



Sustainable
Development Commission

Annual Review

2006-07

Annual Review 2006/2007

Introduction to the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC)	2
Who we are.....	2
How we work	2
Our Principles	2
Current Membership	3
Strategic Business Plan 2007-2010	5
How is the SDC viewed?	5
SDC's work over the financial year 2006/07	6
Advisory Role	6
Sustainable Buildings.....	6
Energy, transport & climate change.....	6
Sustainable Consumption & Business	6
Health.....	7
Education and Young People	7
Economics	7
Local Government and the Regions	7
Engagement.....	8
Capacity Building	8
Whitehall Team	8
Watchdog Role	9
Watchdog Team.....	9
In-depth Thematic Reviews	9
Building Houses or Creating Communities?....	9
Ofgem and the Energy System	9
Review of Supermarkets	9
Devolved Administrations	10
Scotland	10
Wales	10
Northern Ireland (NI)	10
Services	11
Communications	11
Online services.....	11
Online networks	11
Press	11
Resource Management	12
Finances	12
Personnel.....	12
List of major publications in 2006/07	13
List of acronyms	13

Introduction to the Sustainable Development Commission (SDC)

The SDC is the government’s independent advisor and watchdog on sustainable development reporting to the Prime Minister, the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales and the First Minister and Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland. Through advocacy, advice and appraisal, we help put sustainable development at the heart of Government Policy.

The SDC’s roles are threefold:

- *advisory*: providing informed, evidence-based advice to government on sustainability issues.
- *capacity building*: developing the attitudes, skills and knowledge in government to deliver on sustainable development.
- *watchdog*: holding government to account on progress towards sustainable development and on its operational commitments.

Who we are

The SDC is led by 19 Commissioners from a mix of academic, scientific, business and NGO backgrounds, chaired by Jonathon Porritt. Appointments to the Commission are made by the Prime Minister in agreement with the First Ministers of Wales and Scotland and First and Deputy First Minister of Northern Ireland. They are normally appointed for three year terms, and serve a maximum of 9 years (see below for a complete list of membership).

The Commission is supported by a Secretariat of 52 full-time staff who implement the Commission’s decisions. The Secretariat is led by its director, Andrew Lee, and is staffed by people appointed by open competition and by secondments from within the Civil Service and industry. The Secretariat are based in four offices, one in London and one in each of the DAs in Cardiff, Belfast and Edinburgh, providing specialised advice and support to the Administrations.

How we work

The Commission is able to act independently and can investigate any topic within its remit. The work programme is decided by Commissioners taking into account knowledge gaps in government, new policy initiatives, contentious issues and technological innovations.

The work carried out reflects our three roles. This work includes, but is not restricted to:

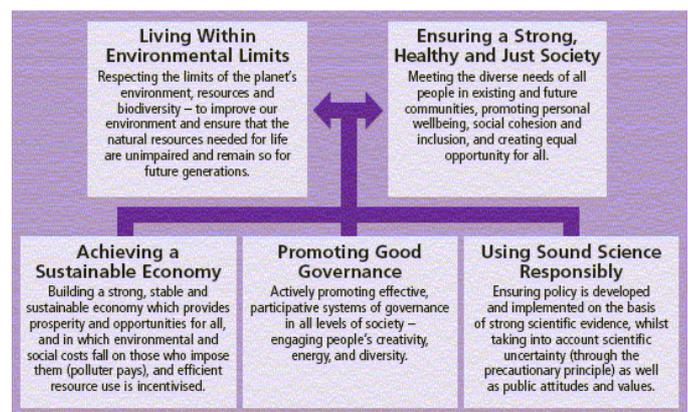
- producing strong, evidence-based reports on contentious environmental, social and economic issues of the day
- responding openly to government policy initiatives
- convening key stakeholders to encourage and facilitate debate on contentious issues
- working in partnership with departments to promote and support the mainstreaming of sustainable development throughout their organisation
- undertaking watchdog appraisals by examining departments’ operations performance and conducting in-depth thematic reviews into particular areas of government work.

Our advisory work focuses on projects and is led by a group of Commissioners and a team of staff. The focus of the work is developed by Commissioners and staff taking into account knowledge gaps in government, technological innovations and areas where delivery of sustainable development is perceived to be falling short.

Our Principles

The SDC is based on the five principles of sustainable development published by the UK government and the DAs in the 2005 report *One Future, different paths*, (shown below).

The principles guide the work of the SDC and establish a basis against which it reviews government progress towards sustainable development.



Current Membership

Chairman

Jonathon Porritt is co-founder and Programme Director of Forum for the Future, Co-Director of The Prince of Wales' Business and Environment Programme, and an eminent writer, broadcaster and commentator on sustainable development.

Commissioners (in alphabetical order)

Jan Bebbington (Vice-chair, Scotland) holds the Chair in Accounting and Sustainable Development in the University of St. Andrews. Jan's research interests focus around the dual themes of corporate reporting on sustainable development and full cost accounting.

Bernie Bulkin, formerly chief scientist at BP, is now Chairman AEA Technology plc and Chemrec AB amongst other duties, and has written extensively on the areas of energy and transport.

Peter Davies (Vice-chair, Wales) is co-ordinator of the Prince's Charities in Wales, Associate Director Business in the Community, and has an established international reputation for his work in corporate social responsibility.

Lindsey Colbourne is internationally recognised for her pioneering engagement work. She established the NGO Vision 21 in 1993 and is now coordinator of InterAct, an alliance committed to using engagement techniques to promote sustainable development.

Anna Coote is Head of Engaging Patients and the Public at the Healthcare Commission. She was Deputy Director of the Institute for Public Policy Research from 1993-1997, where she led the Institute's groundbreaking work on health and social policy, and subsequently Director at the King's Fund, an independent charity working for better health.

Stewart Davies has worked for 20 years in industry, at ICI, British Steel and Rugby Cement amongst others, where he has initiated and implemented changes for businesses to meet demands in environmental, health & safety, and community expectations. Stewart is currently a consultant on business growth strategy.

Ann Finlayson is an independent advisor on social change for sustainable development and is the former

Head of the Social change at WWF, responsible for strategy development for the 'Learning for Sustainability' programme in the education, local government and business sectors.

Tess Gill is a leading barrister specialising in employment discrimination, industrial law and human rights. She is also a trained mediator and has held posts in a range of voluntary organisations.

John Gilliland (Vice-chair, Northern Ireland) is Chair and Director of Rural Generation, a research and development company, designing sustainable renewable energy and waste management systems using willow trees. John also operates a farm on both sides of the Irish border.

Tim Jackson is Professor of Sustainable Development at the University of Surrey. He has pioneered the development of an alternative measure of progress for the UK - 'green GDP'.

Alan Knight is an independent advisor to the Virgin Group, Wyeville Garden Centres and SAB Miller on sustainability through the product chain. He is also the Director of the Forest Stewardship Council and co-chaired the UK government's Roundtable on Sustainable Consumption.

Tim Lang is Professor of Food Policy at City University. A farmer for seven years after obtaining his doctorate, he is a co-founder of Sustain, a major NGO alliance, and an award-winning author of several books.

Tim O'Riordan is former Professor of Environmental Sciences at the University of East Anglia and a Fellow of the British Academy. He has long promoted interdisciplinary research for sustainable development and the implications of the transition to sustainability.

Alice Owen has a background combining industry, the voluntary sector and the public sector. In 2001, she established the SD team in Yorkshire's Regional Development Agency. In 2006 she joined the consultancy firm Arup and leads the firm's work on strategic sustainability in the North of England.

Anne Power is Professor of Social Policy at London School of Economics and Deputy Director of the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion. She has been director of the National Tenants Resource Centre and is the author of several books.

Hugh Raven is Director of the Soil Association Scotland and is special advisor to the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation on the environment. He also helps run Ardtornish, his family's estate in north Argyll.

Waheed Saleem is Locality Director with responsibility for Practice Based Commissioning and Children's Commissioning at Birmingham Eastern and North Primary Care Trust. His interests are in social policy, especially health, social exclusion, crime and youth.

Rebecca Willis (Vice-chair, Whitehall) is an independent researcher focusing on environmental politics at regional and local levels. Her freelance portfolio includes work with the Carbon Trust, Greenpeace, English Nature and the NorthWest Regional Assembly.

Strategic Business Plan 2007-2010

2006/07 saw the development of the SDC Strategy and Business Plan for 2007-2010, following consultation with key stakeholders and staff. The plan sets a new focus to the SDC's work over the next three years, centred around seven main drivers. These drivers are to:

1 Act as a **catalyst for change** by demonstrating how the five principles of sustainable development can be used to help find lasting solutions to the crucial issues of our times.

2 Become more **outcome focused**. By 2010, we hope to have:

- *Built organisational capability* - developed attitudes, knowledge, skills, and resources to put sustainable development into practice throughout government
- *Achieved breakthrough in our areas of policy work* - seen progress on issues which will have the greatest impact on sustainability
- *Held government to account* - reported government progress in delivering the sustainable development strategy.

3 **Scale up the value** we can add to government by:

- becoming a flexible and responsive organisation
- having a consistent approach to engagement
- Influencing the political climate as well as policy.

4 Continue to focus on UK and Devolved Government but strengthen our advice to these audiences by **developing our relationships** with civil society, business, regional and local government, and partners internationally (particularly the EU).

5 Focus on **fewer, major projects**, where most progress can be made, which will form the core of our programme.

6 **Grow our income** by attracting project funding where appropriate, thereby releasing core funds as "venture capital" for other new work.

7 **Measure our progress** by making monitoring, evaluation and lesson-learning an integral part of how we operate.

How is the SDC viewed?

In 2006, the SDC commissioned a study to examine how key stakeholders view the SDC across the public, private and NGO sectors, fulfilling an agreement with SDC's core funders, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). The study, carried out by Opinion Leader, conducted 40 in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, mainly from government, as well as 101 shorter interviews with influential leaders from wide range of sectors.

Strengths

Overall, the results from the study were positive. A core set of stakeholders rated the SDC highly and are signed up to the sustainable development agenda. The responses also reflected a feeling of real improvement over the previous 12-18 months in outputs and influence of the SDC. Our close working relationship with many government departments was widely lauded, in particular the in-situ work with DCSF.

The SDC was seen to occupy a unique position both being funded by government and acting as independent advisors. Our inside track to government in particular was greatly valued and seen as the distinguishing factor between the SDC and other policy-orientated organisations.

Weaknesses

Not all the comments were positive. Many in government believe the SDC did too much 'finger pointing' and not enough enabling. The SDC had yet to cultivate meaningful relationships with certain government departments.

The SDC needed to recognise the differences between its audiences and develop goals on a case by case basis. This was particularly true in the Devolved Administrations where the SDC needed to understand the systems of each Administration separately before judging how to proceed.

Selected Key Recommendations from the Survey

Going forward, the SDC needs to extend its reach by building the profile of its Commissioner and Secretariat members.

The SDC should develop and resource its Watchdog role to continue to hold government to account.

However, the SDC also needs to propose solutions to problems rather than simply be critical.

The SDC also needs to facilitate conversations between government and other sectors, to help find a way to ease tensions on a number of the big issues on the government agenda, such as aviation, energy policy and climate change.

SDC's work over the financial year 2006/07

Advisory Role

The advisory work of the SDC is undertaken by the policy teams covering a broad range of policy issues. Some of this work is published as evidence-based reports, while much of the work is collaborative with government and developed in response to policy initiatives. The work of the policy teams for the financial year 2006/07 is summarised below.

Sustainable Buildings

The SDC launched *Stock Take* in July 2006. The report assesses the level of savings in resources that could be achieved by implementing the full range of technical options available for existing homes. It has received positive feedback from a wide range of stakeholders. Although we have had limited influence to date on the Government Review of Sustainability of Existing Buildings, the work of the Office of Climate Change on existing housing is promising.

The SDC has influenced the Code for Sustainable Homes and the consultations on zero carbon standards. Through this work, along with the Review of the Sustainable Communities Plan, *Building Houses or Creating Communities* (see below), there have been some important strategic developments, such as:

- better working between DCLG and its stakeholders with DCLG taking an increasingly proactive approach to improving environmental standards and sharing their developments with stakeholders
- positive environmental messages and drivers in the 2006/7 'green packages' released by DCLG.

Our work with schools is particularly encouraging and we have now been asked to co-develop a holistic carbon reduction strategy for the schools estate with DCSF. We are now also engaged in the standards for new non-domestic buildings.

Energy, transport & climate change

Following on from our position paper on nuclear power, published in March 2006, we developed a detailed submission to the DTI's (now BERR's) Energy Review focusing on our alternative vision for a sustainable energy system. During the Energy White Paper process, we advised extensively on the need for further public engagement around nuclear power, leading to detailed advice on the design of the eventual engagement process. Our input to the Energy Review was also informed by our on-going in-depth review of Ofgem and its role in delivering a sustainable energy system.

Alongside this, we started work on a major study into tidal power in the UK and the issues of a Severn barrage. This work was supported by the UK Government, the Welsh Assembly Government, South West of England Regional Development Agency, the Scottish Government and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (Northern Ireland). We commissioned a series of evidence-based reports and a comprehensive programme of public and stakeholder engagement to contribute to a report for release in 2007/08.

The SDC has been active in a number of climate change policy areas. We co-hosted a workshop with the UK Energy Research Centre on the role of carbon neutrality and carbon offsetting, with a particular focus on government and the wider public sector. We have also been active in internal discussions on the future of emissions trading, personal carbon trading, and the role of 'green tariffs'. We will continue to develop this work in the next financial year.

In early 2007, we commissioned analysis on certain issues surrounding transport, in particular aviation and biofuels, which will be published on our website by the end of the year. We are developing an innovative stakeholder engagement approach to understand the key areas around aviation policy and inform our advice to Government.

Sustainable Consumption & Business

The SDC and the National Consumer Council published *I will if you will* in May 2006 which has a considerable influence on government departments and stakeholders nationally and internationally. Defra have responded with a commitment to produce 10 high-impact product roadmaps and are reorganising their behaviour change work programme around the

concept of social marketing. The full government response is expected in 2007/08.

The SDC has been involved in the Sustainable Consumption and Production Business Taskforce with Commissioner Stewart Davies chairing the working group on mobility and the car. The SDC has also continued its engagement with food retailers and Alan Knight acted as co-chair for the Ethical Champions Group, FISS.

Health

2006/07 saw the SDC build on the huge success of the Good Corporate Citizenship Assessment Model which has done much to help embed sustainable development across the NHS. This success is reflected in the degree of interest in the Model; by the end of March 2007 23% of NHS trusts were registered on the Model and this figure continues to rise.

Evaluation of the project demonstrated the changes that the Model is facilitating in the NHS. For example, Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust uses the Model as a benchmarking tool and has increased local food procurement to 30%. Interest in the SDC's *Healthy Futures* publications grew and evaluation showed that 83% of respondents felt the publication had helped communicate sustainable development in their organisation.

At a strategic level the SDC provided quarterly briefings to the Secretary of State for Public Health on sustainable development and the revised NHS Principles contained a commitment to sustainable development, which will have important ramifications across the Department for Health (DH) and NHS policy.

Education and Young People

The sustainable schools programme, devised by the SDC in full partnership with DfES (now DCSF and DIUS) is a unique approach for the SDC, with an SDC advisor posted fulltime in DCSF offices. It has proved hugely successful with buy-in from directors and policy teams across the Department, local authorities and schools.

The output from this workstream has been considerable. There has been a flurry of activity to increase awareness amongst school goers and teachers alike such as the pupils' Carbon Detectives' Kit, We Are What We Do competition and a new sustainable development category in the National Teaching Awards.

In addition to these visible activities, there have been some highly strategic developments, including:

- closer working ties with Defra on climate change communications and waste strategy in particular
- inclusion of sustainable development in the Ofsted self-evaluation form for schools for the first time
- regional networks for sustainable schools supported across England
- remits of major non public departmental bodies adjusted to emphasise sustainable development in core business
- commitment to the development of carbon reduction strategy for schools.

The success of this work has led to DCSF commissioning further support for its children and families policy which could lead to the environment becoming a leading consideration in the next phase of the cross-government Every Child Matters well-being agenda. 2006/07 saw the work carried out for an SDC report, *Every Child's Future Matters*, with a view to publication in 2007/08, which benefited from significant input and enthusiasm from DCSF staff.

Economics

2006/07 saw preparations for a major report on *Redefining Prosperity*, led by Commissioner Tim Jackson, looking at issues surrounding the relationships between three key objectives central to policy-makers' concerns: economic growth, public wellbeing and sustainability. This will be a key document for the SDC and sets out to challenge one of the most unquestioned assumptions in modern society: the overriding priority given to economic growth.

We input into the Treasury's policy-making through discussions with departments about their Public Service Agreements (PSAs). These will set the main government targets for the next three years, as part of the Treasury's current Comprehensive Spending Review. We gathered and presented evidence on the sustainability implications of current patterns of government spending, and have produced a report on the future of environmental taxation for government.

Local Government and the Regions

Local government in England spends over a quarter of all public expenditure and employs over two million people. The SDC engages at both regional and local levels to enable and support the delivery of local sustainable development.

In February 2007, the SDC launched *Financing Local Futures*, an online guidance to financial decision-makers in local authorities on mainstreaming sustainable development into their work, in collaboration with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountability, the Local Government Association and the Improvement and Development Agency.

The SDC worked with the Audit Commission to develop its Sustainable Development Approach, which includes commitments to incorporate sustainable development into the new Comprehensive Area Assessment and to improve the Audit Commission's own capability on sustainable development.

SDC has contributed to important local government policy initiatives, particularly the Local Government White Paper. Climate change was flagged up in the second volume of the *Strong and prosperous communities* White Paper as a critical cross-cutting issue for demonstrating how the changes would apply. The SDC also hosted two events for Regional Champion Bodies in 2006-07. By the second event in March 2007 all regions were represented and had regional governance structures for sustainable development.

Engagement

The SDC established the engagement team in July 2006 in response to a perceived lack of capacity in government and the need to further integrate engagement in the SDC's own policy work as a core part of a good governance approach. Engagement played an integral role in the energy team's tidal work which complemented and supported the evidence-based research. Events included stakeholder and public workshops across the UK, national opinion polling, online forums and a series of events with local authorities, all of which proved hugely successful.

The SDC has developed networks across government and the broader engagement community to help embed a more systematic approach to engagement within policy-making and increasing awareness of its link with sustainable development. The team was involved in the initiation of People and Participation Online and OurWorld, two online engagement initiatives. The Sustainable Development Panel has been utilised effectively to facilitate the online consultation for *Redefining Prosperity* (see Online Networks below) and the SDC's aviation work.

Capacity Building

The capacity building role is entrusted primarily to the Whitehall team, who focus on supporting government to show leadership by example on sustainable development. Many of the policy teams also contribute to building capacity through their day-to-day work alongside government and in the development of and follow up to our reports.

Whitehall Team

The SDC has actively offered support to all departments and Executive Agencies preparing Sustainable Development Action Plans (SDAPs) – a key corporate document setting out each organisation's contribution to *Securing the Future*. The SDC met all requests for advice, a total of 15 departments and 20 agencies. The SDAP process has provided a key focus for the SDC's work, and has encouraged the mainstreaming of sustainable development into departments' modes of working. In November 2006, we published *Off the starting block*, an overview of the SDC assessment of government departments SDAPs.

As part of a long term approach to capacity building, the SDC has been working collaboratively with the National School of Government, Defra and Government Skills to mainstream sustainable development into civil service learning and development frameworks. It is intended that these will help embed sustainable development principles throughout government. The Whitehall team has now recruited new members and has scaled up the service it provides to government.

The SDC co-hosted an extremely successful business breakfast in March for Permanent Secretaries and business leaders, bringing them together to discuss 'Capability for Sustainability.' This sparked a number of Permanent Secretaries to refresh their leadership initiatives on sustainable development with their senior management teams.

Watchdog Role

The scrutiny role is the responsibility of the watchdog team, which carries out annual activities monitoring government progress, and of the relevant policy teams, who carry out in-depth thematic reviews of a particular area of government work, selected by the Commissioners.

Watchdog Team

The watchdog team was established in November of 2006, taking over the watchdog duties previously carried out by the Whitehall team, thus allowing the teams to specialise on the respective roles of scrutiny and capacity building. In March 2007, the team produced the *Sustainable Development in Government* (SDiG) report, measuring each government department's progress on operations against the 2002 SDiG targets. The considerable media attention that followed the launch has reflected the public interest in the government's performance and makes the report a useful device in holding government to account. The response from government has been positive with many departments promising significant improvements in the delivery of the new updated targets.

The SDC has been an active member of the Sustainable Procurement Operations Board and has made important contributions to the government Sustainable Procurement Action Plan (SPAP), an essential part of government's strategy to promote sustainable procurement across government. We have also been actively promoting the need for SPAP commitments to be incorporated into the new SDiG process so that progress against them can be formally monitored.

The watchdog team also took over the responsibilities of assessing the SDAPs from the Whitehall team and has issued new guidance and advice to government departments for the second year of plans.

In-depth Thematic Reviews

The in-depth reviews are designed to look in detail at particular parts of government policy or area of work from the perspective of sustainable development and make proposals to increase effectiveness in delivery. 2006/07 saw the launch of three such reviews.

Building Houses or Creating Communities?

The SDC's first in-depth review assessed whether the government has delivered on its aspirations to create sustainable communities. The review is based on site visits, interviews with local authorities, developers and residents, and discussions with government officials and experts in the field.

We found that, while the government has good intentions to create sustainable communities, housing developments are not always realizing those aspirations in practice. Overall few communities built so far are living up to the promise of being environmentally sensitive, well-connected, thriving and inclusive.

The review includes recommendations to further integrate the environmental impacts of housing and regeneration programmes into their delivery, ensure vital social infrastructure is in place from the beginning, and ensure active engagement with citizens and monitoring of real outcomes so that more communities are genuinely sustainable places to live.

Ofgem and the Energy System

Our second review, for publication in 2007/08, examines how Ofgem, the Government regulator of the gas and electricity markets in the UK, could create the market conditions to encourage the drive towards a more sustainable energy sector. The work included detailed interviews with industry officials, academic experts and NGOs, together with desk-top research projects commissioned externally.

Review of Supermarkets

In today's climate of concerns such as fairness and equality in the food chain, the focus on healthy diets, the carbon associated with transportation of food, few topics can be better suited to examination of the principles of sustainable development than the work of supermarkets. Involving the input from supermarkets themselves, NGOs, retailers, government officials, this work will look at the market conditions government will need to create to assist supermarkets provide a sustainable service. The report is due to be published in early 2008.

Devolved Administrations

The balance of the SDC's three core roles of advice, advocacy and scrutiny varies in each of the DAs depending on the memorandum of understanding with each administration.

The DA offices work closely with the office in Whitehall and with each other. This is evidenced in the research for the tidal report which was funded by all four administrations and at varying stages engaged SDC staff in all our offices. Early in the financial year the DAs published the report of the successful Celtic Nations Conference 2006, which shared good practice in sustainability from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Scotland

The publication of *Choosing Our Future - Scotland's Sustainable Development Strategy* in 2005 brought an enhanced role to the SDC Scotland, committing the SDC to an annual assessment of progress in Scotland, as well as acting as an advisor to the Scottish government, reporting directly to the First Minister.

To reflect this enhanced role, the SDC appointed its first Scottish Director, Maf Smith, in November 2006. Maf was joined by a new team in early 2007 to take forward work in Scotland. The team work with the Scottish-based Commissioners, Jan Bebbington and Hugh Raven, along with Commissioners and Secretariat based elsewhere in the UK.

During first quarter of 2007, as well as supporting UK-wide projects, the team worked on the first assessment of progress in Scotland, *Sustainable Development in Scotland*, which has subsequently been published, and undertook ground work for several Scotland specific projects. One such project brings together stakeholders to explore the issues related to sustainable food policy for Scotland.

Wales

In June 2006 SDC Wales published *Sustainable Development in Wales: From Pioneer to Delivery* providing recommendations on how the Welsh Assembly Government could maintain its leading role in sustainable development. The report drew on bespoke research for SDC Wales by Cardiff University. It was well received by Ministers and the Assembly's Senior Business Team, and was used by Assembly Members in their annual debate of progress on sustainable development.

Another key achievement of the year was the development of the *Healthy Sustainable Wales* toolkit and policy framework. Under the policy, all NHS organisations in Wales are required to produce an SD action plan by March 2008 assisted by the toolkit. The toolkit built on the successful Good Corporate Citizenship tool developed for the NHS in England, and broadened the model to include aspects of patient interaction. Jonathon Porritt gave a keynote speech on health and sustainable development at the NHS Confederation Wales' annual conference which captured the hearts and minds of many previously uninterested NHS Managers. Our advice to the Assembly on the development and content of the new Platinum Level Corporate Health Standard award takes workplace health promotion to a new level by merging it with the SDC's Good Corporate Citizenship model.

SDC Wales has provided ongoing advice to the Welsh Assembly on a range of policies including energy, housing, health, social care, the transport strategy and climate change amongst others. Mid-way through the year Peter Davies was appointed as the new Vice Chairman (Wales), and by the end of the year, the SDC had expanded and strengthened its presence through the recruitment of a new Head of SDC Wales, and a professional communications manager.

Northern Ireland (NI)

2006 / 07 was a turning point in the sustainable development agenda in NI and for NI politics. During 2006, the historic St. Andrew's agreement laid the foundations for the return of devolved government to Northern Ireland in May 2007. The SDC played a key role within government on planning, drafting and implementing the first ever Sustainable Development Strategy for NI along with the follow up Implementation Plan and received international recognition for its work.

Working closely with the Secretary of State, the SDC helped to ensure the introduction of a Statutory Duty on sustainable development in NI, and for the transfer of responsibility for sustainable development to the Office of First and Deputy First Minister. Jonathon Porritt delivered key speeches at the launch of the NI SD Strategy.

As well as providing detailed advice on a range of issues such as climate change, sustainable procurement and the establishment of SD Forums, the SDC also played an influential role embedding

sustainable development principles into some of the most critical government reform processes in NI. These included the review of public administration process, the Economic Vision for NI and the £16 Billion NI Investment Strategy. The SDC also played a key role in developing a sustainability strategy for the Maze/Long Kesh redevelopment.

Services

Communications

To ensure our messages are communicated effectively to government and the wider public, we have a dedicated communications team to support and publicise our work.

Alongside managing the presentation and publication of our documents, the team is responsible for updating our website, stimulating debate on our online forums, liaising with the national press and organising multi-stakeholder events that inform and invigorate our work.

Online services

The SDC website is a crucial part of our communication work. The site underwent a complete redesign and features such as the events calendar, user forums and profiles were added to increase participation levels and encourage engagement with the SDC. 2006/07 saw a step increase in demand for our online services.

The provision of our published reports online has proved to be a very successful means of distributing our work. In total 228,220 documents were downloaded in 2006/07, three times as many as the previous year. On average the website received 20,000 visitors per month.

Table 1. The top 5 publication downloads in 2006/07

Publication	Downloads
1. <i>I will if you will</i>	10,633
2. <i>Wind power in the UK</i>	6,621
3. <i>Stock Take</i>	5,215
4. <i>Nuclear Power</i>	4,663
5. <i>DTI Energy Review – SDC Submission</i>	2,974

Online networks

The SDC online network has proved to be a very effective means of encouraging debate around sustainability issues. The SDC network grew from

approximately 6,000 members in April 2006 to 10,000 by the end of March 2007. 2006/07 saw the launch of the Sustainable Development Panel, www.sd-commission.org.uk/pages/sd_panel.html, an online forum of 500 sustainable development experts. The Panel has been used to inform a range of the SDC's policy work, from education to transport. There have been two extensive online consultations: for *Redefining Prosperity* and the *Aviation Dialogue*. The findings of *Redefining Prosperity* fed into recommendations to the Whitehall Wellbeing Group and has helped steer our broader economic programme. The Panel was selected as a case study for online engagement by the Ministry of Justice and Hansard Society's Digital Dialogues report. Both the network and the Panel have been used to inform our work programmes and will continue to be influential going forward.

Press

The SDC has worked closely with the national and local press to increase the reach of the SDC's messages. 2006/07 saw extensive coverage of our major publications.

The launch of the Energy Review in 2006 and Greenpeace's High Court nuclear challenge attracted significant attention to our nuclear report from all sectors of the press. It was well covered by BBC online and on radio, and an opinion piece by Jonathon Porritt was published in the Society Guardian. The publication of the Stern Review drew responses from Jonathon Porritt and Bernie Bulkin on ITV, Sky, and Channel 4 news, radio and newspapers.

The Sustainable Consumption Roundtable report, *I will if you will*, achieved a splash of coverage - 60 pieces in total - on television, national and regional radio, and in business journals and newspapers. Similarly, the *Sustainable Development in Government* report received attention from ITV lunchtime news, in all the major national papers and BBC online. The Good Corporate Citizenship model for the NHS received particularly good coverage in the Guardian and the Health Service Journal.

References to SDC reports such as the *Financing Local Futures*, and *Stock Take*, continued to appear in national and specialist media.

Resource Management

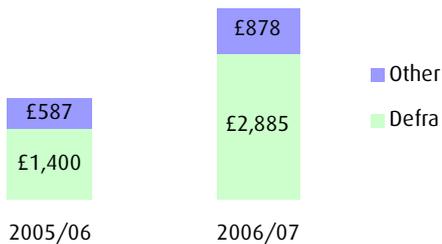
Finances

Income

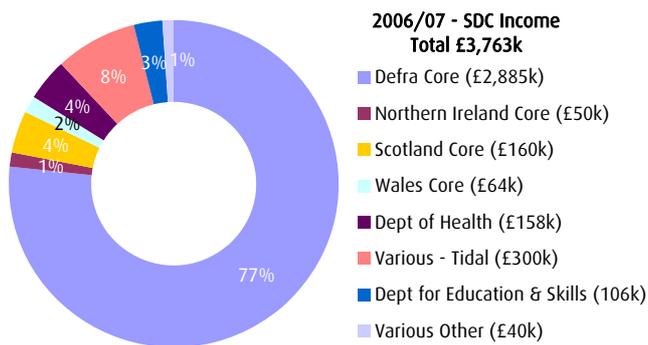
The SDC derives income from a number of government departments and other bodies. The main sponsor is Defra with an allocation of £2.8 million in the Financial Year 2006/07. Other important sponsors are the Welsh Assembly Government, Scottish Government, the Northern Ireland Assembly, the Department of Health and DCSF.

The budget of 2006/07 is significantly higher than the previous year primarily due to the extra support from Defra to reflect the new Watchdog responsibilities. The SDC were also successful in attracting significant extra funding for the Tidal Project from the Welsh Assembly Government, BERR, South West Regional Development Agency and the Scottish Government.

Total income 2005 to 2007 (£k)



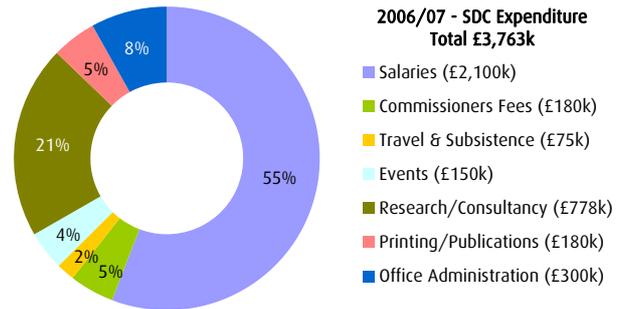
In total the income raised for 2006/07 was £3,763k.



Expenditure

Over half, 55%, of SDC's expenditure was spent on staff. Other than staff, the next largest destination for expenditure was research and consultancy at 21% of our budget, re-enforcing our aim to produce strong evidence bases for our work.

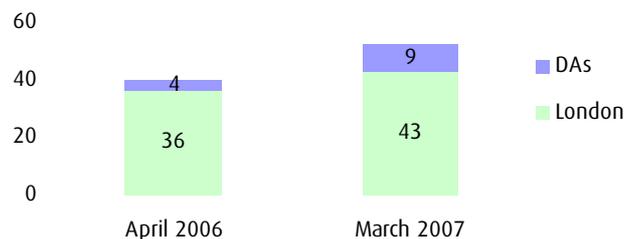
Our funding sources and expenditure are summarised below.



Personnel

At the end of the financial year, the Secretariat had 52 staff of which 18 were permanent staff, 3 seconded from industry or other Government departments and 31 on Fixed or Short Term Appointment. The Secretariat team grew from 40 staff in April 2006 to 52 in March 2007. The DA staff more than doubled showing the enhanced role for the SDC in the DAs.

Staff numbers over financial year 2006/07



List of major publications in 2006/07

For the complete list of our publications, please visit our publications website at:
<http://www.sd-commission.org.uk/publications.php>

- I will if you will: towards sustainable consumption
- Stock Take: delivering improvements in existing houses
- Sustainable Development in Wales: From Pioneer to Delivery
- Sustainable Development in Government
- Off the starting block: SDC assessment of government Sustainable Development Action Plans
- Financing Local Futures
- Healthy Futures #5: Sustainable transport and active travel
- Biofuels and the Renewable Transport Fuels Obligation
- Meeting the Challenge: energy policy for the 21st century

List of acronyms

BERR – Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform

DCSF – Department for Children, Schools and Families

DCLG – Department of Communities and Local Government

Defra – Department for Environment, Food and Regional Affairs

DfES – Department for Education and Skills

DH - Department for Health

DIUS – Department for Innovation, University and Skills

DTI – Department for Trade and Industry

ITV – Independent Television Company

NDPB – Non Departmental Public Bodies

NGO – Non Governmental Organisation

NHS – National Health Service

NI – Northern Ireland

SCP – Sustainable Consumption and Production

SDiG – Sustainable Development in Government

SDAP – Sustainable Development Action Plan

SDC – Sustainable Development Commission

SOGE – Sustainable Operations on the Government Estate

SPAP – Sustainable Procurement Action Plan

SPOB – Sustainable Procurement Operations Board

WWF – World Wide Fund for Nature