

Eco-Schools Strategy Forum 2014

What we learned - a summary report

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Part of the Keep Britain Tidy Family



Acknowledgements

These forums reinforced some things core to the strength of the Eco-Schools network: the people within it are extremely knowledgeable, passionate, committed and generous with their time and resources.

We would like to thank the Centre for Research in Education and the Environment at the University of Bath for an invitation to present on our strategic direction in the run up to the forum events as part of their seminar series.

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A huge thank-you also to Rupert Brakspear who acted as a facilitator at two of our forums, in Birmingham and London, and for his input and advice on how best to run the day. Several colleagues at Keep Britain Tidy made important contributions to logistics, promotion, facilitation, note taking and event management; thank-you all.

The forums were sponsored by David Luke Uniforms, who we would like to thank for their support and in particular David Burgess for attending the forums and contributing so helpfully to the conversation.

Finally, to everyone who came along to the events; thank-you for your contributions to panel discussions, workshops and for leaving us with plenty of great new ideas, insights and hopefully the start of some many more great conversations and collaborations.



1.Introduction

In the first three months of 2014 the education team at Keep Britain Tidy organised four Eco-Schools strategy forums in Northallerton, Birmingham, Wigan and London. These events were an open invitation and brought together 112 Eco-Schools stakeholders, all of whom with a unique perspective and interest in Education for Sustainability and the Eco-Schools programme.

Why review our strategy and why now?

As the impacts of changes to the UK Government's policies on education and sustainability begin to take hold, schools, local authorities, charities, businesses and freelance sustainability and education professionals are experiencing a period of adjustment as they adapt their day to day operations to new realities.

This is as true for us, at Keep Britain Tidy, as it is for any organisation or individual. We feel it important, at this moment of change, to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of our work, how it fits into the wider Education for Sustainability sector and to explore the challenges and opportunities that we collectively face.

The four forum events form part of an ongoing exercise aiming to achieve this, with the longer term aim being the development of a coherent and workable strategy for the Eco-Schools programme in England.

A five year, 2015 – 2020, strategy for Eco-Schools and our wider education work is currently a work in progress, and the learnings from the forum events are directly feeding in to help shape this. We hope to continue the dialogue and publish the final strategy in autumn 2014.

This document summarises what we learned at the strategy forums and our thoughts on how we may begin to take action on some key issues.

Who do we engage with; what do they contribute; what do they need?

In designing the strategy forum we purposefully kept the 'who should attend' guidance vague stating '*if you work in any way in or with schools to deliver Eco-Schools programme and improve Education for Sustainability we would love to meet you.*' We did this because we recognise that many different people have a stake in Education for Sustainability and the Eco-Schools programme, including some that we may as yet not be aware of. People engage with the Eco-Schools programme for many different reasons and in many different ways. As we shape our 2015-2020 strategy we want to continually hear from as wide a

variety of stakeholders as possible. The forums gave us a chance to meet a diverse range of people face to face.

In forming a strategy that will allow Eco-Schools to extend its reach and grow its impact we need to consider the priorities of each of our stakeholder groups. The more we can learn about this, the more chance we have of developing the Eco-Schools programme in a way that will help us work with our stakeholders to achieve our individual and mutual goals. In an attempt to summarise our understandings of who our stakeholders are and how we might relate to them we have created the map below. It is a simplified version of an inevitably complex situation.



It is possible to bring some of these stakeholders together at a forum or to engage with them through meetings and correspondence. There are however, several stakeholders whose voices do not exist or are hard to hear – the physical environment, people in other countries, future generations and so on. Their stake in the success of the Education for Sustainability movement needs to be considered in any strategy writing process. This is something we are keenly aware of.

The table below is a simplified summary of the key ways the Eco-Schools programme relates to its various stakeholders. This picture becomes more complicated when we consider how these stakeholders relate to each other. A side effect of our strategy forums was that they gave space for new meetings and potential collaborations to emerge. Many who attended reported this to be a benefit they gained from attending.

Stakeholder	How Eco-Schools can help them	How they can help Eco-Schools
Schools	Improve sustainability performance; Improve whole school performance, pupil engagement, attendance and attainment.	Deliver Education for Sustainability.
Children	Develop sustainability skills, knowledge and values; Improve wellbeing; Help improve children's local environments.	Engage with programme; Create inspiring work to share with wider network; Future ambassadors.
Business	Future employees with skills for sustainability; CSR partnerships; Route to market for sustainability products.	Funding; Inspiring real life examples of sustainability in business to share; Provide volunteers to help the programme; Business advice and support.
Public Sector	Support on delivery of services; Support for policy objectives; Building citizens of tomorrow.	Create policy drivers to support sustainability and education objectives; Position Eco-Schools as a quality mark for schools to aspire to; Provide sustainability training for local teachers and children; Support schools eco work locally.
Community	Help schools to involve and inspire projects that strengthen local sustainability activities and communities	Support Eco-Schools work locally by getting involved in projects; Volunteer as Eco-Schools assessors / assistants.
Education for Sustainability sector* *Including Development and Global education.	Can help promote educational services, products and resources; Showcase good practice; Provide support, advice and training on Education for Sustainability approaches; Demonstrate impacts and benefits of Education for Sustainability; Campaign nationally on sustainability and education policy.	Assist schools with delivery of sustainability work and education; Act as critical friend to help with development of programme; Promote programme at local, regional and national levels; Share inspiring case studies, ideas and results.
Media	Provide stories of interest for sharing across multiple platforms.	Promote Eco-Schools approach; Support communication of key messages.

A deeper stakeholder analysis is in process as we work to shape our 2015-2020 education strategy. We will continue to meet and explore the programme with a variety of stakeholders and would like to hear from you.

2. Developing an education strategy for Keep Britain Tidy and the Eco-Schools programme in England

As operators of the Eco-Schools programme in England the Keep Britain Tidy education team aims to inspire and educate the next generation so that they are equipped with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes needed to create a more sustainable world.

Each forum event began with a 45 minute presentation by Keep Britain Tidy Education Manager, Morgan Phillips, who outlined the vision, mission, activities and structure of Keep Britain Tidy before explaining our current education work in more detail, the priorities for development as we see them and the thinking behind the way we organise our work. The presentation is available to view¹ online. The presentation provided context and outlines some of the key factors shaping the development of our new strategy. We summarise this below building in updates that reflect what we learnt at the forums.

A work in progress

The presentation was and is very much a work in progress as we continue to develop a full five year education strategy for 2015 – 2020. At the forums, the presentation was intended as a starting point to frame the rest of the discussions throughout the day; the ideas and issues raised served as a starter for very interesting conversations. We are keen to continue the conversation with those who attended the forums, but also those who would like to help us develop our strategy as a result of reading this document. [Please get in touch with us.](#)

The problem we are trying to solve

Midway through the second decade of the 21st century it is clear that we face and will continue to face, numerous inter-connected environmental, social and economic

¹ Eco-School Prezi Presentation, at Prezi.com: <http://prezi.com/s747ugdcerc/eco-schools-strategy-2014/>.

challenges. Climate change, biodiversity loss, natural resource pressure, extreme weather events, water stress and deforestation are all already impacting on the way we organise our lives and economies.

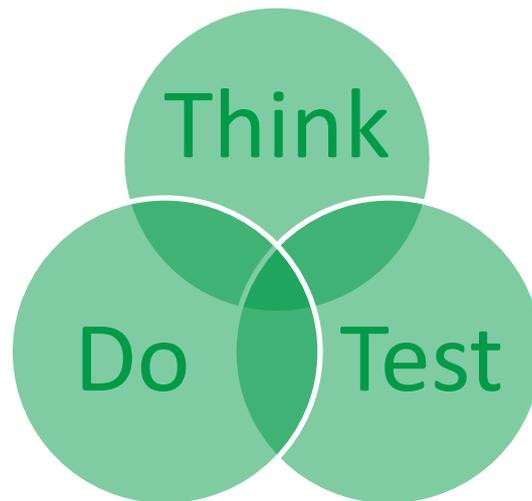
Progress has been made to address these challenges. Despite this the problems are largely getting worse with implications for social and economic equality both within and between countries. If we fail to overcome these problems we will destroy the ability of the planet to sustain the natural biological, physical and atmospheric systems that support life on Earth as we currently know it. Our current ways of living are environmentally unsustainable and, therefore, ultimately socially and economically unsustainable too. This is the problem we are trying to solve.

The responsibility for solving this problem, or at least attempting to, lies with many stakeholders across many sectors. The education sector has an important role to play; and it may be that significant changes to our mainstream education systems are needed. We recognise that the approaches that Education for Sustainability is built on have a lot to offer.

Along with allied approaches in the sciences, arts and humanities, Education for Sustainability has the potential to have a transformational effect on the education system as well as on individual pupils. The potential is there, but a lot of work still needs to be done, both to develop the approaches further and develop the capacity of educators to deliver them. That development process lies at the heart of what the education team at Keep Britain Tidy is aiming to do.

Organising our work

As a sector, everything we do needs to be aimed towards delivering and improving Education for Sustainability. Within this, Keep Britain Tidy needs to work with educators, of all types, to explore and think about what Education for Sustainability is, does and what it could be. We also need to improve their chances of actually doing it; and improve how they do it - so that they do it well. Alongside this we need to improve our evidence base, the way in which we demonstrate how much Education for Sustainability is happening, how it is developing and how successful it is. At Keep Britain Tidy we have therefore organised our work here into three overlapping areas – **think**, **do** and **test**.



Think

There is education *about* the environment, education *in* the environment, education *for* the environment and, assumedly education *against* the environment. We then have Education for Sustainability, Education for Sustainable Development and Sustainability Education; we also talk about learning *for, in, through* and *about* sustainability and the environment. Are these all one and the same thing, are they slightly different, is one a part of another? At Keep Britain Tidy we most frequently use 'Education for Sustainability', while being aware that, internationally, the Eco-Schools programme is framed as Environmental Education.

When we are educating and learning for sustainability what are we actually doing? Why and how are we doing it? What are learners learning? What are teachers teaching? What are we trying to achieve? What is the most effective way to achieve our goals?

Critical and creative thinking about these sorts of questions is something we aim to inspire and facilitate at Keep Britain Tidy. We do this through the courses we run; the articles and reports we publish; the snippets we share on social media; the speeches and workshops we give; the case studies we disseminate; the lesson and activity plans we produce; and the research we conduct and report on. This sort of activity goes on under the **think** area of our work.

Do

Keep Britain Tidy has a role to play in helping educators to turn their 'thinking' into 'doing' so that they can do Education for Sustainability and do it well. We hope to help educators in two main ways. Firstly we want to guide, train and inspire educators so that they can implement and further develop the numerous approaches that form Education for Sustainability pedagogy. Secondly, we want to enable those who want to do Education for Sustainability to actually have the opportunity to do it; to put their thinking and skills into

practice. We have a role to play in helping create a mandate for Education for Sustainability to happen in formal and informal education. We can do this by providing the frameworks (most notably the Eco-Schools framework) that can support them in this and also by influencing decision makers at various levels from central Government through to the senior leadership teams at schools.

Test

Several factors are driving a surge in enthusiasm for better monitoring and evaluation of Education for Sustainability. By reporting on how much Education for Sustainability is happening; where it is happening; which approaches are proving most successful; and how the outcomes bring positive benefits against learning and sustainability objectives; the sector can achieve several things:

Firstly, we can test which approaches work best in terms of developing the knowledge, skills and values learners need to take us from where we are now to a state of sustainability. If we know what works, we know what to replicate, share and further develop.

Secondly, we can map what is happening, reporting on who is doing what, where and with whom. This will help strengthen Education for Sustainability networks and foster collaboration.

Thirdly, we can demonstrate the impacts we are having and report on these impacts to interested stakeholders from within and beyond the sector; perhaps attracting new ones.

Fourthly, we can create an evidence base that strengthens the case for support both in terms of policy and funding from others, both nationally and for schools themselves.

Keep Britain Tidy has a part to play within the sector to help achieve the above. Clarity over the most appropriate and effective role needs to be defined through dialogue and collaboration with schools, partner agencies and alliances, drawing on our contact and interaction with a wide range of school practice. As we travel towards this clarity, we can continue our efforts under the **test** area of our work in the following ways.

Keep Britain Tidy needs to monitor and evaluate how effective it is in:

- Helping educators with their '*thinking*'; are we creating opportunities for educators to explore and understand what Education for Sustainability *is* and *does*.... and even re-imagine what it could be?

- Helping educators to *do* Education for Sustainability and *do it well*.

Keep Britain Tidy needs to work with partners to support educators to monitor, evaluate and report on:

- Learning outcomes relating to sustainability in schools;
- Improvement to children's physical and emotional wellbeing;
- The sustainability performance of school buildings and infrastructure;
- Changes to the sustainability behaviour and attitudes of children;
- The impact Education for Sustainability has on whole school performance, attainment, pupil engagement and attendance.

Enabling ourselves

There is a fourth area of work that is internally focused. In order to help others to **think, do and test**, we need to **enable** ourselves to do the work we do on behalf of others. There are applications to fill in, reports to write, teams to manage, clients to meet and so on; these all require skills and time and need to be adequately budgeted for in any planning process.

Two overlapping and overarching goals for the Eco-Schools programme in England

Schools have an impact on the environment at local and global levels; they also have impacts on social and economic sustainability. Improvements to sustainability performance is a clear priority for Eco-Schools, but it is not the only priority. An equal priority is the development of learner's 'ability to make sound choices in the face of the inherent complexity of the future'².

Eco-Schools is a framework for 'action learning'. When children get to work on projects that improve their school's sustainability performance they are developing a wide range of knowledge, skills and values. We need to make sure our Eco-coordinators are keeping this front of mind in their role as facilitators; so that they maximise the learning opportunities for their learners.

² In John Huckle's 2006 consultation paper on behalf of the UK Sustainable Development Commission, William Scott is quoted as saying: 'The key role for learning seems (to me) to be to develop learners' ability to make sound choices in the face of the inherent complexity and uncertainty of the future.' Available to download via: http://john.huckle.org.uk/publications_downloads.jsp

We want to see schools improving their sustainability performance AND the knowledge, skills and values of their learners. Everything we do under our **think, do** and **test** areas of work needs to contribute to these twin and overlapping goals.



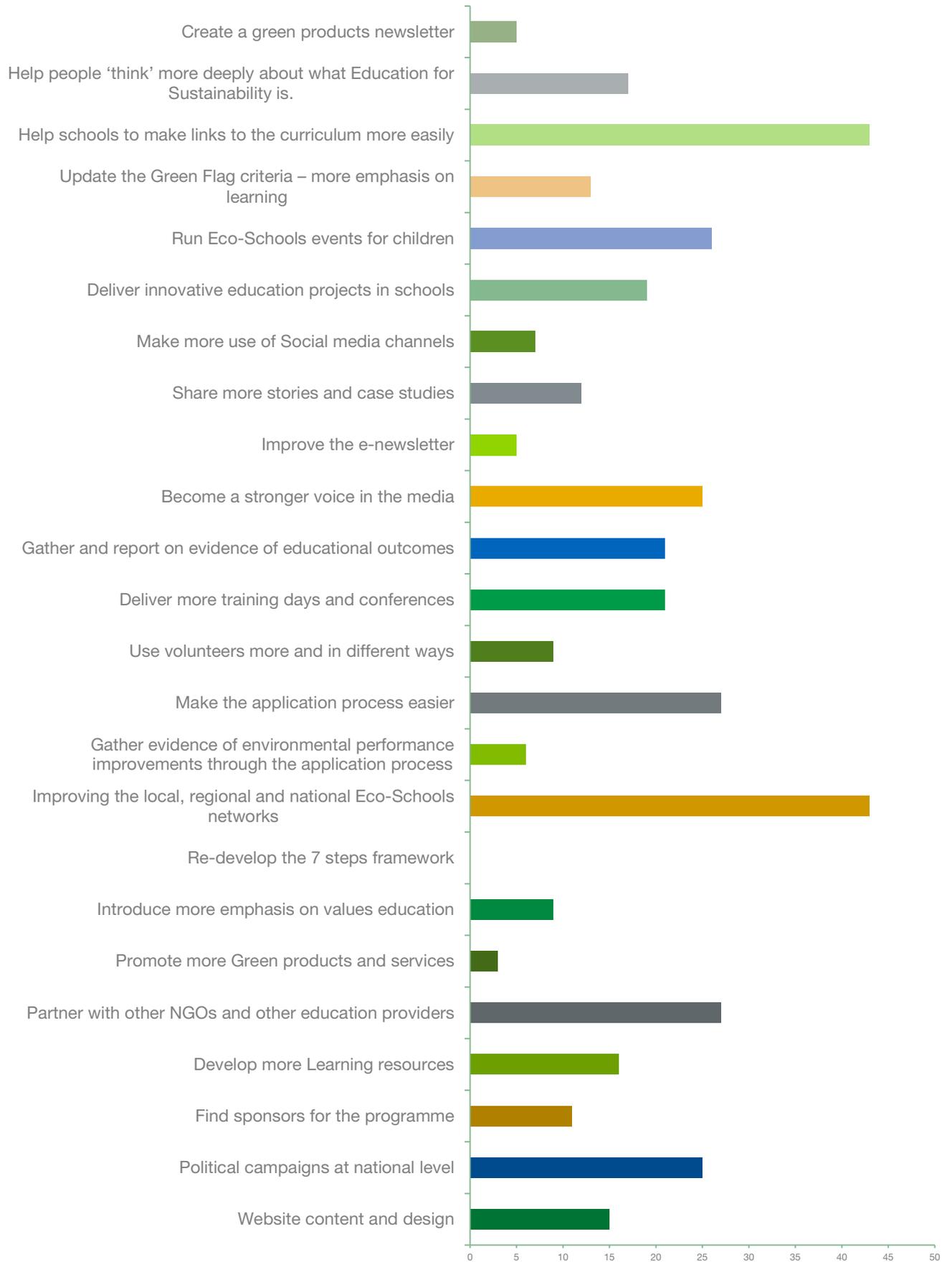
To achieve these goals several resources and enablers need to be in place - websites, learning materials, volunteers, conferences, network meetings and policy drivers that allow Education for Sustainability to develop both in scope and reach. Decisions on which of these building blocks we need to support and develop as a priority are the decisions that will shape our 2015-2020 strategy and more pressingly our work over the next 12 months. The strategy forums have been incredibly useful in helping us to do this.

3. Mapping our priorities

At the end of each forum participants were given a grid of 24 practical things that Keep Britain Tidy and the broader Eco-Schools network in England could choose to prioritise in the coming years. Participants were asked to circle the five they felt were most important. The graph below illustrates the practical steps the stakeholders attending the forums felt were of highest priority.

Two clear priorities emerged relating to the need to strengthen networks at local, regional and national levels and helping schools to link Eco-Schools activity and Education for Sustainability more easily and broadly in with school curriculum. Each of these practical areas of work (and more) were discussed during breakout sessions at the forums. They reinforced the findings of the survey work we carried out in 2013³.

³ Keep Britain Tidy (2013) Eco-Schools England: Exploring success to inform a new horizon, available online at: http://www.eco-schools.org.uk/AssetLibraryFiles/EcoSchools_Report_2013_1183.pdf



4. What did people talk about and what were they saying?

During the forums, conversations gravitated towards eight key areas, with participants exploring issues they recognised as being important to Keep Britain Tidy as the operators of the Eco-Schools programme in England. Helpfully these discussions were captured on flipchart paper, on post-it notes and in the notebooks of our facilitators. Recorded here are the groupings of observations, questions, suggestions and advice that emerged. You can find the full range of comments and suggestions in the appendix to this report below.

Partnership working

A call for Keep Britain Tidy to partner with small and large providers of high quality Education for Sustainability resources and services; and to facilitate two way links between these partners and schools engaged in the Eco-Schools programme.

Create a quick guide to accessing the support of local Education for Sustainability providers for schools to use. Create an 'Eco-Schools directory' that has reviews from schools

'Accredit' key organisations and groups

Keep Britain Tidy needs to encourage partnerships at local, regional and national levels

It is important to create and develop links with other organisations so that pupils can see links of sustainability outside the school gates

Implications for us

How can we best facilitate this? What are the mechanics behind it, the requirements on partners and the standards partners should reach? Who is best placed to set these requirements and standards and how would they set them? How can we resource the process?

Promoting Eco-Schools

The profile of Eco-Schools needs to be developed and raised through establishing greater links with a wide range of stakeholders and in particular other organisations and initiatives that are perceived as at the forefront of interest (STEM, renewable energy sector, economic development, the arts and humanities, etc.) This needs to be done through the right mix and level of media, providing best practice case studies and evidence that clearly outline benefits. Building the profile and benefits of Eco-Schools at Secondary school level

also remains a recognised challenge. Particular focus on engagement with head teachers, preferably through personalised contact, is seen to be key.

Children could write to Secondary head teachers about the programme

Make good practice readily available and both child and SLT friendly

Possibility of linking into STEM activities and other projects through Eco-Schools site

Implications for us

We need to identify and better understand the key routes into schools and support others with the right material to be able to encourage more schools to want to become an Eco-School, or to engage with Education for Sustainability more broadly. We need to strengthen the reach and accessibility of Eco-Schools programme in Secondary schools.

Strengthening networks

Eco-Schools needs to get more regional, establishing more localised, relevant, information and support to aid time pressed teachers, Eco-coordinators and others. Alongside this schools should include in their progression, a recognised role in sharing and building cross and inter-school networks, to support themselves and others on their Eco-Schools journey. Keep Britain Tidy should aim to facilitate and guide this where needed.

Keep Britain Tidy could promote and facilitate regional forums

Supportive networks with people/pupils from range of areas

As soon as a school achieves Silver, put them in touch with a Green Flag school or an Ambassador school

Interactive map to show schools and their stage of involvement

Implications for us

What other regional schools networks are already available? How can we support and build on any of these? Can we develop existing Eco-Schools mapping and identification to promote network building more? Where new networks are needed, how can we facilitate and resource them?

Website, Social Media and Email

One website, newsletter and communication narrative does not fit all. The Eco-Schools programme needs to tailor its approach more to the different audiences and users: Secondary and Primary schools, teachers and students, senior leadership team and businesses, parents etc. With increasing use of technology in and outside the classroom there is opportunity to use a wider variety of techniques to contact, interact, engage and educate. All this needs to be balanced and at the right level so as not to inundate, remain clear and retain engagement.

Would be good to have separate areas for pupils and for adults

Upload 'how to' videos on things like 'how to grow potatoes', 'how to get a governor on board', 'how to take minutes in a meeting' – made by pupils?

As a teacher I receive too many resources, I am inundated daily by emails from different campaigns, e.g. RHS; Co-op; WWF; etc. The Eco-Schools message is a bit lost.

Implications for us

Are there short term solutions we can find to some of these issues that could create greater clarity of the relevant material for the various users? Are there areas we could trial a new approach to, for example Secondary school users? In the longer term, how should we develop our website and other digital platforms to facilitate greater partnership working, networking and learning? How best can we manage our communications with schools to maximum two way effect?

Funding the programme

Funding is required for several different areas of the Eco-Schools programme. Keep Britain Tidy needs funding to allow it to operate and develop the programme, while schools need funds to develop their own Eco-Schools projects at the local level. As well as looking at EU or international funding, the business sector was seen as a key player, at both individual school level and for Keep Britain Tidy. Making sure the benefits are clear is important for generating funding support, with particular emphasis on highlighting the benefits that children see and report.

Schools could approach local businesses to ask them to sponsor the £200 charge for the Green Flag assessment. Local sponsorship can have excellent PR wins for the school, the business and the Eco-Schools programme. Keep Britain Tidy could advise schools on how to achieve this

Look outside the box for international projects and funding

There are two types of businesses to approach. 1. Green, eco-focused businesses; 2. Businesses that have a given 'community' or CSR budget

Implications for us

In order to raise funds we need to improve clarity on what the money is spent on and what schools (or the funders) get from it and us.

Political campaigning

Recognition that sustainability needs to be given higher priority in national educational policy for Eco-Schools and other Education for Sustainability programmes to be successful in England. Frustration that Education for Sustainability has been marginalised and misunderstood by current Department of Education policy is evident. There is a clear call for Keep Britain Tidy to leverage the power of the Eco-Schools network to play a key role in driving a political campaign for all political parties to more highly prioritise Education for Sustainability.

Do 'they' understand how this work helps create the rounded 21st Century citizens?*

**Rt. Hon. Michael Gove MP, Local politicians, the UK Government*

Aim to make sustainability a compulsory part of the whole education system; backed up with central and local government support

Include children's views, concerns; enlist a key figure (potentially a VIP)

Implications for us

Keep Britain Tidy is already working alongside SEEd and others to develop and deliver a campaign of political advocacy drawing on our evidence base and avoiding party political bias. Who else should we work alongside? What should be our campaign goals, tactics and approach? How can we best utilise the strength of feeling that exists within the Eco-Schools network? What role for children? What role for teachers, parents and businesses?

Eco-Schools programme development

The seven step Eco-Schools framework remains fit for purpose and easy to follow. The nine topics are generally accepted but a review may be timely, with the possibility for introduction of new emphasis on areas such as food. Increasing pressure and demands on

teachers' time mean that modifications to the application process may be beneficial to sustain engagement and encourage more take-up of the programme. More guidance on linking Eco-Schools work to the National Curriculum would help teachers to embed Education for Sustainability more deeply into the whole school and highlight the broader benefits of the programme.

Promote the idea of 'whole school homeworks' as ways to involve the whole school in Eco-Schools work

Need new topics, food and economic value of sustainability for example. It is important to focus on waste and energy, but not at the expense of other topics. It is the overarching nature of Eco-Schools that inspires

I am not able to devote the time to the Eco-Schools form filling as I have other commitments

Implications for us

How can we modify the Eco-Schools awards application processes so that they are easier to use, yet still effective as drivers of improved Education for Sustainability and sustainability performance? To guide teachers in how to embed Education for Sustainability into their school curriculum, our approach needs to be a balance of signposting towards the services of others and the creation of our own resources. How can we make the Eco-Schools programme attractive enough that time spent on it is more widely perceived to be time well spent?

Evidencing success

The need to better evidence the benefits of the Eco-Schools programme and Education for Sustainability more broadly is well understood. The collection of data and channels for communicating and reporting are recognised to be important factors to consider across other priority areas, including promotion, partnership working, political campaigning and programme development.

Demonstrate overlaps with Ofsted

Use the presence of assessors to bring in more data / research, information and details

Gather more quantitative evidence and data – relating to grades, attendance and engagement

Implications for us

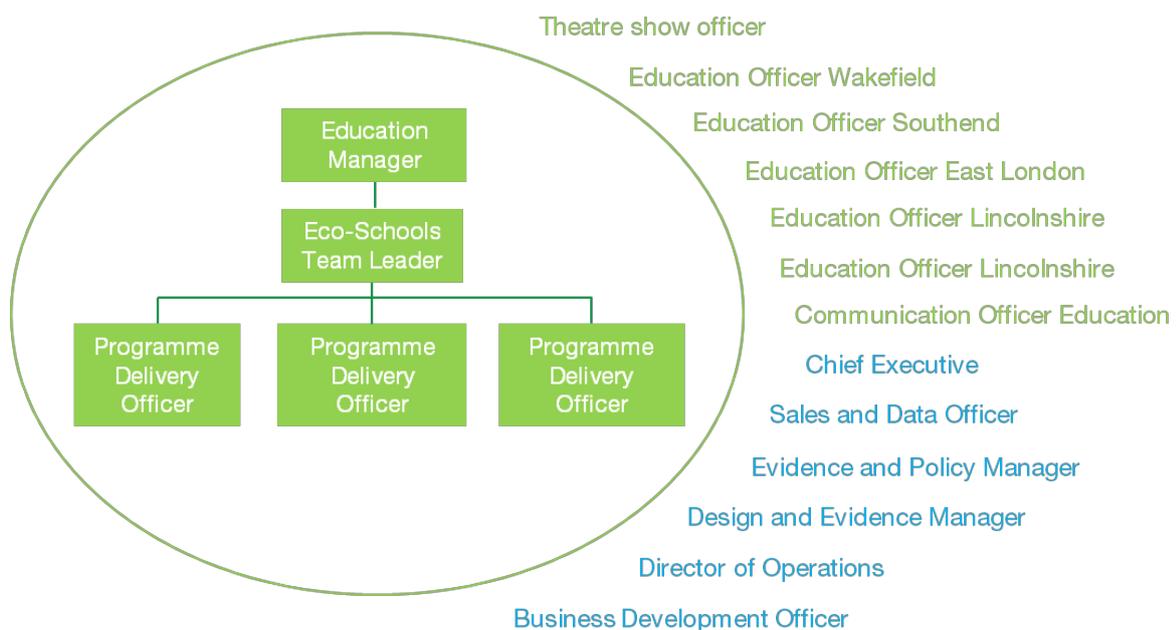
Several considerations are relevant; Keep Britain Tidy needs to work with stakeholders from across the sector to determine what its role should be in the collection and dissemination of evidence. What sort of data do we need? How can we collect it? Who is it useful to? How should it be used? Who might help with and validate this process? How can it be resourced?

5. The building blocks of a strong programme

It is clear that the Eco-Schools programme is shaped by a wide range of factors. Keep Britain Tidy has full control over some of these factors, while we can only hope to have influence on others. The work that we do today and over the next five years needs to have a positive effect on as many of these factors as possible for they are the building blocks that allow the programme to thrive and grow.

Our capacity

Keep Britain Tidy has a small education team that is supported by colleagues in the wider organisation. The diagram below shows the structure of the education team and lists those colleagues who most regularly support it.



Whilst we are keen to follow the advice and recommendations we have received, we are limited by the size of our team in the context of the scale of the issues and the number of schools and other stakeholders we engage with. We therefore need to prioritise.

Our focus in 2014/15

In 2014/15, over the next 12 months, we will focus our attention on promoting and running the Eco-Schools programme while also concentrating on seven tasks that we know need to be prioritised. Alongside work on these core tasks we will lay the foundations for the work needed to develop and construct the remaining building blocks that will support a strong and flourishing Eco-Schools programme for 2015 – 2020 and beyond. The advice and recommendations reported on above will, we hope, help us choose the right tactics and approaches.

Development task	Work area(s)
1. Develop existing and seek new sustainable funding streams	Enable
2. Develop and roll out programmes for improved networking and partnership working at local, regional and national levels	Do
3. Review, modify and pilot Green Flag and Ambassador School application process	Do, Test
4. Modify existing Eco-Schools website, begin process of developing new digital and web based platforms	Do, Think
5. Develop and share guidance on Education for Sustainability and the National Curriculum	Think, Do
6. Work alongside sector partners to campaign for more priority to be placed on sustainability within national education policy	Do
7. Develop and publish five year strategy for Eco-Schools England and the Keep Britain Tidy education programme	Think, Enable

Towards a five year strategy

The tasks in the table above will all **enable** us to meet our goals of helping educators to develop their **thinking** about Education for Sustainability; **do** Education for Sustainability and do it well; and **test** the outcomes of that doing in relation to sustainability performance

and children's learning and wellbeing. They will also lay the foundations for a strong programme in the years ahead and inform our 2015-2020 five year strategy.

Thank-you to everyone who has contributed thus far to the development of our strategy, please continue to do so by getting in touch with us by phone, email, social media and in person. We, for our part, will keep you informed of our progress.

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Appendix

Included below are the comments and notes taken and recorded at the four Eco-Schools strategy forums. If your comment, suggestion, advice or idea is not listed below, or if you have thought on one since, **please do share it with us via phone, email or social media.**

Partnership working

Create a quick guide to accessing the support of local Education for Sustainability providers for schools to use. Create an 'Eco-Schools directory' that has reviews from schools. **3 mentions**

Build partnerships by being proactive. **2 mentions**

Partner NGOs and Education consultants could be given an Eco-Schools quality mark. **3 mentions**

Keep Britain Tidy needs to encourage partnerships at local, regional and national levels. **2 mentions**

Find out / audit which organisations are already supporting Eco-Schools

Find out who the potential partners could be.

Promote the work that partners can do to support schools

Promote local 'offers' aimed at schools

'Accredit' key organisations and groups. **4 mentions**

Help partners to get access into schools. **2 mentions**

Schools seeing [Eco-Schools] as too much work, they need to know support is available to lighten the load.

Outsource some of Keep Britain Tidy's work to other NGOs, businesses, consultants who are well placed to deliver.

Work with Forest Schools / FSC / Living Streets / Khan Academy / Philosophy for Children/ Schools Council UK and other organisations

Encourage volunteer assessors to have post-assessment relationships with schools

Work out how to link to the Global Learning programme

It is important to create and develop links with other organisations so that pupils can see links of sustainability outside the school gates

Help on sharing ideas, developing a newsletter that links people and areas together showing events that are running in different places in England.

Links into local business, outside community organisations, partner organisations should be developed coordinated by Eco-Schools.

Open questions

How can Eco-Schools facilitate the partnerships and the coming together of organisations working in Sustainable Development?

What are the motivations and expectations of the partners?

How can they support and help each other?

Who are the partners?

How can Eco-Schools facilitate the partnerships and the coming together of organisations working in Sustainable Development?

What are the motivations and expectations of the partners?

Promoting Eco-Schools

There are issues with Secondary Schools being less enthused with the programme
Children could write to Secondary head teachers about the programme

Use and share examples of best practice

Newsletters and updates for schools at local, regional and national level are needed

Run a campaign such as the London Sustainable Schools Forum '33' campaign.

[Eco-Schools] does not seem to be the 'gold standard' it once was.

Need to stop preaching to the converted, we need to work on head teachers to raise the profile of sustainability.

Too often it is seen as an add-on, e.g. 'gardening club' with a parent helper.

Link Eco-Schools to other Keep Britain Tidy activities, e.g. 'Love Where You Live'

Raise profile of the global links to facilitate international partnerships to attract schools to get involved.

Emphasise the practical and action elements of the projects

Always be considerate of the pressures and priorities that teachers face – pupil premium, free schools meals, new curriculum.

Who isn't here? Why are teachers not attracted to ESD and how can we attract them?

Eco team 'TED talks'

Better evidence of impact on learning would make the programme more attractive to SLT

Make good practice readily available and both child and SLT friendly

Produce document / presentation which highlights the potential advantages to reluctant governors / PTA

Eco-Schools could raise awareness of renewable energy sector. Explore more ways for schools to access the local community to work with pupils in school. Producing real life situations where using renewable energy can generate income and information to use within the classroom.

Economic development in the country has a high profile and this should be seen in the Eco-Schools programme.

Eco-Schools England does not appear to have a high profile like they do in Scotland and Wales. The brand name needs to be pushed.

SLT need to buy into Eco-Schools to be really successful. Schools need more than one person to be involved to be successful long term. This situation could be helped if trainee teachers had sustainability included in their courses.

Possibility of linking into STEM activities and other projects through Eco-Schools site.

Open questions

How do you get your schools to be interested in becoming an Eco-School?

How do you harness passion into action?

How do we communicate the benefits of the experience/value that a child from a Primary Eco-School has as they progress to Secondary to ensure the advantages are made explicit?

Could we have an Eco-Schools league table?

Strengthening networks

Teachers are time pressed and need support.

Regional co-ordinators of Eco-Schools work are needed. **4 mentions**

Promote clusters of Eco-Schools.

Communication to schools and between schools needs to be improved; this could be achieved through regional coordinators, website, blogging, social media and local businesses.

Keep Britain Tidy could promote and facilitate regional forums. **2 mentions**

Link primary and secondary Eco-Schools.

Local networking events need to be facilitated.

Link in with London Sustainable Schools Forum and other similar forums across the country.

Local Authorities have a role in this.

Maybe set up inter-school environmental groups and education groups.

Supportive networks with people/pupils from range of areas.

Schools could host networking events.

Link to Project Dirt – link to existing networks.

As soon as a school achieves Silver, put them in touch with Green Flag school or an Ambassador school.

Interactive map to show schools and their stage of involvement.

Open questions

How can we create spaces for people to share their experience and learn from each other's achievements and mistakes?

Website, Social Media and Email

Only use the website when completing applications.

A problem page with good answers would be useful.

Would like the website to be more interactive and engaging.

Make the links to the application process clearer.

Would be good to have separate areas for pupils and for adults.

Vital: have a 'pupil zone' with school blogs, resources, games, homework tasks.

An Eco-Schools downloadable app would be great.

As a teacher I receive too many resources, I am inundated daily by emails from different campaigns, e.g. RHS; Co-op; WWF; etc. The Eco-Schools message is a bit lost.

Links to the new curriculum would be useful.

Share ideas from other schools.

Case studies section could be more clear.

Link to POD website very confusing – 'jumps around'.

Upload 'how to' videos on things like 'how to grow potatoes', 'how to get a governor on board', 'how to take minutes in a meeting' – made by pupils?

Have a facility for children to reflect on their learning.

Have different sections of the website for different people – pupils, SMT, teachers, parents, partners, businesses, etc.

Bigger, bolder, pictures to make it more attractive.

The structure of the programme does not make it very easy for secondary schools.

Could using the media in a more creative way help?

Developing the digital brand for teacher's pupils to access. Using topical news issues is a way forward?

Funding the programme

Schools could approach local businesses to ask them to sponsor the £200 charge for the Green Flag assessment. Local sponsorship can have excellent PR wins for the school, the business and the Eco-Schools programme. Keep Britain Tidy could advise schools on how to achieve this.

In some areas schools could approach parents for donations to the Eco-Schools programme.

Think about partners 'in kind' rather than just partners 'with cash'.

Link with sustainable companies e.g. M&S Plan A and 'Schwopping'.

Link with energy companies.

Pupil premium – Eco-Schools could position itself as something that schools could spend the pupil premium on.

Difficult to go beyond one off funds. Think about how to respond to funders requirements, look at enhancing learning.

Look at EU funding.

Look outside the box for international projects and funding.

Schools want something for their money.

Crowd funding – from Schools, LA's, Individuals.

Link the programme to CSR objectives.

Government cutting funding to Eco-Schools is sending wrong message to schools – why carry on when Government does not support?

There are two types of businesses to approach. 1. Green, eco focused businesses; 2. Businesses that have a given 'community' or CSR budget.

Regional businesses could pay into a pot to support Eco-Schools across their region – this could fund regional coordinators.

Get children to write to and visit the companies to the 'asking'.... Very powerful.

Councils are setting up their own wind farms to generate an income. Could Eco-Schools do this too? It is not as unrealistic as it sounds.

Open questions

What is the money being spent on?

Should schools pay for registration? Resources? Assessment?

What is the plan if schools choose not to carry on?

Is it fair to charge small schools the same as large schools for the Green Flag assessment?

Political campaigning

Every child should be entitled to experience outdoor learning whether it be growing projects / enjoying the countryside. It should not be a 'one-off' but an intrinsic part of education.

Lobby OFSTED to include a sustainability element – might encourage greater take-up of the Eco-Schools framework.

Seek support from local MPs and councillors for the programme.

Government cutting funding to Eco-Schools is sending wrong message to schools –

why carry on when government doesn't support?

Lobby the teaching Unions (NAHT; NUT).

Aim for more than just being 'allowed' to do Eco-Schools.

If sustainability is there - campaign for a greater emphasis.

Provide templates for lobbying.

Include children's views, concerns, enlist a key figure (potentially a VIP).

Support heads to support ESD.

Governor support needed.

Governor training needed.

E-petition e.g. Avaaz; 38 degrees.

Be media savvy; children's TV etc.

Do 'they'* understand how this work helps create the rounded 21st Century citizens? *Michael Gove, Local politicians, the Government.

Share evidence of benefits by sharing work of school councils, Eco committees, youth groups, etc.

Highlight strength and growth of green sector jobs.

Form a group of young volunteers to work on political thinking with Government, with the aim of highlighting the areas of life it impacts on.

DFID are already funding work that brings the same benefits – if we campaign with them then it is harder for DoE to ignore.

Make it clear where sustainability fits into the National Curriculum.

Lobby for OFSTED to clearly priorities sustainability in schools. We need to include sustainability in self assessments and ensure it is included in school development plans.

Aim to make sustainability a compulsory part of the whole education system; backed up with central and local government support.

An audit of the new National Curriculum to analyse where sustainability remains, communicate this, but campaign for more.

Open questions

Do you have figures on what Eco-School networks exist and where?

Who is Government funder of Eco-Schools?

What conversations are Eco-Schools having with Government?

How can we and others help?

Who should we lobby? Who in parliament? Which MPs?

Can we have clarification of whether or where sustainability is in schools?

Eco-Schools programme development

I am not able to devote the time to the Eco-Schools form filling as I have other commitments.

Hard to embed in curriculum.

Get children more involved in Green Flag application process.

Promote the idea of 'whole school home works' as ways to involve the whole school in Eco-Schools work.

Outdoor learning and hands on learning.

Make 'how to' videos as part of the application.

Make links to maths.

Want pupils to take ownership of the Green Flag application.

POD training for Eco-coordinators / Forest Schools leaders.

Produce an age-appropriate audit to be used in all year groups / key stages.

Expand Eco-Schools to Eco-Neighbourhoods.

Hands on activities / kinaesthetic activities are powerful and memorable.

Children will still learn despite the outcome of any given sustainability project.

Develop volunteering opportunities – such as Assembly delivery

Learning should be FUN!

Create opportunities for children to go into businesses to question them on their energy usage etc.

Procurement – publications for councils and schools that guide on sustainable procurement (like 'green book' for schools).

Developing sustainability through skills, knowledge and values in Eco-Schools could be the way for further development in the programme.

Develop work in their scheme that shows marketable attributes like skills, knowledge and values; this could be a way of using pupil premium money that shows good value for money. Governing bodies are always keen to see value for money and proven impact.

Provide pupils with opportunities to challenge the decisions people are making.

Need new topics, food and economic value of sustainability for example, it is important to focus on waste and energy but not at the expense of other topics it was overarching nature of Eco-Schools that inspires.

Ideas like Green careers days, Eco-School awareness days linked into the topics developing employability skills team work, communication, leadership creativity.

Building better links in the topics/ lesson plans into the core business of schools - raising attainment in Maths, English & Science.

Creating campaigns around the different topics could be developed in the future.

Develop resources to be audio/visual accessible through technology/DVD's

Develop an online product that SEN students could use as members and have a framework around POD and partnership with BBC.

Open questions

Could schools make films instead of filling out a form?

Could work for SEN pupils be developed?

Evidencing success

Eco-Schools should show evidence of measured success in curriculum areas.

Hard to embed in curriculum – no impact, not worthwhile?

Link evidence of impact to Government targets, e.g. Energy and Waste savings.

Create a diversity of formats for presenting evidence of success – stories, data, video, audio, pictures.

Relate evidence to impact on learning.

Introduce a tick list of actions to do at the beginning of the application process rather than as you go to apply.

Link the application process better to School Development Plans and SEF's.

Demonstrate overlaps with Ofsted. **2 mentions**

Use the presence of assessors to bring in more data / research, information and details.

Add on a research element to the application process.

Draw on evidence of the impact of Sustainable Schools and academic research.

Evidence impact on children and staff.

Information that is gathered for Green Flag applications – can be shared and made accessible.

Gather comments from parents and children on the impact of Green Flag and display online.

Integrate a greater research element into volunteer assessment process.

Gather more quantitative evidence and data – relating to grades, attendance and engagement.

Open questions

How can we help you demonstrate a change in learning and behaviour?

Does the learning really go beyond the core pupils?