter picking in city streets and parks, tree planting and job coaching the city’s homeless. Working in collaboration with a range of partners remains a priority for the university and projects continue to support community groups, charities, voluntary groups and schools. Current activities encourage partnership working through large scale events including the university’s Open House that takes place in May each year, in support of the annual Volunteer’s Week. Staff and student volunteering is encouraged and supported through the work with staff team away days.

3.6 **Encouraging economic regeneration and enterprise**
As the self-described "enterprise university", the University of Plymouth is explicit in its aim to:

become an exemplar in sustainability, social responsibility and responsible business practice, engaging with our wider community and continually monitoring, improving and sharing our achievements.

(The University of Plymouth Corporate Social Responsibility Report 2007/8, 1)

With the support of our Centre for Sustainable Futures and membership of Business in the Community the university has committed to the following:

- Conservation of natural resources used by the university
- Minimising adverse environmental effects of travelling
- Ethical and sustainable procurement
- The well being of our people and employee relations
- Enhancing our community and public engagement
- Developing sustainability-literate graduates
- This underpins our Charter Holder commitment to Plymouth Better Together

(University of Plymouth, 2010)

According to People and Planet's Green League Table, since 2007, Plymouth has consistently been a top performing university in terms of the environment and sustainability. In November 2006 the University approved a Sustainable Procurement Policy encouraging ethical, social and environmental considerations. There has been significant work with University contractors to ensure that environmental principles are adhered through the use of BREEAM ratings in capital projects, including the Roland Levinsky Building. In May 2006 the University was granted Fairtrade status. ISO14001 is the internationally recognised standard defining the requirements for implementing and operating an Environmental Management System (EMS). Some 250,000 organisations worldwide now have ISO 14001 status but only a very few universities in the UK. BS8900 is the British Standard Guidance for Managing Sustainable Development and is likely to become ISO26000 as a standard for sustainable development. In 2009 the University was accredited with both standards. The standards do not lay down specific environmental performance criteria but provide a framework within which an organisation engages in a continuous and upward spiral of developing policy, establishing objectives, monitoring targets and processes to deliver the policies.

3.7 Institutional relationship and partnership building

The University's Corporate Responsibility, Widening Participation, Active in Communities, and Sustainability Schools agendas aim to build and strengthen institutional relationships and partnerships. In addition, the University’s Centre for Sustainable Transport applies their expertise in sustainability research to tackle environmental concerns such as transportation and energy production.
The University’s Centre for Sustainable Transport (CST) opened in 2007 in partnership with the CSF. It aims to be a centre of national and international excellence in the field of sustainable transport. CST members have established a first-class reputation through their transport-related research work in fields including geography, sociology, economics, shipping and logistics, criminology and law. A central aspect of the Centre is its non-academic membership and they work in partnership with the Socio-Economic Research and Intelligence Observatory (SERIO), and the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership, a highly respected sustainable transport developer promoting car-free days out in the South West.

The aims of CST are supported by key University policies. Section 2a of the Corporate Responsibility Index 1 commits to reducing adverse environmental effects of people travelling to and from our campuses, on university business and to work-related events. The University’s Environmental Policy makes a commitment to resource efficiency in relation to transport associated with day to day activities and new developments. The University’s travel plan has established targets to increase staff use of public transport for work place journeys from 17% to 22% by September 2009. At January 2007 public transport use had increased to 25%, exceeding the target.

A related initiative is The Bicycle Users group. This is for staff who cycle to the Plymouth Campus (and other campuses). Its’ aims are:

- To encourage the University to openly promote and support cycling as a means of daily transport
- To work with the University to improve facilities for cyclists on campus and
- To work with Plymouth City Council (PCC) and other groups to make cycling to the campus safe.

The group has collaborated with Plymouth City Council to bring to Plymouth its first Bicycle film festival, a series of films to promote cycling culture, to be held in Summer 2010 in the Jill Craigie cinema.

http://intranet.plymouth.ac.uk/bug/intranet.htm

4. Key points and future potentials

The briefing paper has four objectives:

1. Frame the relationship between sustainability and community engagement at the University of Plymouth within the academic literature and policy context.

2. Provide an evidence base for key, university initiatives taking place at the interface between community engagement and sustainability under the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE’s) seven dimensions.
3. Provide an initial analysis of the most and least covered dimensions.

4. Relate the NCCPE’s seven dimensions of public engagement to the University of Plymouth’s Draft Community Engagement Strategy, and reflect upon future potentials for practice at the interface between sustainability and community-university engagement.

This section will focus on objectives 3 and 4.

**Key point 1**
There is present no explicit linking of sustainable community engagement activities and initiatives at the University of Plymouth.

**Future potentials**
Further mapping of activities at Plymouth in the context of the relevant academic literature in the field would prove to be a highly useful resource to inform future policy and implementation.

Information on activities could be made widely accessible. This might be coordinated by a team of community development workers across the university. Best practice might be drawn from the work of the PCMD Dentistry School’s community development worker. The school has specific funding for this role and the model is deemed highly successful. Furthermore, coordination of community development opportunities could be linked to the university’s Enterprise Enablers initiative.

**Key point 2**
At all levels of policy; international, national, regional and at the University of Plymouth explicit connections between sustainability and community engagement are made.

**Future potential**
The links could be made explicit in the University of Plymouth’s Community Engagement Strategy.

**Key point 3**
Since signing or otherwise affirming commitment to two international concordats on sustainability in 2007 namely; The Halifax Declaration and the Talloires Declaration, the university has not yet developed the related action plans.

**Future potential**
For key personnel engaged in sustainability and community engagement across the university to develop related action plans in response to the Halifax Declaration and the Talloires Declaration.

**Key point 4**
CUPP (Community-University Partnership Programme) have identified three main areas that fall under the umbrella term „community engagement“:

1. Community-university engagement
2. Student learning in the community
3. Community-based research

According to CUPP’s tripartite framework, student learning in the community and community-based research respectively are by far the most, well-covered areas at the University of Plymouth.

Certain dimensions are covered regardless of a sustainability edge, so that the proportion of sustainability-focussed activities under the NCCPE’s seven dimensions is in keeping with the general coverage across the dimensions. The document reveals that activities take place disproportionately across the seven dimensions. This is understandable given the University Plymouth’s principle aims, namely, teaching and learning, and research and enterprise. In particular, the dimension that is currently under represented is Faculty engagement.

**Future potential**
Faculty engagement could be developed and form part of existent sustainability-focussed, staff, CPD opportunities. The initiative could fall under the remit of the forthcoming Sustainability Institute.

**Key point 5**
As regards to community access to facilities, the CETL capital spends on The Gateway has not yet enabled all target community groups to affordably access the Roland Levinsky Building.

**Future potential**
Review the process whereby community and voluntary groups affordably access the Roland Levinsky Building.

**Key point 6**
The Draft University of Plymouth Community Engagement Strategy was circulated for internal consultation in early April 2010. There is no mention in the draft concerning the process of consultation with key communities and partners.

**Future potential**
Ensure that all communities relevant to community engagement at the University of Plymouth are invited to be involved in the process of consultation around the Draft strategy.

**Key point 7**
The NCCPE’s Draft Framework for public engagement sets out seven key themes as a guideline for individual institutional responses to developing a community engagement. NCCP’s seven dimensions of public engagement are:

1. Public access to facilities
2. Public access to knowledge
3. Student engagement
4. Faculty engagement
5. Widening participation
6. Encouraging economic regeneration and enterprise
7. Institutional relationship and partnership building

The University of Plymouth’s draft strategy focuses on the following five key themes:

1. Sharing the learning experience with our community
2. Our students as residents, citizens and volunteers
3. Communication and working in partnership
4. Developing businesses and employability opportunities
5. Promoting vibrant cultural, sports and recreational opportunities

There is considerable overlap between the key dimension so the NCCPE’s draft framework for public engagement and the five key themes of the University of Plymouth’s draft Community Engagement Strategy.

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<th>University of Plymouth Key themes</th>
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Faculty Engagement is not a part of the draft community engagement strategy.

**Future potential**
The second phase of consultation around the implementation of the draft Community University Engagement Strategy could include a discussion around the importance of faculty engagement.

**5. Conclusion**

As the CETL-ESD project ends the continuation and further development of sustainability-focussed community initiatives is an important factor. As many of the aforementioned initiatives have been developed by the CSF, and cut across Estates, Teaching and Learning and Research and Enterprise, it is important that initiatives are further enabled by the Community Engagement Strategy. There is
yet to be a strategy to continue the sustainability, community engagement interface.

One way of addressing this issue might be to establish a community of practice. This is where community partners and key university staff work in partnership to support endeavours and reflect upon meaningful ways to engage. Community University Partnership Programme (CUPP) strongly advocates and provides a strong evidence base for communities of practice. Furthermore, present and future, sustainability-focussed dimensions of community engagement might be taken forward by the forthcoming Sustainability Institute and Education for Sustainability Research Centre.
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