

Northern Sustainable Schools Conference, York

Thursday 7th February 2008

Questions and Answers after Janice Lawson's presentation;

Q. Brian Rooney from Wakefield Council- "One of the schools within our district had an Ofsted inspection specifically looking at sustainability within the school, a secondary school. Eyebrows were raised, it was quite a challenging inspection, the school has responded very constructively to the findings of the inspection, but I was interested in any guidance you may have on intention to role this out."

A. Janice- "It's voluntary so in terms of rolling it out, it's not a formal programme in that sense, we would like all schools to be sustainable schools and the strategy has within in every school to be a sustainable school by 2020, the new planning guidance will give you stages towards that as this is one of the requests that came back from the consultation. Leszek is here and talking this afternoon from Ofsted, no doubt it was him that did the inspection so I am sure he was very kind, but Ofsted will look at this if it's the way schools are using to improve, if they are using the framework and the understanding of sustainable development for the future of children for the basis of every child matters and how they demonstrate that through the school, then I think this is a good tool for the schools a good framework for them to demonstrate to Ofsted what they are doing and how they are doing it, that's where we are coming from rather than, all government, well we have 2 ways of making people do things we either bribe them or we legislate and this is not getting either of those, this is because it's right, this gets passion!"

Q. Charlie Herd, Governor from Tadcaster – "There is a lot of desire within the school to make the school more sustainable and the approach etc, what we are struggling with is where do we start, what should we be aiming for, what sort of information is out there to show us what is best practise, what are the low hanging fruit to use a term of business, and we are struggling to find this information."

A. Janice- "Look at the sustainable schools website on Teachernet and that will lead you to all the documents we have produced, there are some hard copies of many of them out there, there is a governors guidance document as well, with a training pack for governors, that you can use, it will lead you through, so you as a governor could pick it up off the website and either give a half hour session to your governors or many LA's are using the longer version for a 2 hour session for governors to say, this is how you can approach it and when the planning tool comes, which I hope will be just after half term, that will be a good way in to work with your senior leadership team in the school to think about refreshing your school development plan at this time of year."

Q. Catherine Scott, Primary school Teacher from Sheffield- "Just in reply to the last comment, the school I teach in has been part of eco schools for quite a few years and just been awarded the green flag and that's excellent for schools, it supports everything that Janice Lawson said and it gives topics that you have to cover and there is a lot of guidance, there are 3 stages, you go for the bronze, the silver and then the green flag award. I started it in our school in 2002 and we have just been awarded it this year. The school has totally changed and everything will be covered though Sustainable schools"

A. Janice- "Congratulations, an increasing number of schools are signing up for eco schools, it isn't a DCSF scheme, it's run by a third sector organisation and we don't actually fund it, but we have worked with them a lot and when we came up with the Sustainable schools framework, they realigned their work so that it does support that, and we are very keen that schools use whatever awards or schemes that are out there, like healthy schools, international schools will help you with that particular doorway of sustainable schools, if that gives you a framework that you feel comfortable with then go for it, as many awards as you want to help you get to this status. We are not planning at the moment of having an overarching sustainable schools award badge that schools go for as we feel that it's much more of an underpinning ethos."

Q. Alex Harrison, Hermitage Arts and Community College near Wakefield- "we are doing quite a lot with sustainable schools we are wanting to put solar panels, but the problem we are having is actually getting businesses involved, we want to get a solar panel and use it within science so they can see how it's made up and wind turbines etc, are there any incentives out there for businesses to help schools?"

A. Janice- "We had a meeting in the department with 20/30 of the top FTSE type businesses last week and they are very keen and many of them are beginning to do things with schools on sustainability and the reason we have them together,

without being rude, many businesses that come into this think oh we'll make some teaching resources for KS2 or KS3 or something, without actually understanding what schools really need and we have been saying, well there are other things, there are some of the energy companies doing energy audits for schools now and some of them are coming up with cheaper light bulbs etc. It would be worth writing to your energy company and asking them if they are doing anything"

Questions and answers after Ian Smith;

Q. Jed Gargan, Aycliffe Village Primary School- "Perhaps we should have invited Ed Balls and George Bush to chair this conference?"

A. Ian – "I am trying to see Ed Balls in a couple of weeks; I am not doing George Bush!"

Q. Bill Rigby, Voice International- "I am part of the generation which actually created the problems of the ecological challenge of the climate of the moment and I feel responsible. My generation walked into this problem inadvertently and now we are trying to address this issue of trying to get out of it. My understanding is what we got wrong was our whole value system misunderstood our relationship with ourselves, society at large and the planet as a whole, I would like Ian and Janice's view of what is being done looking at the values in our education system in terms of the outcomes for our pupils because at the moment from what I can see the values the pupils are learning in schools, willy nilly, and are largely contributed by the curriculum are the same as the values I was taught and achieved in my learning experience, namely competition, climbing on the back of others, ignoring the global impacts of my individual actions and therefore I feel there is still a danger that the positive feedback loop and not make the situation, even by the initiatives as dramatically interesting and progressive as described just now.

A. Ian – "This gives me a chance to talk for another hour! What we have got to do as I said earlier we need to rethink what the curriculum about because the curriculum in lots of ways is actually driving the wrong values through there in terms of competition, in terms of what some people actually measure schools as being good schools by, I don't know about you, but every year the thing that makes my heart sink is the observer and the independent and papers like that not even the rank papers, and it says your guide to the 100 best schools. And all it's got is A levels or GCSE's. One of the things that I noticed when I first went to Tameside, which wasn't the fault of the schools, it was the fault of the system and the LA's, and I felt that the schools actually needed rescuing from that. Everything was driven by the league tables and in Tameside we are actually going down the league tables, it wasn't working. So what I did, the first morning, talking at a heads conference, a keynote speaker hadn't turned up, so suddenly I am on my own, what do I talk about for 2 hours? We had the Manchester evening news under the chair just in front of me, so I picked it up, it had the league tables on the front and I tore it to little pieces. I said to the people there, if we actually tear up the league tables, if we stop trying to climb other people to the top of the league tables, if we actually start to deliver a broad balanced entitlement curriculum, lets write one, and we actually wrote 'Tameside's entitlement curriculum', and we have just re-written it for the third time in 9 years. That'll be available Bill for anyone to look at, get in touch with me or anyone else, ian.smith@tameside.gov.uk, and I'll let you have our new entitlement curriculum. If you're delivering the performing arts, expressive arts, humanities, citizenship, eco and healthy schools, you are actually saying to young people this is a broad balanced curriculum rather than focussing all your time just on the core, if you are delivering lots of outdoor and adventurous activities, sport, Young people and teachers will be motivated. Everybody will be at the point where they'll do better with literacy and numeracy because they have got the curriculum that is putting it in the real world for them.

I said to the head teachers there, I guarantee if you do that, you will go up the league tables and Tameside will go up the league tables and KS1, KS2, KS3 and KS4 results have improved every year on year, and we have got people, Dave here, used to be at a school called Stanford school in Tameside that was down near the bottom of the National league tables, made dramatic improvement by actually empowering pupils like that. Lorraine at the front here, high technology school who is the highest performing school in Tameside, in one of our most deprived areas and they have just had fantastic success. By not focussing on that competition, you actually beat everyone Bill, the kind of way that you want to, because everyone is doing it together. People have to have the courage to do that and that's one of the things I will be saying tomorrow.

Questions and answers after Leszek Lvaskow

Q. Mick Bradley, Centre for global Education- " Your fleeting comment about the GD as one of the 8 doorways and from what you said, you implied this is still an area very much to be developed, I agree with that but at the same time the government is looking for all schools over time to have a link with another school, now that could be a domestic link but they are particularly thinking about north/south links, many schools will be active in the fair-trade area, some may be seeking the fair-trade status, now they are areas that bring in the GD very much and I think it depends where your starting point is in terms of how much a school may or may not be doing"

A. Leszek " I agree totally, there are lots of opportunities to develop the global dimension, my concern about some of the actual links is who does it actually benefit, I do see these links being made, teachers going away, abroad, receiving visitors, and the impact on the children is minimal. Where there is a clear plan e.g. a school in Somerset, where the planning linked to the exchange of teachers etc was linked with the curriculum, so for example they both chose 2 topics like waste, travel, and these 2 topics were taught in both the schools in Somerset and Ghana and the children then exchanged their work, and what was most interesting was the fact that the comments that came back on the exchange of work were the most pertinent. To give an example, the school in Somerset thought that they were very, very sustainable, but they got comments back on the travel saying, why do you travel 10 miles to go to the hairdresser? Interesting question that. And they then had to answer that and send it back. What I was seeing there was clear curriculum enrichment, where the children were benefiting, it wasn't just the teachers benefiting, it's important that those links are developed into the curriculum and it's not just about pen pals, you are creative in making those links.

Q. Lady- "coming back to your comment about secondary schools, Leszek, and the fact that it's so difficult to get this carrying on through secondary, is there any hope, is the secondary curriculum going to be relaxed so that schools can get a hold of it at local levels and communicate with their kids and their communities, to focus on these things which as you say we can all see energises kids and really push up the standards"

A. Leszek "the answer to that is look at the KS3 review, the schools are due to teach it from 2008, it's a rolling programme; it'll take 3 years to build through. They are supposed to start it in year 7 but they can actually teach it through to year 9, within that there is a clear rationale for sustainability, it's in there, it's up to schools to seize that agenda. What stage 3 review has done has reduce the content one of the big issues in secondary schools is that we have got to bash through the content, there has been a real attempt to reduce the amounts you have got to cover, but look at things in depth, like in geography, I have been very critical of the superficiality of much of the learning and really we want more in depth work that actually spreads out many of the skills and knowledge and understanding in Geography for example, There are opportunities in other subjects, particularly citizenship, DT, Science, they are the 4 lead subjects with Geography where there is a clear need to teach about sustainability. It's not just about the curriculum; I think it's the whole school life. It's the ethos of the school, It's making sure all the Bridget Jones's of ESD are actually involved in the whole school approach so they are not working in isolation, its actually having a whole school policy and a vision for the school which involves sustainability, those are the schools that'll succeed. Secondary schools are slightly more difficult because they are larger and size is an issue logistically etc, but it's not insurmountable; there are some really good examples of where secondary schools have managed this.

A. Tom Freeman, GONW. In the North West working with the North West Education for Sustainable development forum, my colleague at the regional assembly, Andy Dukes and myself and the development agency, it's a small contract, £15k but the field studies council from Cumbria have done a body of work around what is available, predominantly around KS3, they produced it as a database, and it's to help teachers actually source the information that will help them deliver for KS3. That's finalised, it's available on a cd, if you want it, you have Grant's email address, if you want any details, come through Grant and I will let you have it. What we are doing now is trialling it with a number of schools through the Development agency and the SEP group and hopefully the pilot will give us some feedback as to its relevance so we are looking around KS3 KS4 on Sustainable schools."

Q. "I just wanted to ask Leszek, I am involved in the redevelopment of KS3 Geography in our school and obviously one of the things we see is participatory geographies in the new curricular, I just wanted to ask is participation stipulated in other KS3 subjects, would you really be involved in that or would you be aware of knowing what is going to be stipulated in theirs for participation?"

A. "I am not sure of the nitty gritty about the other subjects, I have not gone into those in-depth, so I can't comment on that, but certainly within the Geography KS3 review we did look at how we could actually change and re-energise the subject, and make it relevant and link in with many of the topics which actually interest students now, one of which is sustainability, others like interdependence, the global dimension, which is part of sustainability now."

Close

Friday 8th February 2008

Questions and answers after Morning Session

Q. "Howard Gotts from Rochdale Council, sustainability team and I lead the school travel team. My question is about the statement from the department for cushions and soft furnishings (DSCF) I believe this is the school acronym at the moment, it helps you remember the letters, sorry, the school travel issue, 2 statements were made saying schools can't do this on their own, our experience is that 80/90% of it is the schools on their own, the schools that have actually made the biggest differences to school travel and particularly away from car travel, have very largely done it on their own, that not to say that the local authority isn't required for some aspects but I really feel we need to make the statement that schools can do an awful lot of that without anybody else's help"

"Point noted"

Q. Terry Sutcliffe from Middlesbrough LEA- "Just to ask a question about Sustainability and transport and the conflicts of government policy at the highest level in term of parental choice and the amount of travel that that actually causes, how is that to be squared in terms of school organisation when authorities are asked to expand popular schools and the travel distances just increase and increase all of the time when community schools are getting left behind?"

A. Janice Lawson DCSF- "Good point and a very difficult question to answer, the choice aspect of parent's choice is not going to change in the near future but it did develop before we became concerned about sustainable development widely across government. At the moment there is no intention of changing it, the idea is that all schools will be good schools and parents won't want to choose something a long way away. I think there will be pressure from children and from society at large that people won't choose to go those long distances, but that is the only route I can see at the moment, but we continue to pressure and hopefully others will too to say there are inconsistencies here actually the evidence is looking back over the years that there hasn't been a massive increase in travelling if you look at it on a national basis, but obviously for a LA some will find that there are huge increases in travel taking place"

A. Helen McMullen GOYH- "I was just going to pick up from Janice's point and respond to both of those points as there are some similarities around that, of course I would say like Janice, that if we have all schools as excellent centres of learning, all schools as good schools, that their parents rightly will seek out what they see as the best education opportunities for their children and I think there is a big drive, I have picked up on many of the things that Ian was saying, it is that whole local authority approach to looking at educational excellence, it's not just the responsibility of a Children's Services director or an advisory team and I think more and more through the local area agreement there is a strong recognition across local authority partners that if we have educational excellence opportunities, that is going to have long term benefits to the area, the locality, but it's also going to ensure that parents have good local choice within that. Coming back to the point about school travel plans, because we have some school travel advisors here today, I think that still comes back to some local authority leadership and joined-up-ness. It's not about a school travel advisor or someone trying to just work with those schools, it does pick up the point around which Ian made, how many strategies and policies go through councils that recognise the importance of the sustainable development, and look at if there is a travel initiative, how is that linked in to sustainable development, how is that going to be working with schools, how many schools and school leaders are consulted on some of those broader strategies about sustainability issues within a local authority area. How many children and young people are consulted on that I think is really important. I will keep coming back though to Local area agreements, as I do see that local area agreements are a real opportunity to start for local areas and local partners putting together what is really important for them and that locality and the communities within that, and I think it will be interesting in looking at local agreements and how they are taken forward. Let's say there is a priority and national indicator around climate change, what's underneath that, how many programme strategies whatever are going to be seen that by delivering on the

sustainable schools agenda it is going to be meeting that indicator and unpacking that. It's not a single item, and I think for too long, sometimes issues, people are beavering away and it's not that nobody isn't working hard, but it's about who else knows what you are working on, how do you get that opportunity to say to partners and even to colleagues within LA's, what's the big thing that you are currently working on and is there a better way of working on that together, rather than trying to always be cracking the single issues and I think today is a real opportunities to look at some of those cross cutting issues and look at that broader across partners and across LA's and how we are delivering on some of the sustainable development issues"

A. Ian Smith Tameside MBC– "the only thing that I would add to all of that is, there role of the elected members as well as senior officers within the council, for instance as part of our building schools for the future programme, we did an away day for all the cabinet members in Tyneside. The cabinet deputy, who has got the responsibility for the transport infrastructure for the borough, immediately started looking at what changes will actually need to be made to the whole road, transport system of the borough, even though when we were doing that the thing was 6 years away. What you need is that kind of forward thinking and advanced vision to take into account any potential changes and turning that into the reality of council budgets, council plans, not just the travel plan as Helen is saying, but this is got to be something that the whole council to take on at local authority level"

Q. "Just wanting to know from Janice, in the department is there evidence that people are prepared to pull back on the pressurising of schools, so schools can be happy listening to children and communities?"

A. Janice – "I think if you read the children's plan you will see that there is a very different emphasis coming through that and I wouldn't say it's not pressurising schools because there are some areas where as a department, we would be failing in our duty if we didn't keep up the pressure on the system to improve for young people in it. That's our job too. I wouldn't go along with the argument that the department is the cause of all the schools woes because I don't think that's the case, but I think that there is certainly clear through the children's plan, that we are taking a much more holistic approach to what we need to do across the whole system to make the world a better place for children"

Q. "Gillian Shifrad – City of York school travel plan coordinator. I have experience as a parent and working with young people and I have quite a pragmatic approach, so what I am concerned about is walking the talk, so first part of the question is I am wondering what inspired Ian to use a car to come here today when there is quite a lot of access to transport, so I would like to get around that and also school travel plans don't seem to take on the dimension of schools being work places and one thing about young people is they can spot hypocrisy and we can get all the children coming on buses, walking and on their bikes, but if then the school expands the car parking spaces for their teachers, there are questions there, and finally there was as slide about the economic wellbeing of these young people, and I know there are lots of definitions of sustainable development but they all incorporate an economic a social and an environmental dimension and as a parent I would like my child to have an economic, social and environmental wellbeing."

A. Ian–"ok, I'll pick up on the first bit, first of all it's a low energy car, next because of the distance, in terms of getting here and back again if is anything less than 20 miles, I actually go on my bike, I cycle to work regularly and back again which is a 20 mile round trip. On some of the other issues, I think that in terms of school travel and transport, we do need to create those opportunities for young people. I know cycling from Manchester to Tameside and back again, that I would be worried about my children following the same route that I am riding a bike, so we are working on improving that. I will point you to a good example from the city of Coventry; they produce a map that has all the green routes, canal paths and river paths across the whole of the city so people can actually choose journeys that take them away from the roads that have patroller service, so people can feel safe going there. I think that is something that we are meeting on Monday to try and develop on Tameside, I think quite often there are fantastic opportunities for other forms of travel, but the 2 things that people look at are potential danger for young people and the other just not knowing what is happening, and when you look at this country and look at the amount of green space, we seem to contact all out activity on crowded polluted roads, so I apologise for coming in the car today, but if you come down to Manchester I'll be on my bike"

A. Helen McMullen – "Can I just have a final word, I am sitting here feeling quite smug at the moment, because I came on the train on Northern rail which is a good experience and then walked from the station, so I am feeling quite good. I have to say in our region and as government officials we do try and use public transport as much as possible and I think that's really important. I just want to pick up on the point about schools not being seen as traditional schools, what we've got now are some really innovative multi service multi agency provision being on single sites, and I think if we are looking at some of the examples where the extended services and looking at the multi agency and making use that when we are planning new

provision or looking at BSF or children's centres or whatever, rather than always thinking we'll have a new building in a new site, that now what I see and certainly in Yorkshire and Humber, across the local authorities looking much more innovatively how there could be multi use of a single site, so it's not just about the school travel plan, it's about lots of different people could be using that site in a very innovative way. I think if we are always looking, I am always looking at the 0-8, 8-13 and the 14-19 and the 19+, what are we doing for those kind of key groups of people and how are we bringing things together and how have we got some common strands, good examples as you actually say, so young people pre 3 and 5's actually see it as a good model, and begin to get that habit of walking, of safety and making better use of sites available within localities and cutting down on carbon emission."

Questions and answers after Rebecca Gibbs

Q. James Pitt from the Yorkshire and Humber Teacher training network for education for Sustainable Development. "I was interested in your last slide but one, talking about sustainable development as a mode of delivery and was that in contrast to a policy, could you expand on that, in schools and teacher training institutions, there is a danger that some say we ought to deal with this but we put it in a box, and what I was picking up from you is that this is the whole sort of approach."

A. Rebecca- "Yeah, this is tricky in a way as there is a quite a lot of people around who don't understand sustainable development, so for them it doesn't quite make sense and there are people in the department who feel like that, but for us, it's very central, if you did sustainable development you would tick loads of other boxes for loads of departments, it's actually quite that simple, and when you look at local authorities who have done that, they find themselves delivering on a whole range of issues, so when we talk about a major delivery, I am talking very specifically about Every Child Matters there but actually it should apply to any policy, and if the government were true to their word this would be happening in every department and of course that is happening to some extent, securing the future commits the government every department to sustainable development both in their operations and policy construction, but I know that we are not there and I look at policies every day in the dept and I just think I am not sure sustainable development is a big feature here, but if it was central, then you would get a lot more of the joining up, is my view and I suspect probably yours, but it's how we make it happen, and what's interesting for me to hear how it doesn't happen when it gets down to local level what things get in the way of doing sustainable development.

Q. Nick Bradley from the centre of global education and part of Y&H global schools-" To maybe broaden the discussion even more, although it's very broad from the presentation, isn't it really about sustainable lifestyles and the fact that our lifestyle in common with most of the Western affluent nations is simply not sustainable, we can recognise that and there are lots and lots of initiatives going on and lots of opportunities and so on, but in 10/20 years time are we actually going to be in a better position or worse position than we are now, and it's not such a problem for most of us, but it certainly is for the generations that are in school at the moment. Now it's a very impressive report in lots of ways, and it does take some international examples, the one about Dutch children, who are much more sheltered from traffic, but I don't see many examples from countries in the south, developing countries, those countries are living totally sustainable lifestyles, part of the problems of course are some of them are so poor, that actually they don't have enough to live on, so it's only sustainable in the sense that they haven't had their basic needs met, and I think part of the sustainable future has got to be about lifting the poorest people in the world actually up to a level where they do have a sustainable lifestyle at the same time as us recognising that ours is un-sustainable. That's a long way round of saying can we not take more examples from the southern countries, where they are living more frugal, more sustainable lifestyles and learn from that"

A. Rebecca - "I think that's a very fair point, the trouble is that I agree with you wholeheartedly. I recognise your point about not using those examples, actually I think that's very fair, we haven't done that, partly because we are talking very directly to Western LA's or western Whitehall departments, I think that's very fair. That's the central issue really, how you might raise the spending power of individuals. That's a dilemma in this country when we talk about child poverty. If we are talking about raising the income of those households, we are talking about them probably emitting more, there's a dilemma there. There are a range of things that get talked about in government and it remains to be seen if they will be taken forward but things like, carbon accounts, if we all had a carbon allowance there would be quite a shift in terms of social justice and distribution of income and closing the income differential gap in this country, now what that does when you start getting carbon trading across countries, it's very complicated and morally tricky, it's just about us buying our opportunity to omit more or the same and not change our lifestyles. I really recognise the point, we really haven't talked as much as we might have done about places in south America, if where if we lived like they did, we would only need three quarters of a planet instead of 3 planets, it's a fair point, thank you"

Q. Sally Ann Lindsay, North East Lincolnshire Council- "ON a similar vein, on part one of the sheet that mentions green space for the benefit of children's mental and physical health and their freedom to play it then goes on about traffic and health which is fine, one of the things there it doesn't seem to mention another importance for children for their future is biodiversity, so these green spaces, I don't know if that's what quality means there or does quality mean a football pitch?"

A. Rebecca "That's a fair question, biodiversity is an issue that doesn't come up in the department as much as it should, actually DCSF"

Q. Sally Ann- " all I was thinking without considering biodiversity within these green spaces for the children, they are not going to have medicines, stuff to build with in the future or anything the food webs will go, so it really does need bringing in, not just the quality of green spaces but the sustainable quality of green spaces"

A. Rebecca " I Think that's fair, and I say it's not talked about that much but the new stuff on the play agenda, and the children's plan and these aren't brilliant, there's lots more we would like to see but we are very much hoping that biodiversity will be an element of the new refurbishment, and I recognise that these are flawed policies but partly because these are about learning, we can't really care about a world we never see, and for children that's a real problem. We hope that we could create a playground that was about biodiversity in some ways it wouldn't need to be bouncy rubber chickens or whatever it might be it's a tricky one to drive through in Whitehall, but it's a really valid point and I always take notes on these things and take them back. There is one other element and that is the early years foundation stage, and I know that doesn't affect everyone here but that has some good stuff on biodiversity, what we don't know yet, is how that is going to be delivered, so if your children will be required to spend time but also to learn about creatures and their habitats, and that kind of thing, it's difficult to see how that's going to happen where I live to be honest, because there is not that many creatures but that's questions that we can ask, so some of the stuff there, so we can move it forward, but it's a valid point.

Main Questions and Answers Session

Q. Bill Rigby - "Can we have a little discussion on some antics for a Friday afternoon, particularly around the S word; Sustainability. I have a feeling that represented in the presentations that have been taking place in the last couple of days there has been an unspoken confusion which has come to a head in the last presentation, which is about an excellent initiative but uses the context of the use of the word sustainability in an entirely different way, for example from the speaker previously this afternoon, from the sustainability commission. So therefore I think a little exchange about which bit.."

A. Peter Hetherington, Academy for Sustainable Communities "That's an omission from my part, I apologise, I should have said as well in our project in Milton Keynes and the thousands of children who are now embracing that, the very first school went to Oxley Park which opened about 18 months ago, sustainability is very much part of their curriculum so as soon as we became engaged with MK, clearly we did take on board the carbon challenge and I should have mentioned it in our resource packs, that certainly is a central part of what we do, but I was at pains to try and point out the sustainability canvas is as wide as you want to paint it, and forgive me I did concentrate I guess, on a housing community agenda because Sustainability can also embrace a cohesive community, one that is well served by shops, by public transport, is at peace with itself, is also what you might say socially sustainable, do you know what I mean? So it is an overused word, a cliché, I accept."

A. Tom Freeman, GONW -"When I came into this agenda, it didn't ring or register education for sustainable development, it sounded like something you caught and went to the Dr's to give you a cure, I did mention in our North West ESD forum, it could do with re-labelling, maybe call it thriving communities, but that is no different, it is a label. Climate change overarches, sustainable development overarches all the other initiatives, healthy schools, travel to work, obesity, government is government these things happen. I sit in an office in Manchester and you can see one initiative after another coming to the table and after a few years, you think why don't they stop and talk to one another. It's a fact of government, it's the way it works. Many a time I go away with a headache because I have been trying to fight it, I shouldn't do, I am old enough to know better I should stop, but there is absolutely no harm in being critical, having a bit fire in your belly, but you still have to work with what you have, it's just a fact of life and the easy thing to cop out and not do anything and I don't want any of us here to do that, you need to work with it and get the best out of it."

A. Rich Hurst, NESPSS- "My view, particularly from the Sustainable schools agenda, the key for me is the integrated approach, that link between the teaching and learning, the campus, not just the actual building and grounds, but the ethos

of what that school is about and then it's links with the community, how do those 3 join together and that whole agenda, developing the knowledge, the skills to think about future thinking, problem solving, that's the challenge for schools, I think from a local authority viewpoint and I have a split role half my role is more local authority based within Durham is, how do we join together all the services that we are all supporting with schools, whether we be specifically local authority, or third sector, whether we be private sector, we are all knocking on doors of schools saying this initiative is important, schools have got to say 'fine how does it ultimately deliver school improvement, how does it benefit our pupils' and that's the challenge for us, when we go back, how do we join together the services we want to engage with, with children and young people, to make it better for those children and young people."

A Craig Johnson Y&H ESD Forum – "Yeah, just back to the doorway thing, maybe what Bill's getting at, sustainable development, in the curriculum they are controversial issues, let's not beat about the bush, take those doorway themes, even the aspirations, zero carbon schools, we are certainly into extractive economy, peak oil issues, discussing that, not to avoid those sort of issues, to move from that to solutions, as you say whether you're talking at community level or school level, it's going to be tricky, there is big politics involved in terms of getting change in your community or in your school, so again making very sure that we get to the crux of the discussion really when we talk about sustainable development."

Q. "Sorry, it's been a burning question on my mind all throughout the day, and it's not just about sustainability in schools, it's linked more in what you were talking about in housing as well, but obviously it encompasses everything and that's about population increases, not just in this country, but worldwide, I am not saying we shouldn't do anything about learning to live more within our sustainability means, of course we should, but we also can't ignore that there are a hell of a lot of people on the planet, and the planet can't support that many people, certainly not if we continue to grow in the rate that we have, so we are spending a lot of time and a lot of energy and a lot of good work talking about the things that we have been talking about today, are there any plans afoot, and you might be more aware than anyone, I am not suggesting we do what China does, and limit how many babies people have, or do we?"

"I am not a teacher, I am a layman, and you are professionals, I think if I was talking to some children about the challenge of climate change, I might make the point fairly forcibly that the poorest continents in the world, Africa, are least responsible for carbon emissions and was actually going to suffer more than any other continent, through shortage of water and global warming. So I think it is usually important while we are talking about our own little bit of the planet, to put that into a wider context and I am sure most teachers do that, but just to repeat what some people have said, I am afraid what we are doing is the art of the possible, we all have our views about the state of the planet, and what is going wrong, and about some countries, no names, grossly over polluting more than others,"

"We still have that fundamental problem, it doesn't matter who is doing what, and earlier on we touched on the balance, and that needs to be addressed which means some people perhaps need to start using more energy to raise their standard of living, I am not against that at all, but clearly the planet has got finite resources, hasn't it?"

"It has, which is why in any curriculum, building sustainably to reduce the demands on energy and everything else, there is a linkage there"

A. Rich Hurst – "I think those key skills we were talking about before the issues around, interdependence, social justice that's where all those issues come into it, and solving the population problem is not an easy one, but I think it is something that people need to look at. I would guess most people, I know a number of people from capital estates and so on, here today are more concerned about falling roles rather than roles going further up, so depending from where you are in the world, depends upon how population is affecting you, so as we said before complex issues, there isn't a simple answer."

And finally-

Dave Smith GONE "I just want to say a few things to wind up, first of all this discussion just now, has exemplified a message, a theme that has run through the whole of the day, which is that this stuff isn't easy, this stuff is really hard, but this stuff is really, really important, there are some very hard decisions going to have to be made, politically, professionally in the very near future. I guess we are setting the framework today for the context within which those decisions will be made, and I think that's what the policy, it's about having that strategy, that picture of where we are trying to get to and I think we are starting to get that."

Close