

# Forewords - Chester Long & Jonathon Porritt

The first objective identified in the constitution of the Regional Assembly requires the Assembly "to prepare in consultation with other appropriate authorities an integrated strategic framework for the promotion of the sustainable economic, social and environmental well-being of the region." This Sustainability Framework meets that objective.

Sustainable development (and the principles behind it) is here to stay. All those with a stake in our community must recognise this, and begin to develop policies and strategies to ensure a better quality of life for everyone now and in the future. We need to work together to achieve this through action in the home and at work.

The principles of sustainability are often described by the cynics as "motherhood and apple pie". It is certainly true that the headline statements around sustainable development can be agreed, in principle, by everyone. These relate to social progress that recognises the needs of everyone, the protection of the environment, the prudent use of natural resources, and the maintenance of high levels of employment.

Below these headlines, however, are plans and programmes that require hard choices and difficult decisions in order to deliver more sustainable outcomes. Sustainable development is a flagship policy of our Regional Assembly. I am confident that this document will assist the whole region in making progress in improving the quality of life in a sustainable way for everyone, including generations yet to come who are entitled to expect that we will do all we can to ensure their future.

The Regional Assembly acknowledges the assistance of Sustainability South West in preparing this Framework on behalf of the region.

Chester Long  
Chair of The South West Regional Assembly

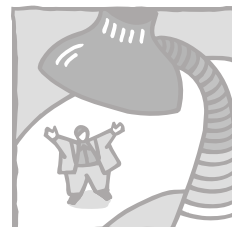
At one level, sustainable development is dead easy. It means a better quality of life for all of us, today and tomorrow. Ask any group of people to conjure up a vision of the kind of world they'd like to live in, and they'll come up with pretty much the same stuff: safe streets, a clean environment, good health, access to rewarding work, first class schools for their children, supportive friends and communities - and so on. That vision of a better life is what sustainable development is all about. But it's no good just dreaming about it.

This Framework seeks to convert such visions into hard-edged practicalities. Bringing people together around shared policies and projects. Providing a set of sustainable development guidelines for all of us to use as a constant reality check. We've got a lot going for us here in the South West. Thousands of people move into the region every year precisely because our quality of life is already so high - relatively! But our farmers are in terrible trouble, poverty and poor health persist, and unsustainable tourism threatens to destroy precisely what makes the South West so special in the first place.

Sustainability South West will continue to highlight those threats whilst working flat out to help find the solutions. For us this Framework is just the first step in building the kind of long-term partnerships we now need to secure the region's sustainable prosperity.

This Framework document represents a major milestone and will enable all organisations within the region, private, public or voluntary, to judge whether the actions that they are taking and the policies that they are adopting are truly sustainable.

Jonathon Porritt  
Chair, Sustainability South West



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